

Inspection of good school: St Mary's Bentworth Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Bentworth, Alton, Hampshire GU34 5RE

Inspection dates:

17 September 2019

Outcome

St Mary's Bentworth Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and their parents adore this school. The school's values, 'love, respect, belong' permeate through all aspects of school life. Pupils care deeply for their school and the other children in it. They take their leadership roles seriously. The eco-warriors, for example, were busy organising a crisp packet recycling scheme for the local community at the time of the inspection.

Teachers have high expectations for every pupil. Supporting pupils' mental health and well-being underpins the school's curriculum. Pupils are taught to be resilient and grow to be confident learners. Parents value this approach to developing their children's learning. They use the same strategies at home. Pupils know they need to try hard. Classrooms buzz with pupils wanting to find out more. They attain well. Pupils do not worry about making mistakes. They know they can learn from them.

Pupils feel extremely safe and happy in school. They say that bullying 'never really happens'. Pupils develop the skills to sort out their own disagreements. Staff are proud of pupils' behaviour and rightly so. Pupils play well together. They are respectful to each other and very polite.

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

Pupils love learning a wide range of subjects. Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum from the early years onwards. They know what they want pupils to learn. They nurture positive attitudes to learning from the word go by tapping into children's interests in Reception. Older pupils enjoy contributing ideas about topics to study. For example, Year 6 have chosen to use the work of Nick Park, creator of Shaun the Sheep, to learn about images versus the written word. There is an atmosphere of purpose and focus in lessons. Pupils work well on their own and with others. Their work is neat and of high quality.

Pupils learn to read well. Children start learning phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) in Reception as soon as they settle. Daily phonics lessons are precise. Reading books are carefully selected so that children can practise the sounds they know. Children learn these sounds quickly. Any pupil who is falling behind is swiftly spotted and support put in place.

Pupils have a passion for books. They love their teachers reading to them. In a mixed Year 4 and Year 5 class, pupils were mesmerized listening to the a 'Harry Potter' story. Pupils read widely. Reading passports encourage them to try out different types of books, such as joke books and classic fiction. They talk confidently about what they enjoy reading and what they would like to read next. Pupils are encouraged to read at home and do so regularly. Reading is a way of life at St Mary's.

Leaders are clear that that across subjects new content should build on the knowledge and skills pupils have already learned. Teachers are clear what they need to teach each year group. Their subject knowledge is precise. However, in some subjects, teachers are not always sure which order to teach different aspects of a topic and exactly what needs to come next.

Teachers know what pupils have been taught in previous units of work. However, sometimes teachers have to go over things again. For example, pupils could not remember what they had been taught before about mammals, reptiles and amphibians because they had not returned to it at the time. This hinders their learning.

Leaders have made sure that there is expertise in supporting pupils with special needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND achieve well. They are fully included in all aspects of school life. Teachers skilfully adapt the curriculum and use appropriate resources to support learning so that all pupils can succeed.

Leaders place great importance on developing pupil's understanding of life beyond Bentworth. They ensure that there are many opportunities to learn about different cultures and religions. For example, recently a rabbi visited the school to talk to pupils about how he makes decisions based on his faith. Pupils benefit from extra-curricular experiences that add to their learning. Pupils love their school trips, such as a recent visit to Marwell Zoo.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of care that permeates throughout the school. Staff are highly attentive to pupils' well-being. All pre-employment checks are fully in place. Staff are well trained in all safeguarding issues. They know what to do if they have any worries about a pupil. Records are meticulously kept. Leaders take the right action without delay.

Leaders know the families who live in the community well. If problems occur, they pinpoint the right help that could make a difference to a family and refer quickly.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are clear what they want pupils to learn. However, sometimes teachers do not know precisely what order to teach new concepts in and what learning needs to come next. Learning in some subjects, other than English and mathematics, is not mapped out sequentially enough. Leaders need to ensure that knowledge and skills are always carefully sequenced.
- The curriculum is planned so that pupils build on knowledge. However, sometimes there are large gaps in time between pupils learning content and then revisiting it. Pupils do not always remember what they have already learned. Teachers have to reteach some knowledge which hampers the progress pupils make. Leaders need to make sure that the curriculum is designed to help pupils remember key concepts over time.

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 St Mary's Bentworth Church of England Primary School to be good on 5 July 2011.

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

Unique reference number	116351
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10111257
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	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Maria Fordyce
Headteacher	Joanna Ayres
Website	www.bentworth.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 January 2016

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils in the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils that have an education, health and care plan is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The provision of reading, mathematics and science was considered as part of this inspection. This involved speaking to the headteacher, science subject leader, early years leader, teachers and pupils. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and leaders' planning.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the governing body and an additional governor.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to staff, governors and pupils, checked recruitment procedures, and looked at safeguarding records and policies.

- Inspectors considered the 32 responses to Ofsted Parent View. In addition, 19 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for staff were considered, as were 43 responses to Ofsted’s online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lea Hannam, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Matt Batchelor

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