

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School

St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School, Dane Park Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 7LS

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 May 2025

Outcome

St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love, and feel loved by, the school. Pupils speak passionately about the wide range of opportunities available to them. The school works well with parents and community leaders. As a result, pupils' welfare is at the heart of every decision and action. Pupils recognise this and describe school as a safe place where, 'We can be the best we can be.'

The school perceives the high level of local deprivation as a motivation and not an excuse. Pupils' aspirations reflect this. They speak of possible future careers as professionals with passion and demonstrate a detailed understanding of these roles. Pupils strive to achieve their best. Staff have high expectations of their achievement. Pupils recognise this and work towards these goals.

Pupils are impeccably polite. They are confident that if a conflict arises, adults will resolve it. In lessons and across the school, behaviour is calm and settled. The school's inclusive culture is demonstrated in how well all pupils are welcomed and cared for by peers.

Pupils recognise and welcome diversity. The school's increasing diversity is a source of pride to pupils. They are well informed and open-minded about the pupils who join the school with different needs and experiences.

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

The school has redesigned and improved the curriculum in recent years. The curriculum is broad and interesting and built effectively around the school's values. The school has set out precisely what pupils should know. It ensures that pupils learn key content in a logical

order. Staff now check what pupils learn and remember well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are swiftly identified. The school's adaptations to help pupils with SEND to learn successfully are very well considered and highly effective.

Pupils progress well through the curriculum from the Nursery class onwards. However, for some pupils, the changes to the wider curriculum have left some gaps in what they know from previous years. The school has a comprehensive plan for addressing this, but this is not fully implemented. This means that pupils struggle to make meaningful connections between their current topics and what they learned in previous years.

The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. Leaders have taken effective action to address historically weaker results in reading at the end of Year 6. Pupils read books that are well matched to the sounds they know. This helps them to be fluent readers. From the start of Nursery, staff closely follow the ambitious reading programme. Struggling readers are supported effectively. Pupils have a potent love of reading and enjoy visiting the vibrant library. They read a broad range of books, which provide insights into different cultures and faiths.

Pupils' feelings of joy and positivity about their school are clear in their words and actions. They treat each other and adults with respect and care. Pupils embody their positive attitudes to learning in their excellent classroom behaviour. They follow routines and expectations with a sense of purpose. Pupils have warm and caring relationships with staff. They are confident that adults will listen to and resolve their concerns. The school has a sharp focus on attendance. It has a comprehensive understanding of the patterns and trends relating to pupil absence and uses this information effectively to improve how often pupils attend. This has a consistently positive impact on the attendance of the most vulnerable pupils.

The school's values of thoughtfulness, knowledge and inclusion are known and applied by pupils across the school. They have an exceptional grasp of the idea of citizenship and their role in the betterment of the community. Pupils are enthusiastic and active in supporting local projects. For example, they are passionate about their role in resolving local issues such as littering and antisocial behaviour. There is an effective programme in place to develop pupils' understanding of important topics such as different faiths, relationships and the rule of law. Pupils are fully prepared, not only for their next stage of education, but also for the wider world.

Leaders at every level are passionate about the school and its role in the community. The school provides a comprehensive professional development program. As a result, staff have excellent professional skills and knowledge. The school's lofty expectations have not come at the cost of staff's welfare. Staff, including those early in their career, appreciate that their well-being is a priority. Governors meet their statutory duties and are passionate about the school's values.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not recall some key knowledge with enough accuracy over time. As a result, some pupils cannot always make effective connections between topics and prior learning. The school has begun to address this but should ensure that pupils have opportunities to remember and apply learning sufficiently well to improve their future 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in July 2015.

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	118764
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341521
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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Turner
Headteacher	Simon Marshall
Website	www.stethelbertsschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic school and is part of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The school's last section 48 inspection was in May 2023.
- The school has a new headteacher and senior leadership team since the last inspection.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector spoke to leaders of the school, members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority and diocese.

- 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 considered the views expressed by staff and pupils in Ofsted's online surveys and the responses of parents to the online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Toby Martlew, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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