

Inspection of a good school: St Dunstan's Cheam CofE Primary School

Anne Boleyn's Walk, Cheam, Sutton, Surrey SM3 8DF

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 April 2023

Outcome

St Dunstan's Cheam CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy here, and proud of their school. They enjoy the many opportunities to take a lead. House captains perform a variety of roles which support their peers and contribute to the smooth running of the school. For example, they help the youngest pupils collect their lunch, and take phone messages in the office.

Staff have high expectations for the way that pupils should behave and engage in their learning. Most pupils meet these expectations. They show positive attitudes towards their learning and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in every aspect of school life. Bullying is rare. When it does occur, leaders deal with it effectively and swiftly. Pupils are treated with fairness and respect. They are confident to report any worries they may have. This ensures that they feel safe, and are kept safe, in school.

Pupils behave well in their classrooms and outside in the playground. They play safely, and are supported by adults to resolve any issues that arise. Pupils enjoy the wider opportunities that they have, such as school visits. Year 6 pupils are particularly excited about their upcoming residential trip to the Brecon Beacons.

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

Leaders have put in place a well-designed curriculum. In most subjects, leaders have defined what pupils need to learn. This knowledge is sequenced so that pupils secure an understanding of the concepts they need to tackle more challenging ideas. For example, in art and design, children in the Nursery practise making continuous lines and closed shapes, selecting from a range of drawing materials. This supports them to create more detailed drawings using hard and soft pencils in Year 1. Similarly, in history, children in the early years start to understand the concept of chronology by ordering photographs of themselves on a timeline. Pupils then build up an increasingly detailed understanding of the chronology of national and international events through each historical period that they study.

However, there are a few curriculum subjects that are at the earlier stages of being designed. In these subjects, the essential knowledge that pupils need to secure has not been clarified as clearly. This reduces how well pupils develop important knowledge over time. Additionally, on occasion, the activities and tasks set for pupils in some wider curriculum subjects do not focus sufficiently on the intended curriculum. This results in some pupils not being as well prepared as they need to be for what they learn next.

Teachers check what pupils have learned. They make sure that any misconceptions are addressed swiftly. As a result, pupils develop a secure body of knowledge in most subjects. Staff make sure that learning is adapted appropriately for pupils with SEND. For example, if pupils are learning new vocabulary, staff will preteach this information, if appropriate, and make sure that resources containing the unfamiliar words are available. This helps pupils to access the same curriculum as their peers.

Leaders have prioritised early reading. Children in Reception begin to learn the sounds that letters make from the beginning of the year. The agreed phonics programme is implemented with accuracy and precision. This is because leaders make sure that all staff are well trained and that the books pupils read match the sounds that they know. Pupils who need to catch up are swiftly identified and receive effective support.

Children get off to a good start in mathematics in the early years, with teachers making sure there are many opportunities to encounter numbers. For example, children discuss the dates on the daily calendar, and explore number lines as they wait to come in from the outdoor provision.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is enriched through a programme of visits and visitors. For example, an outing to the science museum enabled pupils to deepen their knowledge of the digestive system when they viewed the journey a 'pill camera' took through the body. The curriculum helps pupils to learn about difference, and what it means to discriminate. Older pupils discuss ways to 'stamp out stereotyping', and how to call this out when they see it in practice.

Staff feel supported by leaders with their workload. They appreciate the open and ongoing communication with senior leaders and are confident to bring forward any concerns.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff are trained to recognise the signs that might indicate a pupil is at risk of abuse. Appropriate systems are in place for reporting concerns and securing help.

Staff understand the local risks that pupils may face. These are highlighted, and appropriate support is signposted to families. For example, external speakers have spoken with pupils about online safety.

Leaders follow all safer recruitment guidelines when completing pre-employment checks. Effective procedures are in place to manage any allegations concerning staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders have not made explicit the most important knowledge and skills that pupils should develop over time. This means teachers do not focus sufficiently on the important ideas in these areas. Leaders should ensure that the essential knowledge is consistently well defined and sequenced across the curriculum.
- Occasionally, the activities set for pupils do not match the ambition of the planned curriculum. This means that pupils are not consistently well prepared for what they learn next. Leaders should ensure that the activities that are set consistently match the ambition of the curriculum in supporting pupils to know and remember more.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2013.

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	102992
Local authority	Sutton
Inspection number	10240758
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	445
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Martin Swain
Headteacher	Julia Corby
Website	www.stdunstans.sutton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England school within the Diocese of Southwark. The last section 48 inspection of the school took place in January 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. She also met with the chair of governors, four other governors and held telephone conversations with representatives from the Diocese of Southwark and the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.

- The inspector also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspector viewed the single central record of pre-employment checks and met with the designated safeguarding leads. She reviewed documentation related to safeguarding, including records of concerns.
- The inspector considered the views of parents and staff through both discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Alison Colenso, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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