

Inspection of a good school: Whitchurch Church of England Primary School

Daniel Road, Whitchurch, Hampshire RG28 7LS

Inspection dates:

9–10 October 2019

Outcome

Whitchurch Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. They enjoy lessons and all of the different activities that they can take part in. They are very caring and look after each other well. They know that their teachers expect them to be, 'ready, respectful and safe'. As a result, standards of behaviour are high and bullying is rare.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They make sure that pupils learn well in a range of subjects. Subject leaders inspire pupils and staff as they share their love of the subjects they lead.

Leaders expect pupils to work hard. They want every pupil to do their best. If pupils are falling behind, teachers help them to catch up. This ensures that pupils achieve well.

Teachers plan interesting ways to help pupils to learn. They encourage pupils to read a range of good-quality books. Pupils borrowed over 13,000 books from the school library last year. Pupils enjoy their weekly visits to the library. The librarian runs five different creative writing groups, which are very popular.

Parents' high regard for the school was reflected to inspectors in comments such as 'The headteacher leads a very compassionate and caring team. They are dedicated, approachable, inspirational and encourage a love of learning.'

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that teachers refer to closely when planning their lessons. Teachers plan teaching to help pupils learn things in the right order. This is because they know what pupils have learned before and what they need to do next. This helps pupils to learn more and remember more. For example, pupils talk keenly about the periods of history they have studied, remembering this learning because teaching brings history to life.

During lessons teachers check that pupils understand what they are learning. They carefully consider how to ensure that pupils who fall behind catch up quickly. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff support pupils well to be ready for any new learning.

Leaders are passionate about every pupil being able to read. Teachers use a range of different books to inspire children. Pupils were excited to share what they had learned about the 'Great Fire of London'. They had used lots of different texts to help them to find out as much as possible. Older pupils were using their class book to inspire them to create their own 'lands'. Leaders have succeeded in developing a real love for reading across the school. As a result, the large majority of pupils read very well by the time they move on to secondary school.

Leaders have planned a curriculum to help all pupils become good writers. Teachers plan lessons to help pupils to develop their writing skills. In each new lesson teachers check what pupils know. Then teachers help pupils to learn and practice something new.

Leaders have reviewed the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent). A high proportion of pupils are successful in the national Year 1 phonics screening check. Nevertheless, leaders are aware that not all adults in early years and key stage 1 are teaching phonics as precisely as they should. This results in some pupils being confused, particularly when not enough time is allowed for practice before moving on. Leaders make sure that, for the youngest readers, reading books match the sounds they know. This helps pupils gain confidence in themselves as readers. Children enjoy the books and stories they take home to share with their parents.

Leaders support pupils' personal development well. For example, every pupil gets the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. This helps pupils to develop a love and understanding of different types of music. This enriches their learning. Pupils also study differences between cultures. They have links with a school in Uganda. This helps them to develop a sense of their place in the world.

Leaders give everyone the opportunity to share and celebrate their skills. They value and respect staff. Leaders keep a careful eye on everyone's workload. As a result, everyone works happily as part of an effective team.

Adults in the early years care well for the children. Children settle in quickly after joining the school. They listen to what adults have to say and are enthusiastic about all of the activities on offer. Nevertheless, adults' expectations for children's learning can lack ambition. Sometimes adults miss opportunities to develop children's understanding of numbers. At other times, adults don't take opportunities to develop children's spoken English.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff understand their roles

in keeping children safe. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Leaders make sure that staff have regular training.

Leaders have put systems in place to check that all adults are safe to work with children. Staff have managed the current extensive building work extremely well. A number of parents commented on this. They said that they knew that the environment was a safe one because leaders had managed the situation so well.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- Leaders know that there is some variability in staff's expertise in teaching phonics. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the right training so that they can teach phonics well.
- Adults should have higher expectations of children in the early years. Adults should provide more opportunities to extend children's vocabulary as well as children's understanding of numbers, across the curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Whitchurch Church of England Primary School to be good on 16 March 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 116324 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 10111342 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 458 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Joanna Fisher |
| Headteacher | Kate Steven |
| Website | www.whitchurchprimary.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 15 March 2016 |

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England, voluntary controlled primary school.
- Since the previous inspection the school has grown significantly. During the inspection there was a lot of building work going on to update and extend the buildings. A new school hall was being added.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, the business manager and six governors. She also met with a number of non-teaching staff and had a phone call with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector considered reading, writing and history in detail. This involved discussing curriculum planning with leaders and subject leaders, carrying out lesson visits with leaders and teachers, looking at pupils' work with them, talking to teachers and learning support assistants, talking to parents, observing pupils read to a teacher and observing story time.
- The inspector reviewed the single central record and attendance information. She met with two of the school's designated safeguarding leads and discussed systems and

processes as well as considering case studies. Inspectors talked to parents, pupils, governors and staff about safeguarding and checked that practice was consistent across the school.

Inspection team

Sarah Varnom, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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