

Inspection of Sparsholt Church of England Primary School

Woodman Lane, Sparsholt, Winchester, Hampshire SO21 2NR

Inspection dates: 31 October and 1 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 13 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and vibrant school. Pupils are friendly and show kindness towards each other. Friendships extend across year groups, and Years 5 and 6 pupils are impressive role models who seek to help others whenever they can. At playtime, they enthusiastically run games for younger pupils and make sure that everyone is included. Pupils' conduct strongly reflects the school's values of 'Courage, Compassion and Creativity'.

The school has high expectations for all pupils to achieve their best. Pupils respond positively to these. They try hard in lessons and keenly get involved in a range of clubs and school events. Pupils enjoy regular opportunities to share their ideas. They take pride in their contributions and talk excitedly about how their views have shaped the 'Pond Project'.

Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and positive. Pupils are well cared for and value the attentive approach of staff. They feel safe and know that any concerns they report to staff will be addressed promptly. Parents and carers value how the school builds pupils' confidence through its nurturing approach and the focus on participation. One parent captured this, saying, 'The school has shaped a positive and striving attitude in my children.'

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

The school has an ambitious and broad curriculum. For each subject, there is careful planning of the important knowledge pupils need to learn and when they will do this. In most subjects, this builds pupils' knowledge securely over time. The school regularly reviews and adapts the curriculum to further improve learning. For example, in mathematics, more time has been given to ensure all pupils become fluent in calculation methods. In early years, the well-planned curriculum is adapted each year so that it meets the specific needs of the children.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They explain new knowledge accurately and use carefully chosen examples which support pupils to understand new ideas. Thoughtful learning activities provide opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding. Across subjects, teachers routinely use questioning well. They check pupils' understanding and reteach knowledge when pupils do not understand. Teachers know pupils well, and pupils with potential special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are promptly identified. Staff make appropriate adaptations which support pupils with SEND to achieve well.

There is variation in the effectiveness of assessment. In core subjects, assessment of pupils' progress is robust. End of topic and in-class assessment closely track pupils' understanding of new knowledge. Appropriate support is put in place quickly, so struggling pupils catch up. This means pupils build secure knowledge over time. In some foundation subjects, however, planned assessment does not consistently identify how securely pupils understand important knowledge or revisit previous

learning. This hinders pupils' achievement in these subjects because they have gaps in their understanding.

There is a rigorous approach to reading. Children learn phonics from the start of Reception. Pupils who are struggling are given prompt support so that they catch up quickly. Through diverse and rich texts, the reading curriculum develops pupils' vocabulary and comprehension well. This highly effective approach is reflected in the strong reading outcomes in 2023.

Behaviour is exemplary across the school. There are high expectations and pupils learn about excellent conduct. This begins in the early years, when teachers help children to learn how to work well together and show consideration. Pupils know the rules and understand why upholding these supports everyone to learn well. Across lessons, pupils work hard and have excellent attitudes to learning. This continues around the school when pupils' behaviour is orderly and they show consideration for others.

The school's approach to character development is exceptional. High-quality opportunities deliberately broaden the horizons of pupils. All pupils are required to be 'courageous advocates'. They put forward for discussion local or global issues which interest them. Pupils vote for their 'pupil governors', who give pupils an active voice in school improvement. Pupils build a strong appreciation of different cultures. They meet representatives of different faiths and hear visitors from a range of backgrounds talk about their lives in 'Tell Me Tuesday' events. Pupils learn how to handle responsibility and work with others through a range of meaningful leadership opportunities. These begin early, with 'Helping Hands' in Reception Year. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders are determined that pupils will achieve well. They strive for continuous improvement. Staff appreciate leaders' flexibility and mindful consideration of workload. Governors diligently meet their statutory responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, assessment does not identify pupils' knowledge gaps or revisit previous learning. In these subjects, staff cannot then secure the knowledge pupils have not fully learned. The school needs to ensure that assessment practice across all subjects identifies where pupils' understanding is less secure, and that staff know how to address this effectively.

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	116317
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10267878
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	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Caroline Horrill
Headteacher	Elizabeth Hanratty
Website	www.sparsholt.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2010, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- This is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Winchester. Its last section 48 inspection took place in April 2023.
- The school has some mixed-year-group and some single-year-group classes.
- The governing body manages before-school childcare provision.

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.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, and teachers. The lead inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body, the local authority school improvement adviser and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, 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 playtime activities.
- 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 considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school. They looked at the school's self-evaluation documents and school improvement plan.
- The inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. This included speaking to parents at the gate.

Inspection team

Phillip Blagg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Debra Anderson

Ofsted Inspector

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