

# Inspection of St Mark's Church of England Primary School

Aylesbury Road, Bromley, Kent BR2 0QR

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Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Christopher Hollands. This school is part of Aquinas Church of England Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Kathy Griffiths, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Giles Lambert.

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

Tucked away in a corner of Bromley, this school offers pupils a joyful learning experience, deeply rooted in its core values. Pupils enjoy coming to St Mark's. This is because the school creates a supportive environment, where pupils are encouraged to engage actively in their learning and personal development. Pupils are happy and feel safe, and this shows in their enthusiasm during lessons and activities. For example, in Reception, children collaborated respectfully during a creative activity, demonstrating mutual respect and a strong sense of teamwork.

High expectations for all pupils' achievement are consistently communicated and realised. The curriculum is broad and ambitious, catering well to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For instance, in music, pupils not only learn to play instruments competently, such as keyboard, recorders and ukulele, but they also understand and apply musical terms such as tempo and ostinato, showing the depth of their learning. Teachers adapt lessons effectively to ensure that pupils' learning flourishes.

Behaviour is exemplary, with minimal disruptions in class. Pupils are engaged and respectful. The school follows its values when supporting pupils, ensuring a consistent and fair approach to managing their conduct. By emphasising mutual respect and equity, the school promotes a positive learning environment and addresses any issues, including bullying, promptly and efficiently.

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

The school's positive atmosphere is reflected in the high level of engagement and enthusiasm among pupils. The strong sense of community is fostered through a variety of curriculum experiences and activities that promote mutual respect and collaboration. This includes, for instance, pupils taking on leadership roles such as young leaders, reading ambassadors and worship monitors. Pupils use these roles to celebrate and live out the values that shape the school's ethos.

The school provides a high-quality education through a well-organised curriculum, that is both broad and very aspirational. Learning is carefully sequenced across subjects to deepen pupils' knowledge as they move up from one school year to the next. For example, the school makes insightful adaptations to the curriculum so that pupils' understanding and application of skills increase progressively over time. This means that the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, are met and that they achieve consistently highly.

Early reading is a priority. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read, as well as those who have fallen behind, quickly gain the necessary skills to become confident and fluent readers. Teachers use effective strategies, such as regular assessments and tailored extra help, to support pupils in becoming proficient readers. This approach not only nurtures a love for reading but also ensures that those with SEND progress well in their reading alongside their peers.

This inclusive approach extends across all curriculum areas. In mathematics, for example, the curriculum emphasises the importance of every pupil, regardless of their learning needs, gaining a solid foundation in number, calculation and problem-solving skills. Teaching uses resources, such as visual aids and real-life examples, to explain key concepts. This engages pupils and helps them to grasp with clarity important ideas. Pupils actively participate in group activities where they apply their learning to solve practical problems, fostering teamwork and critical thinking. Staff adeptly model concepts and provide ample opportunities for practice and collaboration. Assessment is used effectively to check pupils' progress through the curriculum and provide additional targeted support where needed. Pupils with SEND have their needs identified promptly and are exceptionally well supported.

The school maintains high standards of behaviour, with clear expectations consistently reinforced. Pupils exhibit exemplary conduct, resulting in minimal disruptions. The school's proactive stance against bullying creates a safe and respectful environment, which is conducive to learning and fostering pupils' personal growth.

Absence is closely monitored and addressed through the school's meticulous analysis of any patterns. This approach ensures that any issues affecting pupils' attendance are swiftly identified and resolved. The school works well with parents and carers to stress the importance of high attendance.

The school offers a rich array of extra-curricular activities that cater to a broad range of interests and talents. Pupils actively participate in over 70 different clubs and activities, including yoga, arts and crafts, and film club. This offer is part of the school's goal to broaden pupils' horizons and nurture their individual passions. The school actively encourages participation from disadvantaged pupils, ensuring inclusivity and equal access to enriching opportunities.

Cultural diversity is embraced through initiatives such as school council elections and age-appropriate lessons on topics such as consent and democracy. These activities are planned to foster a deep understanding and appreciation of different cultures and values, as well as promote tolerance and respect within the school community.

School leaders are committed to staff well-being and professional development. This is clear in the school's thoughtful initiatives to address any workload concerns and provide necessary support. The school builds a collaborative relationship with parents, engaging them meaningfully in their children's education.

The trust and advisory council play a pivotal role in setting strategic direction and holding school leaders accountable. Their effective oversight ensures that the school's systems operate seamlessly, contributing to its overall success and exceptionally positive impact on all pupils' education.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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>	141567
<b>Local authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323404
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	410
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Giles Lambert
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christopher Hollands
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-marks.bromley.sch.uk">www.st-marks.bromley.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	7 and 8 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England primary school in the Diocese of Rochester. It had its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character in June 2016.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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

- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior staff. The inspector also held separate meetings with the chief executive officer, members of the advisory council and trustees.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, science, art and design, mathematics and music. During each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and pupils about pupils' learning. The inspectors also reviewed samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.
- 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 also spoke to some parents and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, the online survey. They also reviewed the responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Adam Vincent, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Brian Simber	Ofsted Inspector
Jacquie Fairhurst	Ofsted Inspector

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