

Inspection of a good school: St. Edmund's Church of England Primary School

Fawkham Road, West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 6JP

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 April 2024

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils delight in attending this welcoming school. The staff are friendly, caring and supportive of pupils and families. Pupils form very positive relationships with one another. Older pupils look after younger pupils and show a genuine care for their wellbeing. Pupils learn about the school's values and live out the school's motto to 'shine their light'. Pupils enjoy spending time with Eve, the school dog, who helps pupils who feel anxious to settle well. They delight in caring for the school's three guinea pigs.

The school is keen for its pupils to achieve well. Pupils study a broad and interesting curriculum that inspires them to learn. They learn sign language when singing songs and celebrate festivals at the local church. They enjoy spending time in the library area, create detailed artwork in the art room and develop their teamwork in the forest school. As a result, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding well.

Pupils behave well. They know the school rules and follow them with pride. They are respectful to adults and to their friends. As one pupil said, 'the teachers have patience and always sort things out fairly.'

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

The school provides a curriculum that matches the needs and interests of the pupils well. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and support teachers in how to deliver the curriculum. The early years curriculum prepares children for their transition to key stage 1 effectively. Pupils in key stage 1 continue to learn through appropriate activities and develop their confidence as learners well. The school ensures that teachers' workload is manageable, enabling them to focus on their time in class. Governors ensure that the improvements needed are undertaken diligently.

The school is ambitious for its pupils. Children in the early years develop their knowledge and understanding effectively. They engage in activities that allow them to explore what they learn. Teachers use well-crafted questioning in class to check that pupils understand what is being learned. This helps teachers to identify and support pupils that may have fallen behind.

Staff identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. However, some pupils can struggle to work without adult support. This is because the adaptations needed to best support pupils are not always matched closely enough to the needs of the pupils in some subjects. This means that pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could in some subjects.

Pupils develop their reading and mathematical knowledge well. They become fluent readers and show a love of reading. The programme for phonics and reading is coherently constructed. Staff receive training that ensures that they are clear about what pupils need to learn. Pupils who read less frequently at home receive additional opportunities to read with adults in school. This helps pupils to develop their reading skills and keep up with their peers.

Pupils develop their mathematical knowledge well. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on what they have already learned. This helps pupils to secure their understanding and apply what they have learned before to new learning. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to embed their mathematical knowledge across subjects. For example, pupils analyse data in science and measure in design and technology.

Pupils behave well. They are attentive in class and work collaboratively with their peers. Children in the early years develop very strong bonds with one another. They take turns and enjoy learning alongside their friends. As one parent stated, 'Staff show a genuine care and support to see that children are happy and engaged.' The school has taken positive steps to improve the attendance of pupils. As a result, pupils' attendance is high.

The school provides a rich range of wider opportunities for pupils and families. Pupils engage in a variety of trips and also experience visitors to the school that enhance what they learn in class. For example, pupils visit local museums, places of worship and compete in sporting events with other schools. The range of clubs on offer are fulsome and are attended well by pupils. The school develops pupils' cultural understanding well. For example, pupils model the democratic process when voting for school council positions and raise funds for a range of local charities. The school provide support for parents. For example, fathers are encouraged into the school for 'who let the dads out?' coffee mornings. Parents of pupils with SEND attend parenting workshops. Activities such as these connect families to the life of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' adaptive strategies aimed at supporting pupils are not yet fully implemented. This means that not all pupils with SEND achieve as well as they could. The school needs to continue to embed strategies so that all pupils reach the ambitious end points across the school's curriculum.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 predecessor school West Kingsdown CE Primary School to be good in 13 and 14 November 2018.

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	130948
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10321917
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	179
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of trust	David Strachan
Executive Headteacher	Benjamin Hulme
Website	www.st-edmunds.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Compass Federation of schools. A federation with two schools including this school and St Pauls' Church of England Primary School.
- The executive headteacher leads across the two schools in the federation.
- The school is a Church of England (voluntary controlled) school and is part of the Diocese of Rochester.
- The school provides a breakfast club on site for up to 30 pupils.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, head of school, other leaders, and a range of staff at the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documents including those related to the governance of the school.
- The inspector considered the views of parents and carers through their responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector spoke to staff and pupils during the inspection and took account of staff responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.

Inspection team

Graham Chisnell, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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