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Helen Biles-Wood
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Dear Mrs Biles-Wood

Urgent inspection of Saint Edmund's Roman Catholic Primary School

Following my visit with Ben Jordan, His Majesty's Inspector, to the school on 15 and 16 October 2025, I write on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss the school.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for urgent inspections. The inspection was carried out because His Majesty's Chief Inspector wished to determine the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school, as concerns had been raised with Ofsted about the effectiveness of leadership and management in the school and pupils' well-being.

We do not give graded judgements on urgent inspections. However, if we find some evidence that overall standards may be declining, but where no serious concerns have been identified, then the next inspection will normally be a graded inspection, which will be carried out under section 5 of the Act and be brought forward. If we have serious concerns, we will deem the urgent inspection as a graded inspection immediately.

Evidence

We scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. We reviewed governors' minutes, including an audit of safeguarding procedures and follow-up actions, safeguarding reports, policies, pupil risk assessments, attendance records and alternative provision documentation. In addition, we visited lessons and observed pupils at the start of the school day and during social times.

We met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the chair of the board of directors, the chair of the local governing committee, the chief executive officer (CEO) and the director of school improvement for the trust. We held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority and spoke with leaders from alternative provision. Inspectors talked to a range of staff and pupils both formally and informally. We also spoke with some parents and carers at the start and end of the day.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Main findings

In the previous academic year, the school experienced staffing and leadership changes. Following a period of temporary leadership support, the trust appointed an executive headteacher in September 2025. While it is still early days, this has bolstered leadership capacity. Trust leaders recognise the need to stabilise the leadership of the school to drive forward further improvements.

Leaders prioritise an open culture of safeguarding. Recent initiatives have strengthened the school's work to keep pupils safe. A week-by-week overview details how the school promotes safeguarding at all levels. All staff receive ongoing training, including practical scenarios, which enables them to spot, record and report on any concerns that may arise with confidence. Staff understand their statutory duties and know that safeguarding is 'everyone's responsibility'.

Designated safeguarding leads manage the electronic record-keeping system effectively. Records show that they act promptly on any safeguarding concerns. The school seeks advice from external agencies when appropriate. A newly introduced procedure allows safeguarding leads to discuss and review ongoing support for individual pupils. For example, leaders monitor attendance trends and patterns for the most vulnerable pupils and families well. They follow up on absences and promote regular attendance. However, this work is in its infancy. Persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is still too high and remains a key focus for the school.

Positive relationships exist between staff and pupils. Individual risk assessments provide sufficient detail about the strategies in place to mitigate risks to some pupils' well-being and safety. Most pupils respond well to the routines and expectations in place. However, on occasion, a minority of pupils struggle to regulate their behaviour and emotions. This happens at times when the curriculum is not adapted well enough to meet their specific needs. Leaders at all levels recognise that the next step is to adapt the school's behaviour approach and curriculum thinking for pupils with the most complex SEND.

The school provides a well-designed pastoral programme, including support for pupils' well-being. For example, pupil ambassadors lead assemblies promoting the importance of

staying mentally healthy. Pupils who spoke with inspectors felt safe and confident to report any worries or concerns. They know that members of the safeguarding team will deal with any issues quickly and sensitively. Through the personal, social and health education curriculum, pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of important safety topics, such as the dangers of substance misuse, online risks, consent and road safety.

Additional support

The school benefits from wider trust support. This includes external checks on the suitability of staff working in the school, safeguarding audits and central trust monitoring of the school's work. Trust directors keep close oversight of safeguarding and leadership arrangements. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and next steps. Local governors provide an appropriate balance of support and challenge. They gather first-hand evidence of staff's understanding of safeguarding, including asking pertinent questions about attendance, behaviour and site security. They hold leaders to account and fulfil their statutory duties well.

Priorities for further improvement

- The school should revise the behaviour policy so that it gives clearer guidance on procedures to manage pupils with the most complex needs.
- The school should ensure that staff understand how to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- The school should continue to embed recently introduced strategies to improve attendance for some of the most disadvantaged pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the CEO of the Dunstan Catholic Education Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Clifton, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Wiltshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Dale Burr
His Majesty's Inspector