

Inspection of St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School

Becket Close, Birchanger Road, South Norwood, London SE25 5BN

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are polite and welcoming. They have positive relationships with each other based on mutual respect. Pupils who are kind to others are recognised with a special award. This is a diverse and inclusive school where pupils' differences are celebrated. Staff have high aspirations for all pupils.

Pupils are safe and have at least one adult they can talk to if they are worried. They appreciate having a counsellor on site they can go to with bigger issues.

Pupils behave well in class and around the school. Bullying does sometimes occur. When it does happen, it is dealt with seriously by staff, although it is not centrally recorded. Pupils enjoy the large outdoor area. A choice of play activities is on offer. Pupils make good use of their reading gardens where a broad selection of reading material is made available for them at playtimes.

A wide selection of clubs are also provided, and these are in high demand. These range from sports clubs to art and music groups. Pupils are proud to represent their school in competitions against other schools. Responsibilities across the school are encouraged. Digital leaders and those in the school council are active members of the school community.

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

Pupils follow a broad curriculum. It matches the ambition of the national curriculum and helps pupils achieve. Leaders have identified the overall knowledge pupils need to learn for each subject. Units are typically well organised and delivered. In history, units follow a chronological order so that pupils can make comparisons effectively. For example, pupils can explain how the Ancient Romans used a battle formation which built upon Ancient Greek practice. Leaders have made sure that the curriculum focuses on key concepts such as 'invasion' and 'settlement' across all year groups. These key concepts are revisited so that children are able to remember them better.

In science, curriculum maps identify the key knowledge and skills. There is a clear progression of different topics. Lessons on plants and electricity, for example, build on previous learning. In Reception, children learn about planting seeds. Adults ask them, 'Where shall we put the plant now to help it grow?' Older pupils investigate the way in which water is transported within plants. Teachers check pupils' scientific understanding at the start of units and throughout the lessons.

In mathematics, leaders have identified that fluency and reasoning should be a priority. Through daily, quick recall practice, pupils become fluent in using the four operations.

While clear strengths are in place throughout the curriculum, there are some key areas that show more is to be done. For example, in history, assessment does not

consider the security of pupils' vocabulary knowledge. In mathematics, the school does not have a bespoke calculation policy. In physical education, planning between external coaches and class teachers is not coordinated as thoroughly as it might be.

The school has a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. It is well sequenced and taught consistently. Starting in Reception, children are familiar with the technical language used to help their learning. Children are grouped so that teaching is pitched at the appropriate instructional level. Reading books match the sounds that children know, as well as challenging them further. Children are identified for additional interventions. Pupils make good progress from their varying starting points. Staff promote the love of reading for pleasure. Pupils talk about their favourite books and authors.

Leaders have carefully chosen a programme to deliver relationships and sex education. Pupils refer to what they have learned when discussing the positive relationships between girls and boys at the school. They can talk confidently about how they would respond in different situations regarding peer pressure and puberty.

Pupils behave well in class and around the school. They have positive interactions in the playground. They have regular opportunities to practise their democratic rights. They vote for the pupils who will represent them in the school council. They weekly vote on current issues in class.

Staff plan trips and invite visitors to help strengthen pupils' experience in different subjects. Pupils have a real sense of pride in music. They enjoy their lessons, and many of them choose to further their skills by learning to play different instruments. They perform regularly to an audience, including in the school choir.

Pupils value the care they get from staff. Interactions are positive across the school. Staff are very proud to work at the school. Most staff are long serving. They feel supported by senior leaders. Their workload is taken into account, and adjustments are made when necessary. Governors carry out their statutory responsibilities. They too are proud of the school and look out for the well-being of all the staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have embedded a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Rigorous systems are in place to identify concerns. Pupils who need early help are provided with the appropriate support. Staff receive regular training and have a good understanding of how to raise concerns.

Staff have established strong links with the local authority and external agencies. These ensure that help is readily available.

Leaders and governors thoroughly manage the safe recruitment of staff. Procedures are rigorous and checked regularly.

Pupils are aware of how to keep safe, including online. They are taught about appropriate, positive relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although leaders have ensured their curriculum is broad and balanced, not all subjects are clearly planned and assessed as well as they could be. The clarity and quality of curriculum plans are variable. In some subjects, there is more of an emphasis on skills, and assessment of key knowledge is not in place. Subsequently, teachers are not always sure of what the gaps are in pupils' knowledge. Leaders must make sure that all subjects are coherently planned and sequenced. They must identify specific cumulative knowledge and clear end-points they can assess pupils against.

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	138612
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10204495
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	411
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Humphreys
Headteacher	Noel Campbell
Website	www.thomasbecket.croydon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, this school has become a stand-alone academy.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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 held meetings with senior leaders from the school. They met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. A virtual meeting was held with the school improvement partner and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors met pupils to understand their views on the school. They also looked at the pupil surveys.
- Inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, science and physical education. As part of the deep dives, inspectors met

with leaders to discuss curriculum plans, visited lessons with senior leaders, met with teachers and looked at pupils' work. They also looked at documents and work in geography, music and computing.

- Inspectors considered the well-being and behaviour of pupils during lesson visits and around the school. They observed pupils as they arrived at school in the morning.
- Inspectors considered the effectiveness of safeguarding through discussions with leaders, teachers and support staff. They looked at records relating to safeguarding, including pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors spoke to most of the staff about their workload and well-being. They also looked at the parent surveys and talked to a number of parents at the school gate.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide of documentation provided by the school. This included the school improvement plan, school evaluation, curriculum documentation and school policies.

Inspection team

Aliki Constantopoulou, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Simon Jackson	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Neary	Ofsted Inspector

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