

Inspection of St Paul’s Cray Church of England Primary School

Buttermere Road, Orpington, Kent BR5 3WD

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

St Paul's Cray is a happy school, with a 'family centred' approach at the heart of its work. Leaders provide a lot of support, when needed, to parents and carers. They build positive relationships and work with parents to keep their children safe and well looked after.

Staff work together to help pupils achieve well. For example, children in the early years build lots of confidence in their speaking and listening. Leaders make sure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are given the help they need to complete activities successfully during lessons.

Leaders have recently made some changes to the school's behaviour policy. This has helped to ensure that expectations are high. Pupils behave well, and staff feel well supported in managing behaviour.

Leaders provide pupils with a variety of experiences to help them understand the world around them, including trips to the seaside and celebrations of different events, such as Mental Health Awareness Week. Leaders celebrate the school's Christian faith, ensuring also that pupils are taught to respect differences in, for example, other beliefs and cultures.

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

Leaders know their school well. They have prioritised the right actions in response to the challenges that pupils faced both during and as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders make sure that they provide the right support to help pupils catch up with their reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have also focused on other areas, such as pupils' personal, social and emotional development. All this work has taken time and meant that some curriculum improvement in subjects such as art has been held back.

Leaders choose to introduce pupils to early reading during their time in Nursery. They build on this in subsequent years with dedicated daily phonics sessions. Leaders make sure that pupils, including those with SEND, receive the support they need to become fluent readers. However, there are occasions when adults do not make sure that pupils practise their phonics as well as they should, such as when listening to them read. Leaders use a range of effective strategies to promote a love of reading across the school.

Leaders ensure that pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum. In most subjects, they have thought about what pupils should learn and when. In modern foreign languages, for example, the curriculum is ambitious. Pupils are learning a strong body of knowledge and enjoy doing so. Year 4 pupils were able to write accurate sentences to describe their families. Pupils use the correct pronunciation when they speak in French. However, in a few subjects, the content that pupils learn

is not ambitious enough. In addition, sometimes, leaders have not been precise in identifying what they want pupils to know and remember. In these subjects, pupils do not develop the deep body of knowledge or produce the high-quality of work that they should. In mathematics, leaders are embedding their approaches to improving pupils' fluency in learning the multiplication table.

Leaders have systems in place to identify and support pupils with SEND - for example, in relation to their speech and language. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers know pupils well, and they adapt their teaching effectively to meet pupils' needs.

In most subjects, teachers have secure subject knowledge. They are supported with regular training and updates from networks with other schools in the trust. In most subjects, teachers check how well pupils are learning. For example, in English, pupils correct and edit work in response to any errors they make in their spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Staff work effectively to help pupils become independent and resilient learners. Children in the early years learn how to build positive friendships. They actively took part in 'MFL (modern foreign languages) Day', happily working together on different activities. Most pupils describe behaviour at school as 'good', and inspectors agree. The school is calm and orderly. Pupils play safely in outdoor areas, and they walk sensibly and quietly when in corridors.

Leaders work well with external agencies to teach pupils about a range of safety related topics such as grooming and both online and road safety. However, leaders acknowledge that the range of clubs and activities available, including those to develop and stretch individual talents and interests, are too limited.

Trustees and the local governing body know the school well. They provide a balance of challenge and support to leaders in their approach to school improvement. Staff are very positive about working at the school; they feel supported and know that leaders fully consider the impact on staff when they make decisions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a detailed knowledge of the range of support that is available in the local area. They access these sources to help parents with family life. Staff take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. They respond quickly to concerns, working with external agencies to share information and to keep pupils safe.

Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at school. Leaders make sure that a range of adults are available to help pupils, including in relation to their emotional well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculum is not as ambitious and/or precisely set out as it should be. As a result, pupils do not build the strong body of knowledge and skills that they should. Leaders should review their curriculum thinking in these subjects, ensuring that staff have the subject training needed to deliver the revised curriculum.
- Occasionally, the support for weaker readers is not as helpful as it should be. When this happens, pupils do not use their phonics as well as they should. Leaders should refine their training and monitoring of the phonics programme, particularly focusing on the times when staff listen to pupils read.
- The school's offer to support pupils with clubs and activities is not as broad as it should be. Pupils' opportunities to develop and stretch their talents and interests are limited. Leaders should review their extra-curricular offer and ensure that more pupils engage in these opportunities.

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	146842
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10268157
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	253
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Allen
Principal	Elizabeth Bennett
Website	www.st-paulscray.bromley.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in March 2019. When its predecessor school, also called St Paul's Cray Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school is part of the Amadeus Primary Academies Trust.
- The school is a Church of England primary school within the Diocese of Rochester.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with headteacher and other senior staff. Inspectors also met with leaders representing the local governing body, the diocese and the board of trustees. The lead inspector also met with the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from the alternative provider currently being used by the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, modern foreign languages, mathematics and geography. During each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, and spoke to teachers and pupils about their learning. Inspectors also reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work in a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and behaviour. They reviewed a wide range of documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff, case studies, and attendance and behaviour information. Inspectors also considered the views of parents, staff and pupils to help evaluate the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors considered replies to Ofsted Parent View and the online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Sam Hainey, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Karen Wyatt

Ofsted Inspector

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