

Inspection of a good school: St Paulinus Church of England Primary School

Iron Mill Lane, Crayford, Dartford, Kent DA1 4RW

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 June 2024

Outcome

St Paulinus Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Charlotte Rhodes. This school is part of the Amadeus Primary Academies Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Peter Rhodes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Blakely.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are taught the importance of kindness and respect for others, which they have opportunities to put into practice. For example, they act as buddies to younger children and raise funds for charity.

The school has high expectations for all pupils' achievement. Published outcomes in national assessment tests taken by pupils in Year 6 reflect pupils' high achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics. The school knows where pupils' knowledge is less detailed and has identified changes to the curriculum and teaching which aim to improve academic outcomes.

Pupils behave well. Teachers make their expectations clear which helps pupils to stay focused on their learning. Where any bullying occurs, the school deals with it suitably. Through assemblies, discussions with pupils and reviews of the school's policies, leaders have begun further work on preventing and responding to bullying.

Leaders have recently broadened the range of educational visits that the school organises. Children in the early years visit the local area. In Year 6, pupils take part in a residential journey to an outdoor-activity centre. Pupils are encouraged to extend their knowledge through a range of museum visits connected with curriculum topics such as the First and Second World Wars and Ancient Egypt.

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

The school's broad curriculum is comprehensively planned. Leaders have made recent changes to increase the depth and breadth of content that pupils study. Within this

revised curriculum thinking, leaders have identified the concepts that pupils need to know precisely. This helps pupils to use prior learning to understand new and more complex ideas and concepts. For example, pupils in Year 5 history compare how power was gained and lost by Ancient Benin and Maya civilizations, drawing on their earlier study of trade, democracy and military power of the Ancient Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Shang Dynasty. However, some older pupils have not had the benefit of studying this curriculum content over the whole time they have been at the school and there are some gaps in their knowledge as a result. This means that older pupils sometimes have gaps in their knowledge of important concepts and content.

Training for staff is well focused on delivering the curriculum in ways that make it memorable, right from the early years. As a result, teachers know the curriculum well and provide pupils with work that helps them to learn key content. They break information down and present it clearly, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who typically develop detailed and secure knowledge across the curriculum, alongside their peers. Less secure is pupils' use of key vocabulary. Pupils are introduced to specific terminology, but teaching does not routinely check that pupils use key terms in their work. As a result, pupils sometimes struggle to remember and use key vocabulary to describe their knowledge precisely, both in their discussions and in their written work.

The school has provided training and support for teachers and other adults to understand the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff routinely make adaptations to teaching and resources that enable pupils to learn the curriculum well. However, the training that staff have received does not extend to the specific needs of some pupils with SEND at the school. This occasionally limits how well provision meets the needs of all pupils with SEND.

The school has taken swift action in response to a dip in outcomes in 2023 in the national phonics test compared with the national average. Leaders have introduced a new phonics scheme, trained all staff in its effective delivery and monitored closely how successfully pupils' phonic knowledge is developing. Children in early years are taught systematically to decode and read new words. They have many opportunities to read books that are well matched to their phonic knowledge. The school identifies pupils who need additional support with reading and helps them to catch up. From the early years, children hear a range of stories that capture their interest. Teachers help them to understand the important meanings in texts they read.

From when they join the school, children are taught to follow routines. They know the expectations of their conduct in the classroom and concentrate on their work. Where pupils need some support to manage their emotions and behaviour, adults provide suitable reminders and encouragement.

Typically, pupils attend school regularly. The school identifies any pupils whose attendance rates are below expectations and provides suitable support where needed.

The school teaches pupils extensively about British values. Pupils are taught the importance of tolerance and respect for people regardless of background, culture or

religion. Pupils are encouraged to understand what makes a relationship healthy or unhealthy and of how to stay safe, including online.

Some parents and carers expressed mixed views of the school. School leaders, including those responsible for governance, take their role seriously to develop greater partnership with the school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Recent changes to curriculum thinking in some subjects are new. Older pupils have not had the full benefit of the school's current curriculum. As a result, there are some gaps and lack of depth in older pupils' content knowledge, including in pupils' recall and use of key vocabulary. The school should ensure that those gaps are addressed routinely so that pupils' knowledge, including of key vocabulary, reflects the detail leaders intend.
- The training that staff have received to meet the needs of pupils with SEND does not extend to the specific needs of all pupils with SEND at the school. This impacts on the learning of some pupils' with SEND. The school should build on the provision already in place for pupils with SEND by providing further training for staff to enhance their expertise in meeting the specific needs of 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, also named St Paulinus Church of England Primary School, to be good in March 2013.

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	142294
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10323415
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Blakely
Principal	Charlotte Rhodes
Website	www.st-paulinus.bexley.sch.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	17 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Rochester. The school's most recent section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, was carried out in November 2017. The next inspection is due within eight years of the last.
- There have been a number of changes to leadership since the school's previous inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher and changes to the structure of the leadership team.
- The school is part of the Amadeus Primary Academies Trust.
- The school does not make use of 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 have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with school leaders including leaders from within the trust and representatives of the governing body and trust board, including the chairs of both boards. Inspectors also met with leaders with responsibility for early years, SEND, behaviour and attendance and pupils' personal development.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, PE 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. The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors looked into provision for pupils with SEND and their identification thoroughly, including meeting leaders, discussions with pupils, visiting lessons, taking account of surveys, scrutinising pupils' work and visiting all areas of the school in which the needs of pupils with SEND are provided for.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, pupils and parents; 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 the views of pupils, parents and staff in response to Ofsted's online surveys. The inspector also looked at analysis of responses to surveys carried out by the school. An inspector held informal conversations with parents and considered correspondence sent to inspectors from parents.

Inspection team

Rebecca Iles-Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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