Inspection of a good school: St Thomas A Becket Roman Catholic Primary School

Mottisfont Road, Abbey Wood, London SE2 9LY

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2023

Outcome

St Thomas A Becket Roman Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and confident. Behaviour in classes and around the school is consistently positive and learning proceeds uninterrupted. This is because leaders and staff emphasise the importance of good manners and respect and pupils enact the 'three golden rules'. Pupils understand what bullying is. Although it rarely happens, staff deal with any incidents swiftly. Pupils know they can speak to staff if they have any worries. Pupils feel safe and are kept safe in school.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), access a curriculum that is ambitious. They produce work of good quality in different subjects and are typically well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Across the two sites, leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to help each other and the wider community. For example, older and younger pupils collaborate on assemblies and other projects. Similarly, pupils are supported to understand the work of, and contribute towards, different international charities. Leaders provide several opportunities designed to enhance pupils' wider development. For example, all pupils in Year 6 acquire accredited sailing qualifications.

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

Leaders have constructed an ambitious curriculum that matches the breadth and ambition of what is required nationally. The knowledge pupils need to secure in different subjects has been identified. This is typically well sequenced so that pupils revisit, practise and embed important ideas. This helps them to tackle more complex concepts later. For example, in mathematics, younger pupils practise and secure their times tables. This helps them later on to calculate the area of increasingly complex shapes. Similarly, in geography, pupils learn about famous landmarks in London. This helps them understand the spread and effects of the Great Fire of London when they study this in history.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They generally present ideas clearly and check what pupils have learned. Errors and misconceptions are picked up swiftly and corrected so that they do not persist in pupils' work.

However, in some subjects, the tasks and activities provided do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to practise and embed the key ideas identified in the curriculum. In these instances, pupils do not deepen their understanding of important concepts as effectively. Pupils with SEND are identified quickly. Staff make sure that these pupils have the support they need to access the same curriculum as their peers where possible. For pupils with more complex needs, leaders work closely with outside agencies to secure the right specialist advice and guidance. Staff incorporate this guidance effectively to design a more personalised curriculum that builds well from pupils' starting points and ensures that their needs are met.

From the Nursery onwards, pupils demonstrate a love of reading. Staff have been well trained to implement the agreed phonics programme with precision and accuracy. Pupils have sufficient opportunity to practise reading with books that are well matched to the sounds that they have learned. As a result, pupils develop into fluent and confident readers. They enjoy reading and being read to.

The personal, social and health education curriculum helps pupils to learn about important issues, such as cyber-bullying and the importance of self-efficacy. Pupils take part in a range of outings that enrich the curriculum. For example, they go on residential visits that aim to develop their resilience. Pupils' spiritual development is well promoted. They learn about a range of other faiths and cultures and the importance of respecting and celebrating diversity. This helps pupils to understand what it means to live in modern Britain.

Staff, parents and carers are positive about the school. Staff value the open communication they have with leaders. They are also appreciative of the efforts made to make workload manageable and maintain their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have built strong relationships with families to ensure that safeguarding is an ongoing priority. Staff are well trained to recognise the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They have an acute knowledge of the safeguarding issues that pupils may face. Leaders act swiftly to ensure that pupils are safe when issues arise. They work effectively with other agencies to get pupils and their families the help that they need.

The curriculum has been designed to help pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe, including when on online. Pupils receive age-appropriate information about healthy, caring and respectful relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the tasks provided do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to secure the most important ideas outlined in the curriculum. As a result, pupils do not consistently deepen their understanding of important concepts in these areas. Leaders should ensure that the activities pupils complete routinely match the ambition of the curriculum so that pupils are better supported to learn and remember more in different subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2012.

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' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100177
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10241912
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	413
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Barry Cannon
Headteacher	Bernadette Greally
Website	www.stthomasabecketsch.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is situated over two sites.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders in the school. The inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, a representative from the diocese and spoke to the school improvement partner.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. As part of the deep dives, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. The inspector spoke with a range of pupils about their learning and also viewed a sample of their work. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection.

- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including school policies, behaviour logs, school evaluation and improvement documents.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector checked the procedures for recruiting new members of staff, spoke with the designated safeguarding team and spoke with staff and governors about how they identify and report concerns.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Lando Du Plooy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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