

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Salmestone Primary School

College Road, Margate, Kent CT9 4DB

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 October 2024

Outcome

Salmestone Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Thomas Platten. This school is part of The Kemnal 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 (CEO), Karen Roberts, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gaenor Bagley.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and see it as a close, family community. Staff work hard here to support pupils and their families. The pastoral care is strong, though does not come at the expense of high aspirations for pupils to achieve academically. As a result, pupils achieve well. They are increasingly better prepared for their move to secondary school when the time comes.

Pupils are happy and safe here. They generally behave well and enjoy learning. They frown on silly behaviour. Older pupils say that poor behaviour is not a problem because staff now have higher expectations than in past. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they get as leaders, but want more chances to help their teachers, who they feel are kind and who give everyone an equal chance to enjoy school.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well to access the curriculum. This includes in the early years, where children develop quickly as independent learners. Many pupils benefit from the school's ACE programme (a champion for every child), which provides additional support for their reading, attendance and well-being. Pupils themselves value this initiative, not least because it enables them to share any concerns, as well as celebrate the progress they are making.

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

This is a school that is moving forward at a pace. Though smaller than at the time of the last inspection, there is no sense that the school has shrunk or that any aspect of provision is less secure than it should be. Staff feel valued and well supported in their work. The multi-academy trust is also playing its part in ensuring that the school has a stable future and that pupils from all backgrounds, including those with SEND, benefit from a good quality of education.

The school's curriculum is evolving, though built on firm foundations. It starts in Nursery and builds through Reception, where children are prepared well for their move to Year 1. Staff in early years have a clear understanding of the strengths and the barriers to learning individuals have. As a result, children grow in confidence daily. They are happy to talk to visitors about bats, cats and other topics they are exploring in their autumn-term learning journey.

Curriculum leadership is developing. Key staff are refining what is taught across a range of subjects to ensure that pupils' learning is relevant and builds on what they already know. Smaller cohorts of pupils and a changing local context make this work crucially important. Staff understand that the majority of pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds. As a result, the focus on providing a tailored curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils is paying dividends by the end of Year 6.

Pupils enjoy learning about new things. Their discussions with the inspector revealed a healthy divergence of opinion about which subjects are best and which are not. Some pupils relish the school's renewed focus on reading. Those that struggle to become fluent readers are supported appropriately. Other pupils enjoy playing 'games' on computers. These online programs are linked to reading, times tables and other mathematical problem-solving challenges.

Teachers benefit from a range of professional development. This includes a focus on ensuring that teaching meets the needs of all pupils. This work generally has a positive impact on the progress pupils are making through the curriculum, including in subjects like science or history. However, there is some inconsistency across the school in how staff design and adapt learning tasks for pupils. This means that, on occasion, chances to move learning on are missed, or pupils are not as fully engaged in learning as they might be.

Pupils' personal development has a high priority, underpinned by the school's personal, social and health education programme. Additionally, a wide range of activities enrich pupils' experiences and teach them about life in modern Britain. Initiatives that focus on current affairs, the plight of asylum seekers and other issues are supplemented by trips to local galleries, theatres and historical sites. Older pupils talk eagerly about their recent work recycling rubbish found on a local beach. All pupils access age-appropriate relationships and sex education and health education. Opportunities for pupils to learn about the potential dangers of social media and safer use of the internet are fully in place.

Despite this being a happy place, rates of absence are too high. The school is working on this. There are indications that this work is beginning to have some impact. However, much more needs to be done in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that all pupils benefit fully from what the school has to offer.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, staff do not adapt their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils as well as they might. Activity choices sometimes hold learning up. Sometimes, staff miss the chance to move learning on. This means that pupils sometimes lose focus and their progress through the curriculum is not as strong as it might be. The school should continue to focus sharply on ensuring that best practice is more widely shared, so that all pupils benefit from high-quality teaching.
- Rates of pupil absence, including persistent absence, are too high. Too many pupils do not attend school as often as they should. Despite the school's focus on this problem, rates of absence are not falling as quickly as they should, meaning that too many pupils are missing school. The school should redouble its efforts in this area to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly, so that their academic potential and life chances are fully realised.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness on 22 and 23 January 2019.

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	138438
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341713
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gaenor Bagley
CEO of the trust	Karen Roberts
Headteacher	Thomas Platten
Website	www.salmestone-tkat.org
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Kemnal Academies Trust, a multi-academy trust with 45 other provisions.
- A new headteacher has joined the school since the last inspection.
- Since the last inspection, the school has reduced from two forms of entry to one form of entry. This means that each year group now has one class rather than two.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector held a wide range of meetings with leaders at all levels, as well as teaching and support staff. He met with the chair of the local governing body. He also met with a representative of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, 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 parents, 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.
- Pupils were spoken with throughout the inspection to gain their views about the school. The inspector also met formally with a representative group of pupils.
- The inspector considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024