

Inspection of Sedley's Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Southfleet, Gravesend, Kent DA13 9NR

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?

The school's vision of 'love to learn, learn to love' is shared by staff and pupils alike. Pupils are taught how to be kind and polite and they consistently demonstrate these characteristics. They behave very well in class and around the school. If a pupil's behaviour falls short of the expectations that leaders have of them, they are given effective support to improve. This results in a caring and respectful atmosphere between pupils and staff. Pupils are happy at school and they enjoy their time there. Almost all pupils belong to one of the many clubs that are offered. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of other enrichment activities, such as trips out and visitors who come into school. Leaders ensure that these are used to support what the pupils are learning in class.

Staff have high expectations for what pupils can do and pupils are now achieving well. Since joining the Aletheia Academies Trust, leaders have focused on improving the curriculum and on how it is taught. Pupils are now confident in discussing what they have learned. They are also taught how to learn and are rewarded for showing their identified learning behaviours.

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

Leaders recognise the important role that reading plays in a pupil's education. Teachers have been well supported by leaders to teach pupils at the earliest stages of reading and these lessons are highly effective. If pupils fall behind their peers in reading, staff put in place support sessions that are very targeted and the pupils soon catch up. Pupils are given many opportunities to read and do so with obvious confidence and pleasure. This begins in Reception class and continues throughout the school.

Leaders have made changes to the mathematics curriculum and the way the subject is taught. Although outcomes have historically been weaker in mathematics, pupils are now making very good progress through the planned curriculum. In other subjects, leaders have planned out ambitious end points. They have also considered the way that the curriculum can be sequenced to ensure that pupils will be able to build on their knowledge over time. However, in some subjects, they have not yet planned out precisely what should be taught. Occasionally, this results in pupils struggling because they have not got the necessary prior knowledge to understand or complete some of the activities they carry out in class.

Teachers work expertly with leaders, parents and carers to identify pupils who may have a special educational need and/or disability (SEND). Staff put in place highly targeted interventions to meet the needs of pupils and these interventions have been very effective at helping pupils to make progress. Leaders make sure that staff have the training necessary to provide the precise support that pupils need. Adults in the Reception class know the children very well. They use this knowledge to adapt the activities they have planned to meet the children's different educational

and developmental needs. The learning environment here has been thoughtfully designed to encourage children to engage in different activities. However, some activities are not as enticing as they could be and children do not always understand how to use some of the areas set out for them.

A new curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education has been introduced by leaders. Teachers are using this to ensure that pupils get the information they need in an age-appropriate way. Pupils are taught about a wide range of different cultures and staff encourage them to be curious about the world. They are also encouraged to be active citizens and there are close links between the school and the local community.

Leaders encourage pupils to show positive attitudes towards their work and take opportunities to celebrate the progress that pupils are making. Pupils are highly motivated and enjoy talking about their learning. The attendance of most pupils is very good. A small group of pupils do not attend as often as they should and leaders have worked effectively with parents to reduce the rate of persistent absence.

The Aletheia Academies Trust has provided highly effective support to the school to ensure that all pupils benefit from a high-quality education. Parents, pupils and staff have all noticed the positive changes that have taken place and the differences that these changes are starting to make. Local governors and trustees perform their roles very well and are helping to drive improvements in the school. Staff have felt very well supported during this period of rapid change.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have been well trained in identifying pupils who may be at risk of harm or who have been harmed. When concerns are raised, leaders take quick and effective action to get pupils the help that they need. This includes working with external agencies.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including how to keep themselves safe online. They are able to discuss what they have learned about personal safety with confidence. Leaders manage potential risks around the school site well and follow clear and effective processes to manage risks associated with the recruitment of staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the important knowledge for each topic has not been clearly identified. This makes it challenging for teachers to plan effective learning activities because the desired learning outcomes are not always clear.

Leaders need to ensure that staff are confident about what pupils should learn from each topic.

- Professional development has focused on general teaching strategies and on the core subjects. However, teachers are less confident on the disciplinary differences between foundation subjects and how best to approach the teaching of these subjects. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the opportunity to develop subject-specific knowledge and pedagogy.

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	149123
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10268046
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	105
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Till
Headteacher	J Rolfe (Executive headteacher) J Field (Head of school)
Website	www.sedleys.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Aletheia Academies Trust in June 2022.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England school. It is due its next Section 48 inspection in the next academic year.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders including the executive headteacher and the head of school and special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector also met with trustees, local governors, and officers of the trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and history. 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. They also looked at curriculum plans in a wider range of foundation subjects and spoke with teachers and subject leads about these plans.
- The single central register was checked, and the inspector spoke to the designated safeguarding lead 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 playtime. Inspectors met with some parents at the start of the school day and took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey as well as two emails sent to the inspection team.

Inspection team

Mark Enser, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Martin Hacker

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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