

Inspection of St Fidelis Catholic Primary School

Bexley Road, Erith, Kent DA8 3HQ

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love attending this school. They flourish and thrive here. The school's values of compassion, challenge and excellence are deeply embedded in school life. Staff show great care and commitment to pupils at the school. Pupils can talk to one of their 'favourite five' trusted adults if they are worried about anything.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), excel in their learning. Outcomes in the Year 6 national assessments are well above average. Pupils also achieve very well across the wider curriculum, for example in art, music and sports.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in class and around the school. They are articulate, mature and respectful. Children in the early years focus on their learning, cooperate with each other and listen to their teachers. Older pupils act as role models and mentors for younger children.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Many pupils join one of the two choirs, the orchestra or the steel pans groups. Recently, a group of pupils sang at Buckingham Palace. Pupils also take part in 'the politics project', 'aspirations day' and 'culture day'. They are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

The school has created a rich and ambitious curriculum. Leaders have carefully chosen what subject content pupils should learn and in what order. This means that pupils build their knowledge, make connections in their learning and apply their understanding with increasing confidence. For example, in music, pupils learn a broad range of composition, performance and evaluation skills through pulse and rhythm in Reception and Year 1. This enables pupils to confidently deepen their musical understanding and play instruments such as keyboards and drums. In Latin, pupils learn the present tense in Year 3, the past tense in Year 4 and then the interchange between past and present tenses in Year 5 confidently. The school makes sure that pupils develop high levels of digital knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

Reading is a big priority at the school. Stories, rhymes and songs bring high-quality texts to life in Nursery. Children learn formal phonics from the start of Reception. Pupils, including the lowest readers, develop strong reading skills. The books that pupils read match the sounds they are learning in class. Children who need help are identified quickly and supported effectively. As a result of high-quality training, staff demonstrate strong subject knowledge and deliver the phonics programme well. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading.

Many pupils join the school with low levels of literacy. They quickly learn to talk in full sentences, use key vocabulary and project their voice when speaking about their

learning. Pupils with SEND achieve very well across the curriculum and are fully included in the life of the school. They receive expert support and adaptations so that their needs are closely met. Children in early years are very well prepared for Year 1. They enjoy discussing their work and happily share their thoughts and ideas. They take turns, listen to each other and follow instructions extremely well.

The school has the highest expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils rise to these expectations. They have incredibly positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils follow the school's 'three key agreements' and demonstrate the 10 'excellent learner' attributes. The school promotes high attendance with compassion and challenge. Leaders make regular home visits if required. As a result, pupils attend school very regularly.

The school provides pupils with a wide and rich set of experiences. This year, pupils have completed many thousands of hours of extra-curricular activities which help them to graduate from the 'St Fidelis University'. The school builds on pupils' independence exceptionally well, for instance through sleepovers and residential visits and actively raising money for the homeless.

The school provides pupils with many opportunities to take on responsibilities. For example, pupils can become prefects, sports leaders or reading champions. They can help with the monthly food bank collections, become rights respecting school ambassadors or join the Evangelium Group. Pupils very regularly attend the many after-school clubs, including street dance, Spanish and football. They can attend one of the many outings, including to the British Library, Tate Modern or the Houses of Parliament. All pupils benefit from outdoor experiences in the natural environment.

Leaders, including governors, have created an ambitious culture that puts pupils' learning at the centre of everything that they do. Staff take pride in working here and are highly valued. Staff, parents and pupils are rightly proud to be part of this school community.

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

Unique reference number	101458
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10323283
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	453
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Br James Boner
Headteacher	Mark Hannon (Executive Headteacher) Catherine Quirke (Head of School)
Website	www.st-fidelis.bexley.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 April 2023, under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Roman Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Southwark. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in May 2017.
- The school is led by an executive headteacher and head of school. The executive headteacher also leads two other schools.
- Leaders do not make use of 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.
- Inspectors met with members of the school senior leadership team, a selection of

subject leaders, teachers and support staff.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science, art and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subject areas.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 met with those responsible for governance, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also spoke with a representative from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and looking at information collected from Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

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