

Inspection of a good school: St Nicholas Church of England Primary

School Road, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5PQ

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 July 2023

Outcome

St Nicholas Church of England Primary continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love to learn at this kind and welcoming school. They achieve very well because of the well-set-out and highly ambitious curriculum. Staff and pupils also enjoy positive and warm relationships. The school's values of 'friendship, hope, endurance, humility and compassion' are deeply embedded throughout the school.

Pupils meet leaders' high expectations for behaviour and conduct. They respond extremely well to the clear structures and routines that are in place. In classrooms, pupils show great respect for each other. They are eager to learn, and their behaviour is exemplary. At playtimes, pupils cooperate very positively with each other. Pupils know that staff will listen to them and help them with any worries they have. They said that bullying does not happen. If it did occur, pupils are confident that staff would deal with it quickly. Pupils feel happy and are safe in school.

Adults encourage pupils of all ages to take on roles and responsibilities across the school. Pupils have an extensive range of leadership opportunities, such as being classroom monitors, play leaders and members of the school council. They speak with great pride about their roles. Pupils enjoy the many clubs and activities, such as dance, drama and cricket. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the education and care their children receive at the school.

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

Leaders have designed a highly ambitious curriculum that enables all pupils to be successful. It is clearly scoped and sequenced so that teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. Leaders take timely and effective steps to continually refine and improve the high-quality education pupils are receiving. Whatever they design and do, leaders focus with rigour on supporting pupils' learning. Leaders also make sure that staff have secure subject knowledge. Staff receive training and guidance from highly skilled

curriculum leaders, who have expertise in their subjects. Teachers skilfully connect new learning with knowledge and skills that pupils have already acquired.

Teachers use assessment well. They use information effectively to adapt planning so that any gaps in learning are addressed quickly. Pupils have many opportunities to revisit and build on their prior learning. They appreciate the recap sessions at the start of each lesson. Recalling what they already know helps them to tackle new concepts. As a result, pupils across the school progress through the curriculum smoothly and successfully. Pupils explain their understanding confidently, using accurate vocabulary. This helps them to learn and remember more. Pupils easily make sense of new information. They are ready for the next stage in their learning.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on reading. Children in Reception make a quick start in learning to read. They learn through a well-structured phonics programme. Leaders have ensured that all staff are well trained to teach phonics. For pupils who find reading difficult, effective support is put in place swiftly to help them to catch up. The books that pupils read are well matched to the sounds that they know. Leaders' actions have ensured that pupils develop into confident and fluent readers. They have carefully selected the books that they want pupils to know and love. Pupils enjoy listening to the stories that teachers read to them. They talk confidently about the books that they have read in different lessons and how reading opens the world to them. Pupils said that this supports them to read a variety of different types of books.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities at an early stage. They place a strong emphasis on ensuring that these pupils are included and access the same curriculum as other pupils. The highly effective support that these pupils receive enables them to achieve as well as their peers.

Leaders' aspirations for pupils extend beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils are provided with a wide range of experiences that are designed to help them to develop confidence and character. For example, pupils take part in visits to museums and places of interest, orchestra performances and participate in sports clubs. These enhance the curriculum offer and help pupils to understand and appreciate their world.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves healthy. They learn about demonstrating respect for all religions, beliefs and different types of families. They are also taught to have an age-appropriate understanding of British values and protected characteristics. This helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils are helped to contribute positively to the school and the local community. They regularly take part in fundraising activities for their chosen charities.

Trustees know the school well. They ensure that they support and challenge school leaders effectively. Staff feel extremely well supported by leaders. They are proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding where pupils' safety and well-being are prioritised. Diligent checks ensure that all adults are safe to work with children. Staff are well trained to spot and raise concerns about a pupil's welfare. Training is updated regularly. Staff report any concerns about pupils swiftly and appropriately. Leaders work with external agencies to meet the needs of pupils and families.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in various situations, especially when they use the internet. Trustees keep a close eye on safeguarding. They check to make sure that leaders are doing all that they can to keep pupils safe.

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 predecessor school, Chislehurst (St Nicholas) Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, to be good in February 2014.

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	141529
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10255474
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Giles Lambert
Headteacher	Sophie Sear
Website	www.stnicholasceprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	19 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Rochester and a member of the Aquinas Church of England Education Trust.
- The school's religious character was last inspected in July 2019. The school's next religious character inspection will be within eight school years from that date.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2018.
- The school does not currently use 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.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other leaders and staff at the school. He also met with the chief executive officer of the trust, along with a trustee.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history and

mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and pupils about their learning. The inspector also looked at samples of pupils' work. The curriculum in other subjects was considered during the inspection.

- The inspector met with groups of pupils to talk about their work, behaviour and their experiences of school. He also observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's questionnaires for staff and pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector viewed the school's website and policies, met with the leader in charge of safeguarding, spoke with pupils, staff and trustees and checked relevant safeguarding documentation and records.

Inspection team

Chris Birtles, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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