

# Inspection of an outstanding school: St Bede's School

Carlton Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 2LQ

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Inspection dates:

28 and 29 March 2023

## Outcome

St Bede's School continues to be an outstanding school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They are unfailingly respectful to each other, to staff and to visitors. Pupils are happy and feel safe. Leaders have put in place excellent pastoral care. Pupils know there is always someone they can go to for help. Bullying is very rare and it is swiftly and effectively dealt with by staff when it does occur.

The positive attitude of pupils means that lessons are very rarely disrupted. They enjoy their time in class and describe their lessons as 'inspirational'. The content of these inspirational lessons reflects the high expectations that staff have for what pupils can accomplish. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged, achieve very highly.

Pupils have many opportunities to both develop and discover interests. This includes an innovative 'elective' programme in Year 8. Pupils select from a wide array of topics which go beyond the usual curriculum. This allows pupils to personalise what they study while still having an excellent common curriculum. Leaders have also ensured that pupils throughout the school benefit from well-chosen visits, clubs and opportunities to support their community.

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

Leaders in subjects across the school have created an ambitious curriculum. They have identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn that will allow them to reach challenging end points. This curriculum is very well sequenced and teachers make frequent links back to previous lessons. This allows pupils to confidently discuss what they have learned and to apply this prior learning to new situations. Teachers put in place well-targeted adaptations to support pupils with SEND. These pupils are then able to achieve the same ambitious goals as their peers. Teachers are able to do this because of the work they do with leaders to identify the specific needs that pupils have. The monitoring of action plans for pupils with SEND by leaders is exemplary. This excellent support for pupils with SEND continues into the sixth form.

A similarly rigorous approach is put in place to support pupils who join the school without the knowledge to read fluently and with confidence. Leaders work with staff to identify the pupils who need help and then to work out the barriers they face. Intervention is well targeted and timely. It is delivered by well-trained staff who are knowledgeable about how to support struggling readers. Leaders effectively evaluate the impact that any support has. As a result, weaker readers quickly catch up with their peers.

Pupils, including those in the sixth form, achieve very highly. This can be seen in published exam results and also in the work produced by current pupils. Work in the creative arts is of an especially high standard. Throughout the school, teachers model high expectations of pupils' work. In lessons, teachers skilfully break down the steps that pupils need to go through to achieve these excellent outcomes. Teachers have a very high level of subject knowledge and expertise. They use this to provide pupils with explanations that are rich in details which bring the subject to life.

As well as strong academic outcomes, leaders have also focused on the pupils' broader development. There is a well-planned curriculum for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Pupils receive age-appropriate advice on relationships and sex education. Students in the sixth form appreciate the way that the guidance they receive from staff is tailored to their needs and experiences. This includes an excellent package of careers advice and support with their post-16 options. Careers education is also very strong in the lower school. Pupils with SEND receive additional high-quality support. All receive vocational advice and support with their academic aspirations.

Pupils across the school are tolerant of differences and have a good understanding of life in modern Britain. These things are features of their PSHE curriculum as well as throughout the life of the school. Leaders give pupils many opportunities to be part of the wider community. Pupils engage in a lot of fundraising for charities. Pupils also carry out leadership responsibilities in the school. Students in the sixth form regularly support with activities in the lower school and are involved in helping pupils with their reading and working alongside form tutors to provide mentoring.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, work very closely with staff to identify training needs and to put in place support to reduce workload and improve well-being. Staff are able to focus their time on the activities that will have the greatest impact on the pupils at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive thorough training in how to identify pupils at risk of harm. Leaders monitor the impact of this training and use it to inform future work. Leaders also put in place additional training for staff to support them with their specific roles. When pupils need help, leaders ensure that it happens quickly and effectively. They are persistent in securing help from other agencies.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including keeping themselves safe online and in relationships. Leaders use knowledge of their local context to ensure that the information pupils receive meets their needs.

## 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 January 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>	125278
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10242488
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1922
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	303
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Iain Maclean
<b>Headteacher</b>	Adam Powell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-bedes.surrey.sch.uk">www.st-bedes.surrey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	18 and 19 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since 2020.
- The school's population has increased over recent years and the school buildings have been expanded to accommodate this.
- The school currently uses two registered alternative providers.
- The school is an ecumenical school. As a voluntary-aided school, it benefits from the support of the Arundel and Brighton Catholic Diocese and the Southwark Anglican Diocese. The local Free Churches joined the partnership in 1992.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was in November 2017. It is expecting its next Section 48 inspection within the next two years.

## 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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders, including the headteacher, special educational needs coordinator and other senior leaders. The lead inspector also met with governors, a representative of the local authority and members of the two dioceses.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, art, history, science and geography. As part of the deep dive into art they also looked at photography. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 single central register was checked, and the lead inspector spoke to the designated safeguarding lead and members of the safeguarding team about their approaches to safeguarding. They also sampled case studies and documentation and spoke with a range of staff and pupils about their knowledge of safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff and considered their views through the confidential online staff survey.
- Inspectors met with pupils formally and informally around the school, in lessons and at social times. Inspectors took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey.

## Inspection team

Mark Enser, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrew Morrison

Ofsted Inspector

Helen Middleton

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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