

Inspection of St John the Divine Church of England Primary School

Warham Street, Camberwell New Road, London SE5 0SX

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 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?

Staff take the time to get to know their pupils from the start of the early years at this small school. Relationships are positive, respectful and professional between adults and pupils. This contributes to pupils feeling safe.

Leaders regularly remind pupils of the school's values and pupils aim to show these values in their own behaviour, which contributes to making the school a pleasant place for everyone. One pupil, reflecting the views of many, said: 'If you show the values, then it can start a chain of happiness across the school.'

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. Since the last inspection, this has been reflected in widespread changes that they have made to the curriculum to make it more ambitious. These changes have had a positive early impact on pupils' knowledge.

A range of opportunities develop pupils' talents and interests here, including clubs such as needlecraft, netball and keyboard. Music features strongly, including choir and workshops at renowned venues. Visits extend pupils' learning, such as an outing to a museum for pupils in Year 1 to examine toys from the past. Pupils take up responsibility as school councillors, well-being leaders and in looking after the school's garden.

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

Leaders have clearly set out what they intend pupils to learn across all areas of the curriculum. The school's curriculum matches the National Curriculum.

Teaching focuses on the content set out by leaders. Knowledge is taught in a sensible order. For example, in music, pupils are first taught to sing a melody in Year 1, preparing them to learn to sing a two-part harmony in Year 2. In a few subjects, teaching does not ensure that pupils recall important prior knowledge that will help them when they move on to bigger ideas and new concepts. While pupils remember some of the content they have learned in these subjects, they are less secure in their recall of key subject concepts over time.

The school provides staff with comprehensive support in some curriculum subjects. For example, staff benefit from detailed training to teach mathematics. This helps them to know precisely which parts of the subject to focus on in lessons. In other subjects, staff have not received the same support to ensure that they feel confident to deliver new content. As a result, the explanations given to pupils in these subjects are, at times, unclear and misconceptions are not identified and addressed swiftly. Where this is the case, on occasion, pupils recall the incorrect knowledge that they have been taught.

The school ensures that all pupils access a range of quality texts through daily reading, beginning with stories, rhymes and songs in the nursery. There is a

structured curriculum for phonics and reading, in which all staff receive training. Teachers encourage pupils to recall the phonics sounds that they have previously learned. Typically, pupils know how to decode unfamiliar words by reading letter sounds and blending them together. Pupils read books that help them to practise new sounds. Pupils' outcomes in national assessments in reading at the end of Year 6 are high. Leaders identify any struggling readers and provide them with timely support. However, occasionally the school does not ensure that all pupils close any gaps in their phonic knowledge and catch up as quickly as they might.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are clearly identified. Pupils receive a range of help to meet their individual needs. Teachers adapt teaching and resources, so that pupils with SEND typically learn the same content as their peers.

The school has designed a thoughtful programme of personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils are taught to recognise the features of healthy relationships and encouraged to follow online safety guidance, as well as being taught about different beliefs and cultures.

The school has high expectations of all pupils, reflected in well-established routines in the classroom. As a result, pupils typically learn in a calm, settled environment, where they can focus on their studies. From the early years onwards, pupils are taught how to get along with one another, beginning with taking turns and sharing. Pupils typically work well together in lessons and in the playground. Where there are occasionally issues between pupils, adults help pupils to resolve these successfully.

The governing body has undertaken close review of the school's work. Members know their roles and responsibilities. They work closely with leaders to ensure that priorities to improve the school's work are carefully identified and likely to benefit all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, teaching does not focus on helping pupils to recall important prior knowledge, so that pupils can use what they know already to help them to understand more complex concepts. As a result, pupils remember knowledge in these subjects in isolation, and are unsure how one thing they have learned relates to another. This makes it hard for them to get better at the subject over time. The school should ensure that pupils are helped to connect together the key content that they have learned within a subject over time.

- In some curriculum subjects, information is not presented routinely clearly and pupils' understanding is not checked as carefully as in other subjects. Where this is the case, pupils sometimes recall incorrect knowledge. The school should ensure that staff receive the support they need to deliver the full breadth of the curriculum confidently.
- Occasionally, pupils who are weaker readers are not provided with the help that they need to close any gaps in their phonic knowledge. This prevents them from catching up as quickly as they might. The school should ensure that pupils who struggle with early reading are given the systematic support that they need to catch up quickly and become fluent, confident readers.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100614
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10289781
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	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Truesdale
Headteacher	Catherine Warland
Website	www.sjtdprimary.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 May 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Southwark.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was carried out in July 2018.
- The school makes use of one alternative provider, Evolve Academy.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- 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 looked at curriculum information in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors also met with leaders with responsibility for SEND, behaviour and attendance, early years and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the local governing body, diocese and the local authority.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Rebecca Iles-Smith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Eleanor Ross	His Majesty's Inspector

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