

# Inspection of Vernham Dean Gillum's Church of England Primary School

Vernham Dean, Andover, Hampshire SP11 0JY

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Inspection dates: 31 October and 1 November 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils love coming to this 'small school with a big heart'. They work hard in class and are eager to learn. They show the school's values of courage, creativity and compassion. Pupils of all ages play together very positively. They learn the importance of friendship and good communication. This helps maintain a genuinely calm and happy school community.

The school has high expectations for all its pupils. Leaders have introduced a clear and precise curriculum that teachers are delivering well. This means pupils are achieving much better in all areas of the curriculum. This starts in their Reception Year and continues throughout.

Pupils show good leadership qualities. School councillors, house captains and librarians are examples of roles in which pupils help make their school an even better place. Older pupils support younger pupils through the school's purposeful buddy system. Pupils appreciate the staff organising a range of clubs and trips that enhance their learning. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. All this helps develop pupils' understanding of the wider world.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school is ambitious and wants pupils to achieve their best. Recent adaptations to the curriculum have enhanced the quality of education pupils receive. An effective curriculum is now in place for all subject areas that builds on pupils' previous learning. It is clear what knowledge, skills and vocabulary pupils will learn at each stage. The quality of education is now in line with the strong pastoral support the school provides.

The school prioritises reading. Across the school, pupils' enjoyment of books is clear. Staff have received training in how to deliver phonics lessons and extra support with precision. As a result, pupils learn phonics effectively. Teachers ensure that pupils of all ages have books they can read. Pupils also have access to other books to expand their interests and knowledge. The recently introduced 'Read Every Day' initiative is starting to have impact on readers of all ages and abilities.

The curriculum is well-sequenced in all subjects. Teachers are developing their knowledge of each subject. The school supports all pupils well, particularly those who are disadvantaged, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers adapt the tasks set to meet pupils' individual needs. However, because the curriculum enhancements are recent, some gaps in pupils' learning remain. Teachers are not fully aware of what pupils have learned in the past. To address this, the school has recently implemented new ways for teachers to check pupils' learning, but these have not had the impact that the school wants yet.

Pupils' behaviour is good both in classrooms and around the school, creating a calm environment to learn in. They speak to each other and to adults with respect.

Playtimes are happy and relaxed. There is a good range of activities for pupils to do outside. This means pupils return to lessons ready to work. If a pupil has a difficulty, good-quality pastoral support enables them to settle quickly. Pupils' attendance is strong. Staff work closely with families where attendance is a concern. This has made some significant improvements for individual pupil's attendance and subsequent achievement in their learning.

Pupils and staff value the school's community feel. This is particularly apparent in pupils' spiritual development. Pupils hold dear the opportunities they have to reflect. These enable them to think about themselves and others and what they can do to make life better for everyone. This enhances their strength of character. They know discrimination is unacceptable and that diversity is something to celebrate. For example, the oldest pupils displayed indignation after learning about Rosa Parks' experiences.

The governing body have acted decisively to secure new effective leadership for the school. The staff are immensely proud to be part of the school. They see the positive impact of leaders' recent changes. Parents acknowledge this too. One parent reflected the views of almost all parents when they said, 'My child is so happy at this school. The school is bringing the children up to be such caring individuals. I have nothing but positive comments for the school.'

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school's curriculum in some subjects is new. In these subjects, pupils have not always studied a curriculum that identified the important knowledge they need to learn. Consequently, pupils are not secure in what they can remember in these subjects. The school should ensure that the new curriculum is implemented fully in order to help pupils learn and use important subject knowledge.
- In some subjects, staff do not systematically use the information about how well pupils have learned the curriculum to plan what to teach next. As a result, not all pupils achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that teachers use the assessment information they gather to plan future learning opportunities more precisely.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116321
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10287893
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	42
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Paul Nicoll
<b>Headteachers</b>	Sharon Pole Kirsty Walker
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.vernhamdeanschool.co.uk">www.vernhamdeanschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	15 and 16 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The two interim co-headteachers started in September 2023.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. Its last Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools took place in November 2015, when it received a good judgement in all areas.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the interim co-headteachers and other leaders within the school. The lead inspector also met with three governors, including the chair of the local governing body, a representative from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils, and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View and an inspector also spoke with parents on the first morning of the inspection.
- The views of staff were gathered through interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection, as well as through the survey.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views throughout the inspection, including through discussions, during classroom visits and at lunchtime.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Parker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Darren Aisthorpe

Ofsted Inspector

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