

Inspection of a good school: Finchampstead C of E VA Primary School

The Village, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 4JR

Inspection date: 27 March 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This small school promotes pupils' tolerance, respect, honesty, sincerity and personal development well. Pupils like coming to school and being with their friends. They enjoy positive relationships with staff and generally feel well looked after. The majority of parents also appreciate the care their children receive.

The school has clear expectations for all pupils to achieve well. This ambition embraces pupils who are disadvantaged, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to succeed. However, some teaching lacks consistency and this means that some pupils' learning is variable.

The school has positive expectations for behaviour, and pupils largely meet these. Most pupils behave positively and reflect the school's ambition of 'working together and playing together'. Occasionally, there is disruptive behaviour, but most staff address this appropriately. Incidents of bullying have reduced over time and the school addresses this effectively. However, pupils are not always clear about the actions that are taken.

The school provides a range of opportunities to enrich the curriculum. These include different trips, including to The Living Rainforest and the Science Museum. Pupils are also keen to attend different activities, such as sports and gardening clubs.

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

The school provides a rich curriculum for pupils. In most subjects, staff have identified and sequenced the most important learning from Reception to Year 6. This helps pupils to build learning successfully over time. However, in mathematics, the school uses different schemes between key stage 1 and key stage 2. This slows pupils' achievement, as some cannot consistently recall previous learning.

Some elements of the school's curriculum are inconsistently implemented. For example, not all staff follow planning closely, so some content is missed. However, most staff have secure subject knowledge, which enables them to provide clear explanations. For example, staff use technical language in music to help pupils learn about tempo, tone and rhythm. Staff do check pupils' understanding, but this is not well developed. This means that pupils' misconceptions are sometimes not identified or addressed promptly. Pupils with SEND have their needs identified swiftly. Staff generally adapt their teaching suitably to support pupils' learning, so most pupils with SEND achieve appropriately well. In the 2023 published outcomes, pupils achieved broadly in line with the national average. Pupils can discuss their current learning confidently. However, in some subjects, such as mathematics, they struggle to link current learning with what they have learned before and to integrate new knowledge into larger ideas.

The enthusiasm the school brings to reading motivates pupils to read a wide range of books. The love of reading is a cornerstone of the school's offer. This is reflected in pupils' passion for reading to adults and themselves. The school prioritises reading and has a clear structure for teaching this from the earliest days of Reception. However, some teaching of reading is variable and does not consistently follow the intended curriculum. The school carefully identifies pupils who need additional support and provides timely and effective intervention.

Pupils generally behave with respect and kindness. Staff follow the clear behaviour procedures and teach pupils how they are expected to behave. A small number of pupils and parents have ongoing worries about the behaviour of other pupils. Leaders take effective action when concerns are raised. They recognise this needs to continue to ensure everyone is assured about steps to secure good behaviour. Overall, pupils' attendance is improving. However, the school's work to track and support disadvantaged pupils' attendance, including pupils with SEND, is not fully developed.

The school appropriately promotes pupils' broader development. Pupils are supported to develop a secure understanding of spirituality and their place in the wider world. Pupils enjoy life skills lessons, preparing them for life beyond school. They keenly study aspects such as relationships, keeping safe and managing money.

Leaders at all levels are committed to providing a good quality of education, but the school has not checked to ensure its ambition is realised. This means the school's understanding of the strengths and development priorities sometimes lack precision. Staff generally feel well cared for by leaders, although some of the school's decisions have created an unnecessary workload for staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some elements of the school's curriculum are inconsistently implemented. Variations in the quality of teaching mean that pupils are not always learning as well as they could. The school must ensure that staff have the required training and support to develop their subject knowledge and pedagogy to support pupils to learn the intended curriculum consistently well.
- The schools' systems to improve attendance are underdeveloped. This means that some pupils, including pupils with SEND, do not attend often enough and miss vital learning. The school must redouble its efforts to improve pupil attendance and keep close track of this with a systematic and thorough approach.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2018.

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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

Unique reference number	110012
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10321771
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nigel Kennington
Headteacher	Jacquie Vanstone
Website	www.finchampsteadschool.org
Dates of previous inspection	31 October and 1 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England school and is part of the Diocese of Oxford.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was in July 2017.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team. The inspectors also met with members of the local governing body and representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample

of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. The inspectors also spoke to pupils in lessons and during playtime and lunchtime.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school, the school improvement plan and minutes of governors' meetings.
- The inspectors gathered evidence to explore the impact of pupils' behaviour, the school's wider curriculum offer and how leaders support staff with their workload.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 spoke to parents and considered their responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspectors took account of the views of staff through conversations and the responses to the online staff survey.
- Pupils were met with throughout the inspection to gather their views about the school.

Inspection team

Toby Martlew, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lorraine Greco

Ofsted Inspector

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