

# Inspection of a good school: St Paul's Catholic Primary School, Thames Ditton

Hampton Court Way, Thames Ditton, Surrey KT7 0LP

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Inspection dates:

30 and 31 January 2024

## Outcome

St Paul's Catholic Primary School, Thames Ditton continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are exceptionally proud to be part of this school community. Their strong understanding of the school ethos of being 'ready, respectful and responsible' is demonstrated through their interactions across the school day. The expectations the school has of pupils' behaviour are high, and pupils regularly meet these. Pupils treat each other with kindness, offering extra support for those who need it. Comments from parents typically describe the school as 'warm', 'caring' and 'nurturing'. Pupils are safe in the school and know who to speak to should they have any worries.

The school's expectations for pupils' achievement are also high. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who may be experiencing other disadvantages. Most pupils achieve highly and are learning well. Children in the early years are making a strong start to their time in school.

Pupils are provided with an array of clubs and activities from which to choose. The vast majority of pupils take part in these regularly. Pupils like to discuss the trips and the clubs they attend, including art, drama and a range of sports. They also have opportunities to become house and school captains and enjoy taking a leading role in the school.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. This considers the needs of pupils with SEND or those experiencing other disadvantages. The curriculum in art is especially ambitious, and pupils are achieving highly in this area. This subject has been carefully developed from the early years, and subject knowledge is precisely broken down and built on over time. Pupils' knowledge and skills are revisited and practised frequently. In other subjects, the curriculum is also clearly sequenced, identifying the core knowledge and skills pupils need. Staff have a clear understanding of the aims of the curriculum and continue to develop their own knowledge and expertise.

Reading is prioritised in the school, with pupils starting to learn to read with accuracy and fluency as soon as they begin in Reception. Pupils who need additional support are quickly identified and are provided with the right help and practice they need to be successful. Pupils enjoy reading and do so frequently. Older pupils can discuss the books they have read in their reading sessions and during their '10-minute pledge' class reading. They also talk about the books they read independently, and progress in reading is regularly celebrated across the school.

Pupils are learning the mathematical language and processes they need effectively. In Reception, children quickly develop an understanding of number, weights and measures. They have frequent opportunities to revisit this learning throughout the day, building on more directed learning in their free-choice activities. Older pupils learn about a range of mathematical processes and make use of their knowledge in other lessons, such as geography.

The needs of pupils with SEND are swiftly identified, and additional support is put in place to meet them. The school knows these pupils exceptionally well. The help they receive includes ensuring they learn to read, but they also receive the precise support required in other areas. This means most pupils with SEND are progressing well. However, the needs of these pupils are not always fully considered in lessons, and adaptations are not always as precise. As such, a small number of pupils with SEND are not achieving as highly as they could be. While staff know what the needs of these pupils are, they do not always adapt work for them appropriately.

The school ensures that pupils' wider development is valued. Pupils learn independence and confidence. They show resilience when encountering new learning and situations. They also learn about different relationships, tolerance and the importance of treating the uniqueness of all with respect. Pupils know how to stay safe online and how to keep themselves healthy. In addition, pupils are actively involved in many fundraising activities. There is a wide variety of clubs and activities, some of which are led by pupils. This allows pupils to develop their interests. Older pupils enjoy taking on these additional responsibilities and being role models for their younger peers. The school makes sure that all pupils can benefit from these opportunities and provides the right support for them to do so.

Staff are as proud to be part of this school community as the pupils are. They are supported well with their workload. Governors take time to talk to staff to understand the day-to-day challenges they experience. They are alert to staff well-being and act to make sure they have the help they need.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Although the needs of pupils with SEND are quickly identified and there is a range of effective support in place, there is some variation to the quality of the support they receive in lessons. This means that a small minority of pupils are not making as much progress as they could be. The school needs to ensure that all staff have the knowledge and training they need to be able to make the right adaptations for all pupils.

## 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good on 24 April 2018.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125212
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10287951
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	343
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Steph Neale
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hayley Townsend
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stpauls-thamesditton.surrey.sch.uk">www.stpauls-thamesditton.surrey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a Roman Catholic school and is part of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. Its last section 48 inspection took place on 8 July 2019.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club on the school site.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, art, and physical education. To do this, she met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited a range of lessons and looked at pupils' work.

- The inspector also met with a range of leaders from other subjects and looked at a range of pupils' work.
- The inspector also scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation documents and its priorities for improvement.
- The inspector met with a range of senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspector also met with the chair of governors and a range of other governors and representatives of the diocese and local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and a review of Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Zoe Enser, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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