

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Wanstead Church School

Church Path, Wanstead, London E11 2SS

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 January 2023

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

There is a strong sense of community in this small primary school. Staff know the pupils and their families well. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. Younger pupils look up to older pupils. All pupils in Year 6 have leadership roles, including as part of the eco-team and as playground leaders and digital leaders.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils in the school. All pupils study a broad curriculum of subjects. In class, pupils behave well. They listen to their teachers and each other. Pupils are calm and polite as they move around the school. The playground is lively and welcoming.

Pupils enjoy a range of educational outings. These include visits to local museums, outdoor adventure centres and residential trips for older pupils. Leaders organise a range of popular school clubs, including art, coding, chess and sports clubs. Pupils make the most of these.

Pupils are taught about staying safe, including online, in computing and through the wellness and well-being curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily, maintain an active lifestyle and keep physically and mentally healthy.

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

In the last year, leaders have introduced a new and ambitious curriculum. Leaders have identified the key knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn. They have thought about and decided on the order in which key content should be taught to help pupils to build up their knowledge and understanding.

The development of the curriculum is further forward in some subjects than in others. Leaders have thought carefully about the new mathematics curriculum. Staff teach mathematics with confidence. The teaching of early mathematics is effective. In art, pupils now learn about a broad range of contemporary, traditional and modern artists. In subjects where curriculum development is not as far forward, pupils do not build as deep an understanding of key subject content and concepts.

Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. They use recall activities regularly to check what pupils know and can remember. This helps pupils to make links in their learning and retain information in their long-term memory. At times, the work that teachers set pupils to do is not well matched to what they need to learn. When this happens, pupils struggle to learn and memorise key knowledge and skills.

In lessons, teachers check pupils' understanding and address any knowledge gaps as they arise. Sometimes, teachers confuse pupils when they introduce new knowledge and subject-specific vocabulary too soon and before prior knowledge is securely learned. When this happens, pupils struggle to recall their learning with accuracy.

Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy taking on roles on the school council, worship council and as senior student leaders. Leaders ensure that pupils' broader personal development is developed strongly. Pupils are taught about emotional resilience, the merits of goal-setting and the value of effort.

Pupils work hard in class and love to learn. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are clear, and teachers encourage pupils to behave well from the time they join the school in the early years. Should pupils become silly or distracted, teachers are quick to remind them of the rules so that learning is not disrupted. Teachers encourage children in the early years to play independently. They help children to learn important school routines, such as how to pack away at the end of activities.

A strong reading culture is evident across the school. Leaders have recently introduced a new phonics programme. Staff have had the training they need to deliver this well. Teachers model sounds accurately and make regular checks to ensure that pupils are keeping up. Pupils at risk of falling behind get the support they need to become confident, fluent readers. Pupils practise reading using books that closely match the sounds that they have learned. Across the school, pupils develop a love of reading. All pupils in the school practise reading through the school's 'reading buddies' initiative.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the support they need to learn alongside their peers. Teachers know how to help these pupils to access the curriculum in the classroom. Adults who support pupils with SEND are well trained.

Staff are very positive about the actions leaders take to help them to manage their workload. Leaders engage well with staff and ask them for their views when making decisions. The governing body and leaders are mindful of the pressures on staff. They find ways to support staff well-being. Leaders support teachers in the early stages of their careers to develop the knowledge and skills they need in the classroom.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know the safeguarding issues that may arise within the local area. Leaders ensure there is a vigilant culture of safeguarding at the school. Staff know how to spot the signs of pupils who are at risk of harm. The procedures for reporting concerns are well understood and followed. Those responsible for safeguarding engage with external agencies to make sure that pupils, and their families, get the help they need.

Pupils are taught how to keep safe, including online and in their local area. They have a strong understanding of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Pupils are confident that a trusted adult in the school would help them deal with any worries.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, new subject-specific concepts, knowledge and vocabulary are not introduced with sufficient clarity. When this is the case, pupils struggle to understand what has been taught and do not remember it accurately. Leaders should ensure that teachers take a rigorous approach to the introduction of new content and support pupils to learn subject-specific knowledge and vocabulary securely over time.
- Leaders have introduced a new curriculum this year and some foundation subjects need further development to ensure that they are suitably ambitious for pupils. At times, the work given to pupils does not securely enable pupils to achieve the ambition of the planned curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the new curriculum is embedded across the school, and that series of lessons and the work given to pupils contribute well to the curriculum intent.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in July 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102841
<b>Local authority</b>	Redbridge
<b>Inspection number</b>	10257101
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kate Spencer Ellis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Natalie Denchfield
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wansteadchurchsch.co.uk">www.wansteadchurchsch.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 and 6 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in January 2019.
- The school has a Church of England religious character and operates within the Diocese of Chelmsford. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in March 2017.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- 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.
- During the inspection, leaders spoke with the headteacher and a range of members of the wider staff and the local governing body, including the chair of governors and the church rector.
- To evaluate the quality of education at the school, inspectors conducted deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and art. They met with subject leaders and classroom

teachers and visited a sample of lessons. They also reviewed the work of pupils and met with pupils to discuss their learning.

- Inspectors looked at a range of school documentation, including records of behaviour and safeguarding, school development documents and records of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke to staff about their workload and well-being. They considered the views of staff and pupils through Ofsted's online surveys. They also considered the responses submitted by parents and carers to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Annabel Davies, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Bryant

Ofsted Inspector

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