

# Inspection of a school judged Good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Stephen's Church of England Primary School

Dorset Road, London SW8 1EJ

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Inspection dates:

12 and 13 November 2024

## **Outcome**

St Stephen's Church of England Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

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

St Stephen's is a warm and welcoming school. Pupils are polite and friendly to staff and to each other. The school ensures that pupils learn in a safe and nurturing environment where they gain the skills needed to enjoy life as well as receiving a rounded education.

Pupils could name members of staff they would turn to if they had any concerns. They know that person would ensure any problems were dealt with appropriately. Most pupils behave sensibly and focus on their learning in class. At playtimes, they play together happily and cooperatively, enjoying their games and developing their imaginations.

The school has high expectations, including for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum and, by the time they move to the next stage of education, most pupils achieve well.

The school provides enriching and exciting experiences to enhance learning, including trips, outdoor learning, and after-school clubs. Pupils were excited to talk about their visits to museums and parks. They are inspired by visitors. For example, during Black History Month, a university professor and a musician spoke about their experiences.

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

The school has created a well-thought-out and ambitious curriculum where pupils revisit and build on their learning. The school makes sure that the curriculum is designed to

respect the diverse backgrounds of the pupils at the school. For example, they ensure that pupils see themselves represented in the texts used.

The school prioritises teaching pupils to read. In Nursery, pupils enjoy listening to a variety of stories and rhymes. Staff have been well trained and so teach the phonics programme with precision. Pupils can blend sounds to form words and read books matched to the sounds they know. Any pupils who fall behind in the phonics programme are given support to catch up.

Pupils' progress through the curriculum, beyond reading, is clear. For example, in mathematics, Nursery children use concrete resources to help them learn to count. By Year 6, pupils learn to calculate fractions and relate this to percentages and decimals. Pupils can discuss their learning and make connections to what they already know. For example, in history, pupils were able to recall different empires they had studied and draw similarities between them. In science, pupils could talk about how the subject gave them important knowledge for their future lives. Staff praise the training and support from subject leads they receive which improves their teaching. This allows them to present information clearly and effectively in lessons.

The school identifies pupils with SEND as swiftly as possible and supports them in different ways to learn successfully throughout the curriculum. This includes advice from specialists, visual resources and staff providing different activities or breaking down the learning into smaller pieces.

Pupils appreciate the support offered to improve and deepen their learning, for example through feedback from staff in lessons and in their books. They know that if they struggle at all, they will receive extra support, for example in small groups or one to one. However, in wider curriculum subjects, the way in which teachers carry out checks on learning is still being developed and needs to be more carefully structured and consistently organised and applied.

The school works effectively in order to improve attendance. This includes having meetings with parents and carers and also offering them support where needed, such as offering places for pupils in the breakfast club. Pupils are also given rewards for good attendance, handed out during a Friday assembly.

Most of the time, pupils behave well. In lessons, pupils are mostly focused on their learning and are ready to answer questions. Behaviour incidents are dealt with immediately and good behaviour is encouraged and rewarded by staff.

The school enriches pupils' learning in many different ways. It celebrates different backgrounds and heritages, for example on International Evening. Pupils can talk about the different faiths and religions they study. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain and understand the fundamental British values. The school encourages pupils to take on responsibilities in the school. For example, they can contribute to the school newspaper or be a 'playground hero' and help to resolve conflicts at playtime.

Leaders are dedicated to continuing to improve the school in all areas. Staff were overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many describe it as being like 'a family.' They know leaders consider their workload and well-being. This ensures they can make a real difference to pupils' learning. Governors are proud to work at the school. They ensure they understand leaders' decisions and hold them to account while also being supportive.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some subjects in the wider curriculum, assessment is not used precisely enough to check what pupils learn and remember. In these instances, pupils do not consistently develop the same depth of knowledge and understanding as they do in other subjects. The school should ensure that assessment is used consistently well across the curriculum to identify any errors or misconceptions in pupils' learning.

## **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 to be 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 in May 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 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>	100621
<b>Local authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10345668
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	195
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jermain Tomlin (co-chair) Rebecca Heywood (co-chair)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Linda Campbell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-stephens.lambeth.sch.uk">www.st-stephens.lambeth.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	8 and 9 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England school in the diocese of Southwark. The school's most recent section 48 inspection was in September 2024. The next inspection is due in 2029.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club every week day.

## 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 this evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.

- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. They also held meetings with the members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys completed by pupils, parents, and staff.

### **Inspection team**

Eleanor Ross, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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