

Inspection of a good school: St Margaret's, Collier Street Church of England Voluntary Controlled School

Collier Street, Marden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 9RR

Inspection date:

4 May 2022

Outcome

St Margaret's, Collier Street Church of England Voluntary Controlled School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Margaret's is a welcoming and supportive place for pupils to learn. Pupils are kind and respectful to each other. Staff's expectations of pupils are high. Older pupils relish the opportunities they have to support younger ones. Pupils feel safe and trust adults to help them solve any problems they may encounter. Leaders deal with any incidents of bullying quickly and well.

Pupils value the opportunities they have to develop and grow as individuals. They enjoy the many opportunities to explore their interests and talents. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about starting a school band, raising money for charity and linking with a school in Malawi. One pupil commented, 'There's something for everyone here.'

Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy lessons and understand the school's Christian values. They behave well and enjoy working together. They know the importance of tolerance and respect and say, 'It's okay to be different.' Pupils understand the world is a diverse place and enjoy learning about cultures and religions that are different to their own.

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

Leaders have made sure that pupils study a broad and balanced curriculum. They have high aspirations for pupils to achieve well.

Learning to read has been made a top priority and is at the heart of the curriculum. Leaders promote the love of reading well. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly and they have lots of engaging and imaginative stories read to them by adults. The well-resourced book corners and school library provide a wide range of interesting and appealing books for all pupils. Staff are well trained and know how to help pupils learn to

read. Children learn phonics from the start of Reception. Any pupils who struggle with their reading receive the support they need to help them keep up. As a result, pupils get off to a strong start in learning to read.

In mathematics, staff have secure subject knowledge. Across Years 1 to 6, pupils learn well because teachers plan sequences of lessons that help them build on what they already know. Staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need to learn well.

Leaders have ensured that there is clear curriculum planning for all subjects from Year 1 to Year 6. The precise knowledge and skills they intend pupils to learn are clearly identified. Teachers use this planning to design interesting and challenging sequences of lessons. Teachers check that pupils have remembered the most important content. Pupils can recall the things they have learned and understand important concepts from different subjects. Year 6 pupils eagerly recalled their learning in history. They were able to explain the significance of Alexander the Great and his impact as a leader.

Children in early years feel safe and happy. The early years curriculum helps them make a good start in some areas. For example, they learn to read and communicate well. In some other areas of the curriculum, there is a lack of clarity on what children should learn. This results in staff not being clear enough about the sequences of learning children should experience.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND. The COVID-19 pandemic hampered the way the school was able to work with the families of pupils with SEND. Leaders are now working to re-establish strong communication between the school and families. In reading and mathematics, pupils with SEND have their needs met well. However, leaders know that further work is required to make sure that the curriculum is adapted to meet these pupils' needs in all subjects.

The school provides pupils with a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. These include sports clubs, as well as opportunities to learn to cook, sing and perform. The challenges of the pandemic have hampered work in this area. However, the determined staff have worked to get things up and running again as soon as was possible.

The school is well led and managed. Governors have prioritised resources to help minimise the impact of the pandemic on pupils and staff. There is a strong culture of personal and professional support among staff. Leaders carefully consider the workload and well-being of the staff team. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make safeguarding a top priority. All members of staff are appropriately trained so that they understand how to keep pupils safe. Leaders make sure that regular updates are provided so that safeguarding remains at the front of everyone's minds. Staff report concerns swiftly and follow-up is thorough.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. The curriculum teaches pupils to have a strong understanding of how to stay safe online. For example, they know not to share passwords or give out personal information.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of learning, the early years curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced. This means that staff do not always help children to develop their knowledge and skills and build on what they already know and can do. Leaders need to continue to improve the early years curriculum so that staff know what knowledge and skills they should teach and when.
- Plans and support for pupils with SEND focus on reading and mathematics and do not sufficiently consider the help or curriculum adaptation that is required in other subjects. As a result, pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they could across the whole curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the effective provision for pupils with SEND in reading and mathematics is replicated for all subjects.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2017.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	118636
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10227657
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	121
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gareth Waterman
Headteacher	Paul Ryan
Website	www.collier-street.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A section 48 inspection took place on 4 July 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. Inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also heard some pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and other school staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered 36 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and

parents' free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke with some parents at the beginning of the school day.

- Inspectors met with staff to gather their views about the school. Meetings were held with groups of pupils to discuss their views about many different aspects of their school.

Inspection team

James Freeston, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Andrew Hogarth

Ofsted Inspector

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