

Inspection of a good school: Minster Church of England Primary School

Molineux Road, Minster-in-Thanel, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 4PS

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 January 2023

Outcome

Minster Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere at Minster. Pupils, parents and staff are proud to be part of 'Team Minster'. This generates a real sense of belonging, underpinned by the school's values. Pupils describe the school as a fun place to be with lots of opportunities. One parent said: 'Minster is a wonderful school with a real sense of community. Staff are always approachable and the school has a home-from-home vibe.'

Pupils are very happy at school and enjoy their learning. They thrive in a caring environment. Everyone is included. Pupils are supported and encouraged to do their best. They rise to teachers' high expectations to flourish personally, socially and academically.

Pupils behave well and feel safe and secure. Their well-being is a priority for everyone. Staff know the pupils very well and there are positive, trusting relationships. Pupils know that staff will listen to them if they have any concerns or worries, including about bullying if it should happen.

Parents are very positive about the school. Typical views were summed up by a comment from one parent: 'The school feels like a family and they genuinely care about the development of the children in their care.'

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

Leaders are unwavering in their work to ensure that all pupils achieve well, succeed as learners and develop as fully rounded individuals. The curriculum is inspiring, ambitious and motivates pupils well. One parent echoed the views of many with the comment: 'Pupils are inspired, enthused and motivated by all of the learning that they have done. They are well prepared for their transition into secondary school and they certainly are ready to face the world.'

The curriculum develops progressively from Reception, so that pupils build on what they have learned before. The 'Minster Learning Model' is used consistently across the school.

This is effective in helping pupils 'learn how to learn' in all subjects. It is currently particularly effective in supporting pupils' achievement in mathematics. Teachers' strong subject knowledge means that through checking pupils' understanding, they inform their teaching and make skilful adjustments to meet pupils' needs. This includes how teachers adapt tasks and lessons to make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Staff are quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. The curriculum is equally ambitious for these pupils as it is for others.

The majority of pupils achieve well in reading. Pupils learn phonics skills effectively through a recently introduced structured programme. It begins in Reception and is built on in Years 1 and 2. Children quickly learn letters and new sounds and enjoy learning. They read books that match the sounds they know. Younger pupils who are falling behind are given additional help to catch up quickly. Leaders are correctly checking the effectiveness of the new programme and ensuring that teachers are becoming increasingly confident in its delivery.

Reading for enjoyment is promoted throughout the school. Teachers regularly read to pupils and introduce them to a range of quality texts. Books chosen often promote pupils' awareness and discussion of issues, such as cultural diversity, equality and difference. As they get older, pupils are encouraged to read frequently. Most develop as confident, fluent readers who have the skills to access the wider curriculum. The extra support for weaker readers in key stage 2 is not consistently effective. Therefore, a few pupils in key stage 2 are not developing their reading skills as quickly as they could.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities. Leaders are determined that pupils have opportunities to broaden their experiences beyond their immediate environment and culture. These include a wide range of clubs, trips and visitors to school. The performing arts have a high profile, encouraging pupils to grow in self-esteem and confidence. Pupils are full of enthusiasm about participating in 'Young Voices' at the O2 Arena and are proud of their achievements. Pupils are reflective about their own beliefs and are respectful, understanding and accepting of others. They value diversity. A group agreed that 'You shouldn't judge people by how they are on the outside, it's what's on the inside that matters.'

Staff feel valued and proud to work at the school. They appreciate working in a very supportive team, led by highly effective leaders. Staff appreciate the care that leaders and governors take to manage their workload and support their well-being. Staff are great role models for the values that are central to the school's ethos.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' well-being and safety are priorities for everyone. Staff and governors are fully trained in safeguarding matters and understand their responsibilities. Staff know pupils well and so are quick to spot any signs that a child may be at risk of harm. They know the procedures to follow if they have a concern. Leaders ensure that any necessary action is taken quickly. They seek advice from specialist services where appropriate. Pupils learn

how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Leaders' record-keeping is thorough. The required checks are made on adults who work in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Catch up for weaker readers in key stage 2 is not consistently effective. Specific gaps in pupils' learning are not always accurately identified and addressed. This is because, unlike in the early years and key stage 1, weaker readers in key stage 2 have not consistently followed a programme that develops reading skills in a systematic and sequential way. As a result, these pupils are not always learning to develop their reading skills as quickly as they could. Leaders need to make sure that staff know precisely where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge to ensure that reading skills are effectively developed.

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 the school to be good in November 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.

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	118696
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10256469
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	389
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Darren Philpot
Headteacher	Wendy Stone (Executive headteacher) Paul McCarthy (Head of school)
Website	www.minster-ramsgate.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In April 2019, Minster federated with Monkton Church of England Primary School. Both schools in the federation share a governing body. The previous headteacher is now the executive headteacher of the Minster and Monkton Federation. The previous deputy headteacher at Minster is now the head of school.
- Minster is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Canterbury. The school's last section 48 inspection was in 2015. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place within eight years of the date of this inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher and head of school, the deputy and assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, other leaders and staff.

- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair. She also held telephone conversations with the local authority school improvement adviser and a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, talked to some pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum information in other subjects and observed some pupils reading to teachers or teaching assistants.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector spoke with leaders, staff and pupils. She looked at the single central record of recruitment checks and safeguarding records. Throughout the inspection, the inspector considered and checked the culture of safeguarding within the school.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. She talked to pupils about their learning and gathered pupils' views about what behaviour is like and whether they feel safe in school.
- The inspector considered the responses from Ofsted's online surveys for staff, pupils and parents.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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