

Inspection of a good school: St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Halstead

Mathews Close, Halstead, Essex CO9 2BH

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 September 2022

Outcome

St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Halstead continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Andrew's Church of England Primary School are happy. They say that the school is special because adults are kind. Daily collective worship supports the school's aim to 'cultivate a love of life and learning in all children'. During worship, pupils learn about values such as celebrating difference and respect. Pupils are welcoming to those who join the school. They are inclusive to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils have a positive attitude to their learning and are determined to try their best in all they do. This includes reading. Pupils value the opportunities to enrich their learning outside the classroom, including in the forest school area.

Behaviour is calm in lessons and at break times. Pupils have a positive attitude to their learning and want to do well. There is little disruption to learning. On the rare occasions that pupils do not meet the high behaviour expectations, they return to their learning quickly. Bullying seldom happens in the school, but if it does, pupils trust adults to make things right. Pupils feel safe and look after each other.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. While aspects of the curriculum are at different stages of development, leaders ensure the plans outline what pupils will learn and when they will learn it. The learning is mapped effectively from the early years through to Year 6. This supports teachers to understand and build pupils' knowledge over time.

Leaders have prioritised reading. The phonics curriculum is taught consistently from the start of Reception. Pupils demonstrate that they have learned what they need to become fluent readers. This includes pupils with SEND. When pupils fall behind with their reading,

they are given targeted support to help them to catch up quickly. Pupils have a passion for reading and talk enthusiastically about the books they have read. They describe their love of being able to use their imagination when they read.

Teachers have a clear understanding of what pupils should learn when. Assessment is used to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge, and this informs targeted support with individual pupils where this is necessary.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils with SEND. Staff use individual plans effectively to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve as well as they can. Pupils with SEND work alongside their peers, with teachers making adaptations to their teaching to support these pupils. For example, in physical education, one pupil was able to take part and access the same learning as other pupils by changing the type of ball being used.

While leaders have planned a secure and ambitious curriculum, it is new and yet to be fully embedded in all areas. There are a number of curriculum leaders who are new to their roles. While current established leaders are supporting those leadership responsibilities to monitor and evaluate the curriculum effectively, this work is in progress. Leaders have secure plans in place to ensure this work is continued.

Children get off to a good start in early years. The curriculum is clearly planned to prepare children for their future learning. Use of the outdoor environment is maximised through planned curriculum-mapped challenge-based activities. These activities support children to gain the knowledge that they are expected to learn. This prepares them well to succeed in Year 1 and beyond.

Behaviour routines are clear and high expectations are high. Children in early years demonstrate this despite having only just joined the school. Pupils behave well in lessons and are calm and orderly around the school.

Leaders have carefully considered the development of the wider curriculum. This gives pupils broad and rich experiences to develop their knowledge and skills. For example, Year 6 pupils explained how they developed new skills such as teamwork on their residential activity week. Assemblies teach pupils about different faiths and cultures. Pupils talk confidently about different religions, for example Hinduism and Buddhism. Other pupils explained how they used their geography and science knowledge when they visited Colchester Zoo and Castle. Visitors to school support learning about online safety and water safety.

Leaders are mindful of staff's workload. Staff report that workload is high, but they are supported by leaders and by each other. Those responsible for governance understand the challenges that currently face the school. They know the school well and use this knowledge to challenge leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding records are detailed and show that leaders follow through issues in an appropriate and timely manner. Leaders undertake appropriate checks on all adults who work or volunteer in the school. Staff and those responsible for governance are well trained and understand local issues that pose a risk to pupils.

Pupils learn about respectful relationships and consent at an age-appropriate level. They say that they trust adults in school will listen and help them with any worries that they have.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While the curriculum intent is very clear and it is being implemented well, a number of subject leaders are new to the role. Leaders know that they need to continue work that has been started to support new leaders to carry out their roles effectively. Leaders need to provide support and training to enable new leaders to check the quality of the curriculum and check that pupils are remembering what they need to know for the next stage of their learning.

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 St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Halstead to be good in January 2015.

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](#)' 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	145523
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10238297
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	218
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Michael Gee
Headteacher	Bridgette Gough
Website	www.st-andrews-halstead.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school has been part of the All Saints Academy Trust since April 2018. Previously the school was known as St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Halstead.
- There is one other primary school in the All Saints Academy Trust: Feering Primary School, and the headteacher is the executive headteacher of both schools.
- Some members of staff, including curriculum leaders, work across both trust schools.
- The school is part of the diocese of Chelmsford.
- The religious character of the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act (2005) in March 2016 and was judged to be good.
- Leaders do not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into three subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. 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 held meetings with the headteacher, (including in her role as the designated safeguarding lead), the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, the early years leader, teaching staff and support staff.
- Remote meetings were conducted with a group of Year 6 pupils who were on a residential activity week, and with the leader responsible for the personal, social and health education curriculum.
- The inspector met with three members of the governing body.
- The inspector reviewed the school's central record and evaluated a range of safeguarding records.
- The inspector reviewed and considered 42 responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including 45 free text responses. The 34 responses to the staff survey and the 15 responses to the Ofsted pupil survey were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Wayne Jarvis

His Majesty's Inspector

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