

Inspection of Rake CofE Primary School

London Road, Rake, Liss, Hampshire GU33 7JH

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 June 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They understand the school's values of 'love, respect and perseverance' and talk about these confidently. Pupils learn to keep themselves healthy, such as through healthy meal choices, and know how to stay safe online. Pupils build their confidence through carefully chosen activities, including in the outdoors, which help them to manage risks safely. Pupils enjoy responsibilities and leadership roles such as eco-council members and school councillors.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are polite, have good manners and are praised for showing kindness towards adults and each other. Staff promote positive behaviour clearly and consistently. They adopt approaches that focus on recognising and celebrating pupils' achievements. The school is a calm, orderly environment. If any pupils find managing their own behaviour challenging, they receive the help that they need. Pupils feel safe.

Pupils learn the curriculum well. Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Staff ensure that children make a strong start in the Reception Year to develop the independence and readiness for learning they need. By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve positive outcomes in end-of-year published results for reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Starting in the early years, the school is ambitious for its pupils. The school has identified the key knowledge and skills that it wants pupils to learn. Lessons are designed to help pupils build their knowledge well. For example, in music, pupils are taught to build on their understanding of notation, from visual scores to treble and bass clef, as well as singing and using rhymes that build on strong early years practice. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified quickly. The school adapts the curriculum appropriately, where needed, and works well with external agencies such as speech and language therapists. This helps to ensure that pupils with SEND build their knowledge and understanding securely. Overall, by the end of key stage 2, most pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Across the curriculum, staff have secure subject knowledge. In subjects such as mathematics and early reading, staff check pupils' understanding and then adjust the curriculum appropriately. However, in some subjects, staff are less precise in the checks they make on what pupils know and remember. This can mean pupils have gaps in their knowledge or understanding that go unnoticed and so unaddressed. When this happens, some pupils do not build on their prior knowledge as securely as they could.

The school prioritises teaching phonics to help pupils gain the strong foundations in reading that they need. This starts strongly in the Reception Year. Staff deliver the phonics programme systematically. Most staff model sounds precisely and are increasingly confident in delivering the phonics programme. Reading books are matched closely to the sounds that pupils have learned. If pupils fall behind, they receive help to catch up with

their peers quickly. Most pupils become confident, fluent readers. However, the writing curriculum is not as effective. Currently, some pupils have gaps in their writing skills, such as in handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar, which are not as secure as they could be. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and correct their work to build their knowledge and skills over time.

In the early years, children are deeply engaged in their learning. Thoughtful, creative activities help children build their knowledge and understanding effectively. For example, staff generate children's enthusiasm by creating lunar modules and space helmets together following the crash landing of an imaginary spacecraft. Children enjoy the chance to make and share bread and love squeezing fresh lemons, exploring the smells, tastes and textures with expressive language and rich opportunities for discussion. There is a sharp focus on language and communication development. Staff ask questions and prompt the children skilfully.

The school utilises an array of trips and educational visits to help pupils deepen and broaden their understanding of life in modern Britain. Wide-ranging school clubs such as multi-sport events, football, craft and computing help pupils follow their interests and talents enthusiastically. Opportunities to learn outside are utilised effectively to support pupils' character development and enthusiasm to learn the curriculum. Pupils learn to be resilient and grow in confidence as a result.

Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development well. They support and challenge leaders effectively. Governors have a sharp focus on school improvement and staff well-being. Staff are dedicated to their work. They appreciate how they are supported by the school to manage their workload successfully. Parents are supportive. One parent summarised the thoughts of others, saying that the school is 'supportive and friendly. Staff know every child'.

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 subjects, teachers' use of assessment does not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge or understanding precisely. As a result, pupils sometimes have gaps in their learning which are not identified and addressed. This means they move on to new learning before they are ready. The school should ensure staff check pupils' knowledge systematically so gaps in knowledge are identified and addressed early and pupils learn with greater consistency across the curriculum.
- The school is not addressing gaps in pupils' writing, including handwriting, consistently and effectively. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to correct and practise their writing. This affects pupils' ability to communicate their learning as well as they could.

The school should identify what each pupil needs to master to improve their writing and provide activities that support them in becoming fluent writers.

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	125989
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10361662
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	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Chris Hawker
Headteacher	David Bertwistle
Website	www.dvsf.school
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is one of three small schools in The Downland Village School Federation. The executive headteacher and executive deputy headteacher lead all three schools.
- The school is located in the Diocese of Chichester and Arundel. Its last section 48 inspection took place in October 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, other leaders in the school and wider staff. They met with members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, music and history. 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.
- 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 considered the views of parents shared through the Ofsted online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text responses. They gathered the views of pupils and staff through the online pupil and staff surveys, as well as through interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings, local authority visit reports and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andy Platt

Ofsted Inspector

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