

Inspection of a good school: St John's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Ipswich

Victory Road, St John's CEVA Primary School, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 4LE

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 February 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are enthusiastic learners. They are well mannered, polite and respectful. They are happy at school and talk about their learning with pride. There are exceptional working relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are kind to each other. Pupils have faith in the adults at school and trust them to keep them safe.

Pupils value their teachers and enjoy their lessons. They listen carefully and follow instructions promptly. They answer questions readily in class. Learning is their favourite thing about coming to school. Pupils confidently link their learning from different subjects. They benefit from trips, such as visiting the Imperial War Museum, which support their learning. They also enjoy the visitors who come into school to enrich the curriculum, such as the Great Fire of London theatre group.

Pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of wider issues, such as diversity, relationships, and forgiveness. Stories and poems are used to give context to the curriculum, providing pupils with a greater depth of understanding. They know how their learning links to the school's vision of 'Loved by God. Learning with Jesus. Living by the spirit'. They eagerly strive to meet the school's values and vision.

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

The curriculum is highly ambitious for all pupils. It delivers beyond the requirements of the national curriculum. Pupils experience a curriculum which allows them to develop broad and deep knowledge. Staff support pupils' understanding of abstract concepts exceptionally well. Pupils achieve highly in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the right help to support their learning. This includes guidance from well-trained teaching assistants when needed. Pupils with SEND approach tasks with independence and take responsibility for their learning.

The curriculum design supports the school's vision. Diversity is a key focus of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils have frequent opportunities to explore spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning. They learn about the views and experiences of others. Pupils are articulate. They use complex vocabulary with confidence. Teachers carefully check pupils' understanding through questioning. They quickly address misconceptions. Pupils feel secure to make mistakes. They know this is a part of learning.

Children in the early years benefit from the ambitious, creative and well-resourced curriculum. They learn exceptionally well from the start. Frequent repetition of activities ensures they get a firm grasp of the basics. Children make a fantastic start in reading and mathematics in Reception.

Pupils learn to read quickly. Teachers demonstrate significant expertise in the teaching of phonics. Pupils become familiar with the sounds and vocabulary they need through engaging sessions. Pupils who need additional support receive this immediately. Consequently, pupils become increasingly confident and fluent readers. Pupils have access to a wide variety of books, including an online library. Pupils like to show their confidence with independent reading by completing reading journal challenges and value the rewards they receive for this. Teachers share stories and poems with pupils every day for pleasure.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They listen attentively to their teachers and engage readily with tasks. Pupils are polite. They treat their peers with kindness. They play cooperatively in the playground. Adults treat pupils fairly. They ensure pupils follow routines consistently. They praise pupils often. There is no disruption to learning.

High attendance at school is an expectation. Pupils meet this. Absence is low. Pupils are punctual to school. The school challenges any absence from school swiftly, ensuring that pupils are safe. The school provides effective support for a small number of pupils whose attendance is not so high.

The school provides a variety of opportunities for pupils' wider development. Pupils can attend clubs, including sports clubs and Bible studies. There are a range of trips offered each year, including residential trips for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Visitors, such as authors, illustrators and drama groups come into school often to enhance the curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity to join community projects and perform at the local church. There are leadership opportunities for pupils, such as school council and prefects. Pupils' spiritual development is carefully considered. Pupils value the daily worship.

The school cares about the well-being of staff. Teachers are grateful for the school's careful consideration of their workload. Staff feel supported by governors and the school chaplain. Staff meetings and training are purposeful and help teachers develop their practice. Governors know the school well. They provide effective support and challenge, which ensures that the school continues to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 in 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

Unique reference number	124781
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10295016
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stefanie Thorne
Headteacher	Janita Betts
Website	www.st-johns.suffolk.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 April 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a Christian religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in September 2018. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior teacher, mathematics leader, reading leader and a number of school governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited

a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- 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 inspector considered responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys. They considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.

Inspection team

Sarah Fowler, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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