

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Andrew's Church of England Infant School

Upper Church Lane, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7PW

Inspection date: 3 June 2025

Outcome

St Andrew's Church of England Infant School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The executive headteacher of this school is Jayne Venables. This school is part of The Good Shepherd Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Paul Kennedy, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Yvonne McLeod.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and inclusive environment where pupils feel happy, safe and valued. Respectful relationships between staff and pupils create a nurturing atmosphere in which pupils blossom. From the moment children enter Reception, they quickly learn to follow the expected routines. Pupils know that if they have a worry, however small, they can speak to an adult who will help them. One pupil said, 'This is a jolly good school where everyone is treated fairly and with kindness.'

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour and academic success. Pupils demonstrate a real thirst for knowledge and achieve well. In lessons, they are captivated by their learning and are eager to reply to their teachers' questions. This includes children in the early years, who share and collaborate well.

Pupils enjoy taking part in a range of carefully selected extra-curricular activities. For instance, they take part in sports tournaments, learn about their local heritage and represent the school at events in the community. Outdoor learning is a particular highlight, helping pupils develop their resilience, resourcefulness and a deep sense of responsibility. Pupils fulfil their roles, such as being part of the school council or the eco-council, with pride and maturity.

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

The curriculum in all subjects is well constructed, interesting and ambitious. The school has identified precisely the important knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils need to know and remember. As a result, pupils learn the important knowledge in a logical order, building on what they already know and can do.

Upbeat staff value the professional development they receive. They use their strong subject knowledge to introduce new learning effectively. The school uses research-based, innovative approaches to design work that is stimulating and fosters pupils' natural curiosity. Teachers check and help pupils make links in their learning. The school also ensures that pupils use a wide range of vocabulary to explain their work in different subjects. Nevertheless, sometimes, key gaps and misconceptions are not addressed effectively enough. Where this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

The school places a very high priority on making sure that pupils become prolific and fluent readers. A rich and diverse range of books are celebrated and enjoyed throughout the school day. In the early years, much of the children's learning is centred around high-quality texts. Expert staff make sure that pupils develop their phonics knowledge and reading skills securely. They promptly identify any pupils who struggle to read. The school provides well-considered support that ensures these pupils catch up quickly. The same rigorous approach is not applied in early writing. Errors in how pupils form letters or join their handwriting are not consistently identified or addressed.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Staff skilfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum to meet pupils' individual needs. The school works very well with a wide range of external agencies to provide specialist support, where required. These actions ensure that pupils with SEND achieve well.

Children in the early years demonstrate high levels of independence and cooperate very well with their peers. They are curious about their learning. Children work independently and are fully engaged in the work they do. They persevere with demanding work because staff provide lots of encouragement. Children excitedly share examples of their work. Rightly, there is a strong, effective focus on ensuring children develop language and communication skills.

The school develops pupils' character very well. Pupils benefit from trips and visits to places such as the seaside, the theatre and the local history museum, which link to the curriculum successfully. They learn how to be responsible and active citizens. Pupils are taught about respectful behaviour in the community and about life skills, including how to stay safe when crossing the road or visiting the library. They plant flowers around school and make hanging baskets to decorate the town. Pupils maturely discuss their views on topics such as being a refugee and anti-bullying. They learn about respect and tolerance through assemblies as well as taking part in democratic processes, such as voting on the playground equipment and on new reads for their school library.

There is real strength in leadership at all levels. The school focuses effectively on improvement priorities and brings about positive changes to continually enhance pupils' education. Governors and trustees are skilled and knowledgeable. They fulfil their roles well and maintain a sharp focus on ensuring that the school moves from strength to strength. Staff value the importance the school places on their professional development and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is variation in how well handwriting is taught. This means that some pupils do not secure the foundational skills of accurate letter formation well enough. The school should work with staff to improve teaching in this area so that there is a consistent and effective approach to teaching early handwriting skills.
- Sometimes, teaching does not identify and address key gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge well enough. Where this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff develop the expertise they need to identify and address misconceptions that pupils have so that pupils embed the important knowledge they need to know well.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2014.

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	144330
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10379918
Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Yvonne McLeod
CEO of the trust	Paul Kennedy
Headteacher	Jayne Venables (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.standrews-infant.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Andrew's Church of England Infant School is part of The Good Shepherd Trust.
- The school has joint leadership and governance with Potters Gate Primary School, which is also part of The Good Shepherd Trust.
- Subject leaders work across both schools.
- St Andrew's is a Church of England school within the Diocese of Guildford. The last section 48 inspection took place in July 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in the academic year 2025/2026.
- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school childcare.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- Inspectors spoke to the executive headteacher, the executive deputy headteacher, other leaders and staff. The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair. She spoke on the telephone with the chair of trustees. The lead inspector also met with the CEO and the senior education officer.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: looked at 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.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Shazia Akram, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Owen McColgan

Ofsted Inspector

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