

# Inspection of a good school: De La Salle School

Ghyllgrove, Basildon, Essex SS14 2LA

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Inspection dates:

1 and 2 May 2024

## **Outcome**

De La Salle School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy attending De La Salle School. They flourish here because they know that staff will give them the support and encouragement they need to do well, or if they feel worried. The school is highly inclusive. It celebrates the diversity of its pupils. During the recent 'culture week' pupils wore clothes from different cultures and enjoyed food from different countries.

Pupils take the 'Lasallian' values of the school very seriously. They strive to do their best. Pupils learn about the importance of helping others less fortunate than themselves, for instance by raising money for charity. Pupils look out for each other. They work hard and conduct themselves with maturity and respect.

There are frequent opportunities for pupils to become confident, active citizens. They can take part in the school council and become prefects. Pupils develop a range of interests when they attend a variety of clubs. These include science club, clarinet, crochet and many sports. Large numbers of pupils take part in drama productions. They broaden their experiences when they visit universities, museums and the theatre.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They learn about topics such as consent, internet safety and the dangers of knife crime.

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

The school is determined for everyone to succeed. It provides all pupils with a broad curriculum. Most pupils study languages up to the end of Year 11.

The curriculum has been designed carefully. Subject leaders identify the knowledge that pupils need. They break the curriculum down into smaller chunks so that pupils can build on what they have learned and move securely on to more complex topics. Pupils regularly revisit knowledge from previous topics. This helps pupils to build on what they already know to deepen their understanding of what they learn.

Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to introduce new knowledge clearly. They check on how pupils are doing in lessons, for example through 'mini mocks' in mathematics. They show them how to improve. Pupils respond to this feedback and use it to improve their work.

The school has prioritised reading. Pupils improve their reading through regular practice. The school regularly checks on how well pupils can read. Staff quickly identify pupils who need additional help. They provide them with tailored support. This enables pupils to improve their accuracy and comprehension so they can access the curriculum.

The curriculum is ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers adapt work skilfully so pupils can access the curriculum. However, at times, particularly in key stage 3, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Some work is not demanding enough. Pupils are not always expected to tackle challenging tasks independently. As a result, they do not always gain the depth and breadth of knowledge they need to achieve highly.

Pupils behave very well. The school has high, clear expectations of pupils' conduct. Pupils understand these and usually meet them. If pupils need support to improve their behaviour, staff work closely with them to help them to do so. Pupils attend well. They enjoy coming to school. Staff work effectively with pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs to help them attend and achieve well in school.

The school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain very effectively. Pupils meet representatives from different faiths. They learn about the importance of democracy, healthy relationships and the dangers of radicalisation. Careers education and guidance is comprehensive. Pupils get useful advice on their next steps, which helps them make informed choices. Pupils meet many employers and apprenticeship providers. The school is working to increase opportunities for pupils to experience the world of work.

De La Salle School is well led. Governors challenge leaders to continue to improve the school. They check that pupils are kept safe. The school supports staff with their well-being and workload. It provides them with useful training that develops their knowledge and skills. As a result, staff enjoy working here. Staff turnover is very low.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Staff do not have consistently high expectations, particularly in key stage 3, of what pupils can achieve. Some work is not demanding enough. As a result, pupils sometimes do not gain the depth and breadth of knowledge they need to achieve highly. The

school should provide training to ensure that the curriculum and its implementation are consistently ambitious 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 in October 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>	115237
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10318582
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	764
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sarah D'Lima
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Norris
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.dlsbasildon.org">www.dlsbasildon.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	9 and 10 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- De La Salle School is a voluntary-aided school in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood. It is a Lasallian educational institution, which is a group of schools affiliated with the De La Salle Brothers religious order.
- The school received its most recent Section 48 inspection in March 2022 and will be reinspected approximately five years from then.
- The school currently uses two registered alternative providers for pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The lead inspector spoke to the members of the local governing board, as well as representatives who work with the school from the Diocese of Brentwood and the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography and science. 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 discussed the curriculum in some other subjects and visited a range of lessons.
- 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 a range of leaders, including the careers coordinator and the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with early career teachers and staff involved in the induction of new teachers.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school. They met with groups of pupils to discuss behaviour in the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector considered the 47 responses and 36 free-text responses received during the inspection to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also considered the 66 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 97 responses to the pupil survey.

## **Inspection team**

Steve Woodley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Elizabeth Shapland

Ofsted Inspector

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