

Inspection of St Giles' CofE (Aided) Infant School

Dene Road, Ashtead, Surrey KT21 1EA

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 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	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of what they learn and achieve at St Giles'. Every pupil is known as an individual, and staff expect all pupils to succeed and flourish. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who receive carefully tailored support.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils. They are supported by extensive opportunities to enrich their learning. Pupils of all ages enjoy taking part in arts festivals, music workshops and 'reading week'. These help them to build character and confidence well.

Pupils embrace the school's values. They learn to be kind and considerate towards others. This creates a positive atmosphere in classrooms and the playground. Although a few pupils find it more difficult to concentrate at times, most pupils behave sensibly and calmly. All pupils know that they are safe and well cared for. They are confident to speak to adults about any concerns they might have. Bullying is not tolerated. There is a variety of ways for pupils to lead and contribute to the life of the school. Through the faith, school and eco councils, they encounter thought-provoking issues. This helps pupils to feel part of a genuine community.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. They have organised and selected the knowledge that pupils will learn clearly and sensibly. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to break down the learning content clearly. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and interest. Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly. Teachers adapt the curriculum successfully for those pupils, supporting them to achieve well.

The work set by teachers enables pupils to meet the curriculum aims. Teacher explanations are effective. Pupils build on their learning over time. For example, in music, pupils deepen their understanding by using their prior learning about pitch and rhythm when encountering new songs. Teachers check pupils' understanding, but in a few subjects, they do not always ensure that misconceptions are picked up swiftly enough. This means that gaps in the knowledge of some pupils develop.

Leaders make reading a priority. In early years, teachers deliver high-quality phonics teaching, which gives all pupils a positive start in learning to read. The learning environment is filled with prompts that support the learning of sounds and words. Pupils of all ages enjoy a wide range of exciting books, and they develop a broad vocabulary. This helps to foster a real enthusiasm for reading. Weaker readers receive frequent, targeted support. This helps them to catch up in their reading.

Pupils show positive attitudes to learning, including when they encounter challenges. Clear routines are embedded consistently from early years onwards. This helps to

create a purposeful and calm atmosphere. Leaders are quick to identify issues with attendance. However, the impact of leaders' work to reduce pupils' absence has been mixed. Many pupils are still absent too often. This limits their opportunities to learn as well as they could.

There is an extensive range of opportunities planned to enhance pupils' overall development. Leaders have ensured that all pupils benefit from a coherent and ambitious programme. Pupils' perspectives are broadened through books and music from different cultures. They consider ethical and moral issues during reflection time and values-themed assemblies. The opportunities provided by the school help pupils to develop determination and resilience. Leaders ensure that individual support is provided for less confident pupils. Equal opportunities and fairness are cherished. From early years, pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and relationships, such as what it means to be a good friend. The personal development programme helps pupils to embed a positive approach to learning.

Leaders have a clear ambition for all pupils. Resources are deployed well to address the barriers that pupils face. Leaders are mindful of the workload pressures that staff face. Leaders provide effective training for staff, often in response to emerging needs.

Governors understand their responsibilities clearly. They fulfil their statutory duties and support the school's strategic development. Governors have been active in supporting the development of the curriculum. Leaders' engagement with the community is effective. Committed volunteers contribute to pupils' experiences in school, such as supporting trips. This helps to reinforce the welcoming and inclusive ethos that leaders have created.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a culture of vigilance around safeguarding. Staff are alert to potential warning signs of harm, such as changes in pupils' behaviour. When pupils need support, effective provision is available in school. Leaders are tenacious in securing help for pupils from outside agencies when needed. Safeguarding records are kept up to date and indicate the actions leaders have taken.

Governors have a secure understanding of their safeguarding duties and the school's practices. Governors and staff adopt an approach that 'it could happen here'. Leaders are active in assessing potential risks, and they emphasise learning from previous incidents and concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not always identify pupils' misconceptions accurately. This leads to gaps in the knowledge and understanding of some pupils. Leaders should ensure that teachers identify and address misconceptions swiftly and accurately.
- Despite leaders' efforts, too many pupils are persistently absent. This leads to some pupils missing out on vital learning. Leaders should ensure that their methods for ensuring all pupils attend regularly are effective.

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	125190
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10240556
Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dominic Pioli
Headteacher	Nicola Angus
Website	www.stgiles.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Giles' is a Church of England Voluntary Aided school. The most recent section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) took place in June 2016. The next section 48 SIAMS inspection is due to take place before July 2024.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, assistant head and subject leaders. Inspectors spoke with the school improvement partner from the local authority and a representative from the Diocese of Guildford.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and music. 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. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects and looked at records of pupils' learning.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the school's single central record, files relating to safeguarding cases, and spoke with staff, pupils and governors.

Inspection team

Daniel Botting, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Justin Bartlett

Ofsted Inspector

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