

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Tunstall Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Tunstall Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1YG

---

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 May 2022

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are understandably very proud of their school. They enthuse about the variety of subjects, their responsibilities, and opportunities to develop interests. One pupil spoke of her enjoyment of helping new children to feel welcome during 'buddy times'.

Staff have high expectations. They develop strong relationships with pupils. Pupils feel comfortable, secure and well supported as a result. Caring adults and well-established routines in Reception Year mean that the youngest children adjust to school life happily. Parents say that their children have settled into school incredibly well.

Pupils welcome visitors warmly and politely. They work hard and say that everyone behaves very well. Pupils know that teachers will help sort out any minor disagreements between friends without fuss. One said, 'they listen to both sides of the story - we shake hands - we move on'. Leaders respond promptly to any concerns about bullying.

The school's Christian ethos, and its aim to be 'a place where everyone will flourish', lies at the heart of school life. Pupils learn the importance of courage, kindness, and personal responsibility. Parents speak highly of the school. One said, 'I feel very lucky that my child attends this school'.

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

The school's ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum is thoughtfully designed to make learning engaging and meaningful. Pupils learn a wide range of subjects and achieve well. They are very well prepared, both academically and personally, for the next stage of their education and for their future lives. The breadth of the curriculum is a particular strength.

An extensive range of clubs, activities and special events contribute to pupils' love of school and to their personal development. During the inspection, for example, pupils joined in enthusiastically with opportunities to sing and dance, while Year 6 pupils helped to serve guests who were enjoying lunch in one of the regular community events organised by the school.

The school's securely established and effective mathematics curriculum ensures that pupils achieve very well in this subject. Teachers explain new learning clearly. They use resources and examples well to help pupils to grasp the content. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are motivated to do well in mathematics. This is because teachers adapt the curriculum effectively so that each pupil is suitably challenged and experiences success. They use questioning well to check pupils' understanding. Regular opportunities for pupils to revisit and revise previous learning helps to strengthen their mathematical knowledge. Children in Reception Year develop an early understanding of mathematics through a wide range of activities. During the inspection, for instance, an adult used her discussion with children to check and develop their knowledge of shape and vocabulary while they were making 'mud pizzas'.

The school's phonics programme provides clear structure for the teaching of early reading skills. It is supplemented well by a range of high-quality resources, including reading books matched to the sounds pupils are learning. Much of the phonics teaching is of a high quality, and pupils become proficient readers as a result. However, some variations in staff subject knowledge have led to inconsistencies in the quality of phonics teaching. This means that pupils do not always learn as well as they could. The school fosters a love of reading well. Teachers read to their pupils regularly. The school's attractive and well-resourced library provides an appealing place for pupils to enjoy a book.

Most pupils behave extremely well in lessons. They listen carefully to their teachers, work hard, and behave responsibly. Occasionally, a few pupils lose focus. Adults usually address this quickly, so that pupils can get on with their work. Playtimes are calm and well-supervised occasions for pupils to relax, play, and socialise. Pupils enjoy having plenty of space. During the inspection, for example, a group of pupils chatted over lunch in the quiet area, while others chose more physically active pastimes.

The special educational needs leader has established robust procedures to identify and support pupils with SEND. She has developed strong links with parents. Their views, and those of their children, are given a high priority in identifying and planning support.

The headteacher provides clear and compassionate direction for the school. She and her leadership team work together constructively. Staff say that leaders are considerate of their well-being. They appreciate the practical steps leaders take to help them to meet deadlines and manage workload.

Governors are knowledgeable and committed advocates for the school. The chair of governors has developed robust systems to ensure that leaders are held to account effectively.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that implementation of the school's phonics programme may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders give pupils' safety a high priority. They have established reliable systems to ensure pupils' well-being. Leaders make sure that staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding matters. Staff are clear about what to do if they spot something that causes concern. They keep a careful eye on pupils' welfare and report any worries promptly. Leaders act swiftly where there are any concerns about a pupil's safety. They maintain strong links with agencies, such as children's services and the police. The school is secure and maintained to a high standard.

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

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

- The school's well-structured phonics programme provides a clear framework for teaching. There are some variations, however, in how well the programme is delivered across different phonics groups. Leaders should strengthen implementation of the phonics programme so that it is delivered to the same consistently high standard.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding on 3 and 4 March 2016.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118735
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211923
<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>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	420
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Dr Peter Gregory
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rebecca Andrews
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.tunstall.kent.sch.uk/">http://www.tunstall.kent.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 and 4 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has relocated since the previous inspection, moving to its new location in 2016. It occupies a purpose-built building situated in the same village as the original school building.
- The school has expanded to a two-form entry school since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2018. The school has two interim assistant heads currently.

## 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.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, assistant heads, and other members of staff. She spoke with the four governors, including the chair of the governing body. The

inspector also met with a local authority representative and had a telephone discussion with a diocesan representative.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, she met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, held a discussion with some pupils and looked at samples of work.
- A range of safeguarding records and documents were reviewed, including the single central register. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSLs.
- The inspector considered the views expressed by parents, staff and pupils in Ofsted's surveys. She spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their views of the school, as well as speaking with pupils informally during lunchtimes.

### **Inspection team**

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:  
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022