

Inspection of St Michael's East Wickham Church of England Primary School

Wrotham Road, Welling, Kent DA16 1LS

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They said that teachers are caring and helpful. Pupils are safe and happy here. They are taught to be tolerant and to make sure no one is left out.

Leaders have high expectations which are shared by all staff. Leaders have created a positive environment in which bullying is not tolerated. They have introduced a variety of new approaches to tackle bullying. These include ensuring that pupils and the whole school community understand how to raise concerns. Staff deal with bullying quickly and effectively, including any concerns related to aggression or discriminative language. The number of bullying incidents has dropped considerably over the last two years. Pupils appreciate the additional equipment available at playtimes.

Parent representatives have been recently introduced. Parents and carers found this useful to communicate any concerns and raise questions regularly with leaders and in helping them to find out more about the school.

Leaders ensure that pupils have meaningful opportunities to understand how to become responsible citizens. For example, pupils were proud to be elected as members of the school council. Anti-bullying ambassadors take their roles seriously. Older pupils look forward to residential trips. Pupils enjoyed recently organised visits to the zoo and a workshop on Anglo-Saxons.

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

In most subjects, leaders have thought about the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that subject content is sequenced logically, beginning from early years. Teachers recap pupils' prior knowledge before they introduce new concepts. For instance, in mathematics, pupils used recall activities to secure their calculation strategies.

In some subjects, leaders' curricular thinking does not identify the important knowledge pupils need to learn. In these subjects, teaching focuses too much on activities rather than on subject-specific skills. In history, leaders do not build on key concepts over time. For example, leaders do not embed pupils' understanding of different periods of time. This limits pupils' deeper understanding in these subjects.

Staff assess pupils' understanding effectively. They respond to any misconceptions during lessons and adapt planning accordingly. This helps them identify and address any gaps in pupils' understanding quickly. Leaders have made staff training a priority. Staff are confident in teaching all subjects. Subject leaders receive regular professional development opportunities to help them develop their expertise and that of other staff. Staff in early years know all of the children's starting points and provide them with tailored opportunities through which they can thrive.

Leaders ensure that support for pupils with SEND is a high priority. Leaders work closely with outside agencies to identify pupils' needs. They make appropriate adaptations to teaching and resources so that pupils with SEND have full access to the curriculum. Leaders have made sure that staff receive appropriate training to best support pupils they work with. They routinely communicate with parents and keep them informed about their child's progress.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. They have trained staff to embed a new phonics programme consistently, including in Reception. Staff check pupils' phonics understanding regularly. Pupils who fall behind in their reading receive effective help to catch up quickly. Books that pupils read closely match the sounds they know. Pupils talked about reading with enthusiasm, including a range of texts and authors.

Pupils enjoy their personal, social and health education curriculum. Through this, they learn about healthy relationships. Pupils are encouraged to keep physically and mentally healthy. They are taught to treat others with respect and acceptance, including to celebrate diversity in the local community. Pupils consider different views and beliefs in a mature way. Although pupils have access to a few clubs, the take up of these is not high. Planned school visits are not as frequent as they were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff were overwhelmingly happy to work at the school. They appreciated that leaders looked out for their well-being. Leaders make sure that staff workload is manageable. The governing body and the multi-academy trust leaders provide the school with challenge and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a positive culture of safeguarding. They ensure that effective arrangements are in place to identify and report concerns. All staff know what signs to look out for and how to help pupils should they have concerns. Leaders know the local area and families well. They engage with outside agencies to best support these families. Members of the governing body understand their statutory roles and play a key part in safer recruitment of staff.

Pupils report worries and concerns to a trusted adult or through the 'worry boxes' in classrooms. They are taught to keep safe, including online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders do not identify precisely the specific knowledge that pupils need to learn. As a result, teaching in these subjects focuses too much on activities rather than subject-specific skills. Leaders must identify specific cumulative knowledge with clear end points so that pupils develop secure subject knowledge over time.
- Although pupils participate in some school outings and attend clubs arranged by staff, the offer of both is not high. Not many pupils attend the clubs that are currently available. Leaders should consider how they can increase their offer, providing more opportunities for pupils to broaden their experiences.

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	144889
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10241139
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	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carole Pellicci
Executive Headteacher	Amanda Blackburn
Website	www.stmichaels-eastwickham-ce-school.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 March 2019 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education Multi-Academy Trust. It joined this trust in September 2017.
- This school does not use any alternate provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- 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. They met with members of the governing body, including the chair. They also spoke with the chief operating officer and the education partner.
- Inspectors met pupils to understand their views about the school.
- Inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons with senior leaders, met with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the behaviour of pupils during lesson visits and around the school. They observed pupils as they arrived at school in the morning. Inspectors looked at behaviour and bullying records, and leaders' analysis of these.
- 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 staff about their workload and well-being. They considered the views of staff, pupils and parents, including responses to Ofsted's online surveys.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation provided by the school. This included curriculum documentation and school policies.

Inspection team

Aliki Constantopoulou, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Matea Marcinko	His 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022