

Inspection of St Giles' Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Great Maplestead, Halstead, Essex CO9 2RG

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They are polite and courteous, and grow into respectful young people. Pupils celebrate the differences between themselves and each other. The culture of mutual respect between everyone in school shines through.

Pupils have many and varied opportunities to discover the world outside of Great Maplestead. These opportunities, such as visits to historical sites, raising funds for local charities and performing at musical events, contribute well to preparing pupils to be active citizens of the future. Pupils are supported effectively to become resilient when faced with challenges.

Although bullying is rare, pupils know they can turn to adults for help. If they fall out with a friend, pupils are well supported by adults to find solutions to help resolve problems. Adults care deeply for pupils and keep them safe in school. The school's values of respect, trust, love and forgiveness are evident in the way pupils behave and interact with one another. Older pupils take their 'buddy' roles seriously. They take care of children in Reception, helping them find their feet in school when they start.

Pupils live up to the high expectations adults have of them. They work hard in class and try their best, learning well while having fun.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum which broadens pupils' horizons. They know the needs of pupils and take every opportunity to widen their experiences, raising pupils' aspirations and helping them learn about different cultures and diversity. Within the curriculum, leaders have been clear on the important knowledge and skills they expect pupils to know and remember, and by when.

Teachers receive high-quality training to help them teach the curriculum well. They have strong subject knowledge and give pupils tasks to check that they remember what they are taught over longer periods of time. Consequently, pupils develop detailed knowledge in many subjects.

Stories, rhymes and poems are the bedrock of children's time in Reception. The youngest children learn and practise many new words. They develop a love of stories. Older pupils enjoy reading the wide range of books in the school's well-stocked library. Leaders have recently introduced a new, ambitious phonics programme. This ensures that most pupils learn to read well. Some pupils who find learning to read tricky do not always receive the precise support they need. This is because not all staff have the required knowledge of phonics to ensure they support these pupils well enough.

Leaders are skilled at identifying pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND learn the same wide curriculum as their peers. Teachers make changes to the activities pupils with SEND carry out so they receive full access to the curriculum.

Pupils access a wide and ambitious personal development programme. Through rich opportunities, pupils learn how they can make a difference in their local area and further afield. Some pupils recently worked to raise awareness of people in the world who are less fortunate than themselves. Others highlighted the small actions everyone in school can take to help the environment. Pupils develop a rich understanding of people from different cultures and faiths. Many learn musical instruments, such as the ukulele, saxophone or piano. Some pupils find these instruments tricky to master, but show great determination to keep practising.

Adults help pupils understand how to look after their mental health. Pupils understand the reasons for keeping healthy and the steps they can take to do this. Adults are on hand to provide more tailored support to pupils and their families if they need it. The relationships and sex education and health education curriculum ensures pupils are well prepared for their future.

Pupils enjoy lessons. They pay close attention to adults. There is very little disruption, which means pupils concentrate well. Children in Reception learn from an early age how to get along with one another. Adults are expert in how the youngest children learn and develop. They provide well-designed activities to help children improve their social and emotional skills. Children in Reception are prepared well for their move to Year 1.

Governors work strategically. They are supportive, while being ambitious for the school to continue to improve. They carry out their duties well, such as looking after the school's finances and checking leaders do all they can to keep pupils safe.

Leaders take great care to manage teachers' workload. Teachers value the training they receive. They have ample opportunities to learn, and grow their careers in school and across the federation.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils are identified and properly supported so they can thrive. This includes working with outside agencies if this is needed. Staff know how to report any safeguarding concerns, and do this promptly when the need arises. Regular training and updates ensure there is a culture of vigilance in the school. Leaders carry out all pre-employment checks thoroughly.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe. They have an age-appropriate understanding of how to use the internet safely. Older pupils learn about healthy relationships and learn how to seek support if they are worried about anything.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of weaker readers do not receive the precise support they need to help them to catch up. This is because some adults do not have the required knowledge to deliver the newly introduced phonics programme. Leaders should ensure that they provide training for staff so that effective support is provided for all pupils who need extra help in learning to read.

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	115068
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10255063
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	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Penny Doe
Headteacher	Jinnie Nichols
Website	www.sggm.sgasa.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is federated with two other local schools, and the executive headteacher leads all three schools.
- The school has a Christian religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, music and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.

- The lead inspector spoke to leaders and pupils about several other subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the executive deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinators and the early years leader. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and held separate telephone conversations with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record and reviewed safeguarding paperwork and systems. Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers, support staff, members of the governing body and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in school.
- Inspectors considered 22 responses, along with 13 free-text comments, to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents. There were no responses to the pupil or staff surveys.

Inspection team

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alex Hayes

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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