

Inspection of Churchmead Church of England (VA) School

Priory Way, Datchet, Slough, Berkshire SL3 9JQ

Inspection dates:	12, 26 and 27 November 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a strong sense of community at this school. As one pupil aptly put it, 'it's a small school with a big heart'. Staff and pupils live out the school's values of courage, compassion, and commitment. Pupils show consistently high levels of respect, including for those from different backgrounds. The school is aspirational for all pupils, including some who are harder to reach. It provides individualised care for pupils who need additional support. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and have excellent attendance. In most lessons, the school's expectations and clear routines ensure a calm and orderly environment with a positive atmosphere for learning. As a result, most pupils behave well. Bullying rarely happens, and staff address it effectively if it occurs. Pupils and students in the sixth form feel safe. They are comfortable seeking support from adults if they have any concerns.

Personal development is a particular strength. The school offers a wide range of opportunities to develop pupils' interests, including a range of extra-curricular clubs and a well-thought-out programme of trips and experiences. Pupils value the school's high-quality personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum.

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

The school has an ambitious curriculum that ensures pupils experience a broad and balanced education. Staff have carefully considered what pupils need to learn, and the best order to teach content. This helps teachers know what to teach and when, and ensures pupils build knowledge over time. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn the same curriculum as their peers. Staff identify the needs of these pupils accurately and make suitable adaptations to help them access the curriculum. As a result, pupils achieve well and achieve good outcomes in public examinations.

Most teachers have secure subject knowledge, which helps them to explain concepts and ideas clearly. In most lessons, staff skilfully check what pupils understand and can remember. Staff ensure learning in lessons builds on what pupils already know. This was especially strong in sixth-form lessons, where students were highly engaged in their learning as a result. However, in a small number of subjects, some staff were not as confident and did not routinely choose activities that helped pupils to learn more and do more. Furthermore, in some subjects, the school has not yet embedded approaches to help pupils to remember what they have been taught over time.

Pupils behave well and most lessons are calm and purposeful. Teachers consistently model the school's values and its high expectations for behaviour. However, on occasions, these high standards are not maintained and there is some low-level disruption in a small number of lessons. Some pupils expressed frustration at how this impacts their learning. The school is alert to this, and a clear strategy is in place to improve consistency of expectations. However, this strategy is new and has not yet had the full impact that leaders intend.

Pupils and sixth-form students attend school regularly. Staff work positively with pupils and families, and help is provided for those who need additional support to improve attendance. As a result, most pupils benefit from the high-quality education and personal development that the school provides.

Reading is prioritised. The school consistently focuses on building pupils' vocabulary. This strengthens pupils' spoken and written language, which helps them learn well. Effective systems are in place to identify pupils who are at an earlier stage of learning to read. These pupils are given timely support to improve their reading knowledge.

The school's personal development programme is exceptional. It is well thought out and responsive to pupils' needs. The school ensures that pupils know how to keep themselves safe and healthy, and includes teaching about any potential risks from being online. Pupils talk positively about PSHE lessons and workshops, which have helped them learn about important issues such as knife crime, consent and healthy relationships. In the sixth form, students especially appreciate timely input about the risks involved in driving.

A carefully curated range of trips and experiences enrich pupils' experience of the curriculum. 'Culture Day' is a particular highlight for pupils. It allows them to celebrate differences and learn more about diversity within the school community. Pupils and students receive expert independent guidance which ensures they are well prepared for their next steps.

Leaders and governors are committed to the school's continuous improvement. They make decisions in the best interests of pupils and are reflective in their practice. Staff appreciate leaders' support for their workload and well-being. As a result, staff feel valued as professionals.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the school's curriculum is not securely and consistently implemented. Consequently, pupils do not build their knowledge and skills successfully in these subjects. The school should ensure that it carefully monitors how well the curriculum is being implemented and provides support where needed to enable all pupils to achieve well across the whole curriculum.
- The school's strategy to address a small number of inconsistencies in expectations for behaviour is not having a strong enough impact. As a result, some pupils experience low-level disruption in a small number of their classes, which hinders their learning. The school should embed its clear behaviour strategy to ensure that low-level disruption is dealt with 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	133580
Local authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	10341650
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	597
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dianne Cranmer
Headteacher	Chris Tomes
Website	www.churchmead.org
Date of previous inspection	2 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is a Church of England voluntary aided school within the Diocese of Oxford. In March 2015, it underwent a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) under section 48 inspection of the Education Act.
- At the time of this inspection, the school used one registered and one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Through no fault of the school, this inspection started on 12 November and then was completed on 26 and 27 November 2024.
- Inspectors met and spoke with leaders, staff, pupils, parents and carers. Inspectors also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector met with representative of the local authority and of the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, art and design and business studies. 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. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire. They also considered the responses to the confidential Ofsted staff survey and the views of pupils gathered throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; considered 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.
- Inspectors considered information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and wider learning. They took account of a wide range of documentation and information provided by the school.

Inspection team

James Stuart, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jane Cartwright	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Dyer	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Mortimore	Ofsted Inspector

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