

Inspection of St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Estcourt Road, Fulham, London SW6 7HB

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this school. They thrive from the caring ethos here. Pupils understand the importance of being kind and respectful to everyone. As a result, pupils feel welcome and cared for in the school.

Pupils enjoy going to school. They particularly like the opportunities for learning outside the classroom when they go on educational visits. For example, pupils visited the Saatchi Gallery and Westminster Cathedral which supported their learning.

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They enable pupils to behave well across the school. Pupils are polite and hard working. They conduct themselves well in and outside of lessons. Pupils are eager to receive rewards such as earning 'house points' and 'gold card' awards. In early years, staff support children's development well.

Teachers encourage pupils to take on wider responsibilities. Pupils are keen to get involved in the many opportunities available such as the school council, gardening and eco-clubs. This helps them to learn about being responsible citizens and enables them to contribute their school.

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

Leaders have developed a well-planned curriculum that matches the expectations of the national curriculum. In early years, the curriculum is meticulously planned and sequenced. This helps children to be fully ready for Year 1. In most subjects, there is a strong focus on the knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn and when. In a few subjects, leaders' curricular thinking is not as well developed. This is because they have not identified the important content that they want pupils to learn in these subjects. This limits pupils' deeper knowledge and understanding.

Teachers set high expectations in lessons and pupils are eager to learn. This helps pupils to gain subject-specific knowledge and skills well, including in mathematics. Teachers ensure that they explain and deliver subject content clearly. They check and address any misconceptions in pupils' understanding. In early years, staff enable children to learn successfully across all areas of learning through purposeful activities. Staff maximise learning opportunities for children in a well-resourced and stimulating environment.

The school helps pupils to read well. Leaders have put a phonics programme in place that is understood by all. Staff who teach early reading receive training so that approaches to teaching reading across the school are consistent. Pupils have lots of opportunities to read a variety of texts. Visits from authors inspire pupils to read widely. Leaders' work to prioritise reading has helped pupils to develop as confident readers. A small number of pupils who struggle with reading do not read books

closely matched to the sounds that they know. This limits these pupils' reading fluency.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Pupils with SEND are happy and enjoy attending school. Staff support pupils with SEND well, academically and socially.

The school is a very happy community where everyone is valued. Teachers have strong working relationships with pupils. Learning is rarely interrupted, and staff are swift to address any behaviour that does not meet the school's high expectations. This helps pupils to concentrate well during lessons. In early years, staff enable children to follow routines and instructions positively.

Leaders ensure that there is strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Staff teach pupils to be respectful of different faiths and cultures. Pupils talk confidently about the importance of treating everyone equally. All pupils learn age-appropriate content about mental and physical health. Staff teach pupils about positive relationships and personal safety.

The governing body has a very strong understanding of leaders' work. They support and hold leaders to account robustly. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working at this school. They feel very well supported by leaders and value the professional development they receive. Staff shared that leaders take their well-being and workload seriously when making decisions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff know their pupils and families very well. Staff receive regular training which helps them to swiftly identify the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Any concerns are reported promptly to leaders, who make swift and detailed referrals to appropriate agencies.

The curriculum provides pupils with information about how to keep themselves safe. As a result, pupils know how to keep themselves safe in and around school. For example, pupils spoke confidently about online and road safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A minority of the weakest readers do not routinely read books that are matched closely to the sounds that they know. This limits these pupils' reading confidence

and fluency. The school must ensure that all pupils are supported to develop their phonics and reading accuracy with precision.

- In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders have not planned the curriculum in sufficient detail. As a result, pupils do not routinely develop a deep body of knowledge in these subjects. Leaders should ensure the curriculum in all subjects makes explicit what pupils should learn and when.

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	100357
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10287173
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	139
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair governing body	Jane Debois
Headteacher	Karen Wyatt
Website	www.stthomasrc.lbhf.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school had its last section 48 inspection in March 2019.
- The school has Nursery provision for three-year-old children.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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 any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art, geography and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with members of the support staff team, the governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the pre-employment checks of staff and reviewed safeguarding documents and systems. Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers, support staff, members of the governing body and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils, including to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sophie Cavanagh, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Ridding	Ofsted Inspector
Alice Clay	His Majesty's Inspector

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