

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Horton CofE VA Primary School

Horton, Chipping Sodbury, Bristol BS37 6QP

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Inspection date:

23 April 2025

## Outcome

Horton CofE VA Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Horton CofE VA Primary School is at the heart of the local village community. Pupils are helpful, kind and welcoming. They take part in a wide range of local activities, such as church services and village carnivals. Pupils exemplify their core values of love, compassion, generosity, truth and forgiveness.

Pupils behave very well. They are polite and well mannered. Unkind behaviour is very rare. Pupils know they can share their worries with trusted adults. Concerns are followed up quickly. Subsequently, pupils are happy and safe.

The school has high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Most pupils learn the curriculum very well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Learning activities are appropriately adapted to support pupils within lessons. This means pupils with SEND learn effectively alongside their peers.

Pupils experience a wide range of activities that enrich their learning. This helps them to understand the world around them, beyond their rural setting. For example, pupils enjoy the theatre and residential trips. They visit different places of worship, such as synagogues and mosques. They learn about different cultures through events such as African theme days. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and well planned, starting from the early years. It supports pupils to know more and remember more over time. The school has identified the specific knowledge and skills that it wants pupils to learn. The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary. This includes pupils sharing their ideas using clear

sentences when speaking. Pupils use accurate subject-specific vocabulary when discussing their learning with others.

The needs of pupils with SEND are accurately identified. The school works closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils are well supported in lessons. Staff are well trained to help pupils who require additional help. Staff adapt learning to help pupils learn the curriculum alongside their peers. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

The school prioritises reading from the very start. Pupils enjoy a wide range of diverse texts. They are enthused by visiting authors. Staff teach phonics expertly. Pupils who are falling behind receive extra support. This helps pupils to catch up quickly. Consequently, pupils learn to read fluently and accurately over time.

Staff deliver the curriculum effectively. They explain learning clearly. Pupils build on their prior learning successfully. Staff ensure that pupils are secure with previous learning before moving on. Pupils are highly motivated and engaged in their learning. They can apply their knowledge and understanding across subject areas. However, pupils do not develop their handwriting and letter formation as quickly as they could. As a result, some pupils lack fluency in their handwriting. This slows future learning in writing.

The programme for personal development is a strength of the school. The school knows its pupils very well. This means it quickly identifies and encourages pupils' talents and interests, such as singing, dancing and performing. The school focuses on activities to promote protected characteristics. This includes visiting female scientists and celebrating black history. Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs, including gardening, chess and cookery. Pupils particularly appreciate their learning in the school's wooded area. They learn about their environment and the importance of sustainability. All this means that pupils develop their character exceptionally well.

Pupils' attitudes to their learning are very positive. They are highly motivated to learn. Pupils know how to identify their feelings. Pupils who need help with their behaviour are very well supported. They learn strategies to manage their emotions. The school places a high regard on attendance. It is doing everything it reasonably can to ensure that pupils attend regularly.

Those responsible for governance know the school well and fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They provide appropriate challenge and support to school leaders. Governors care about the school community. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about their experience of working at the school. Their workload and well-being are well considered. Parents and carers are grateful for the opportunities that the school provides.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's approach to teaching handwriting is not consistently effective. As a result, some pupils do not develop successful letter formation or handwriting skills as quickly as they could. This leads to a lack of fluency and slows pupils' ability to express themselves well in their written work. The school should improve the teaching of handwriting so that all pupils can write 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2020.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109262
<b>Local authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10378880
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	34
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Suzanne Elmore
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicola Berry
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hortonprimary.org.uk">www.hortonprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	3 and 4 March 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school became part of the Sodbury Vale Federation with one other school in March 2022. The two schools share the same governing body.
- The school is a Voluntary Aided Church of England school and is part of the Diocese of Gloucester. The school received its last section 48 inspection in October 2017.
- 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.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the chair of the governing body, governors, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They also talked with parents.

- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority and of the diocese.
- Inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke with teachers.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of individual education plans for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils, formally and informally, about their learning and experiences at school.
- Inspectors observed informal times to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. Inspectors also looked at responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school policies, curriculum documents and SEND records.

### **Inspection team**

Anna Vrahimi, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ken Buxton

Ofsted Inspector

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