

Inspection of St Stephen's CofE Primary School

Uxbridge Road, London W12 8LH

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since May 2011.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is one big happy family. School leaders and staff work closely with parents and carers. Together, they strive to ensure that every pupil can thrive. Pupils said that they love the way teachers make their lessons so interesting and engaging. They thoroughly enjoy participating in the wealth of extra-curricular activities and performance opportunities on offer. Everyone is included. Staff's passion and joy are infectious. Pupils do not want to miss out. Consequently, attendance is consistently very high.

The school is determined to give pupils the highest quality of education possible. Pupils' achievements from the early years upwards and across the full range of subjects are routinely exceptionally high. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils enjoy warm working relationships with adults. They are respectful of all people. Right from the early years, staff teach children to be kind and helpful towards each other. Around the school, pupils are calm, purposeful and cheerful.

Parents cannot speak highly enough about the school. The school runs multiple workshops for parents. These help them to support their children in a variety of ways. Beyond this, there are several staff and family social events, including the annual family supper and the recent camping trip and walk across the Isle of Wight.

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

The school has a vision and ambition for excellence in all that it does. It brings this to fruition through the curriculum, which goes well beyond expectations. Every subject has been thoroughly thought through in terms of what knowledge the school wants pupils to know and by when this should be taught. Across the subjects, teachers have high levels of expertise and skills to teach effectively. There are subject specialists for Spanish, music, physical education (PE), gymnastics and dance. Spanish, for example, is taught from Reception all the way through to Year 6. Across the board, staff often check pupils' knowledge and skills. They use their findings to help all pupils, including those with SEND, to catch up quickly should they fall behind. For example, in PE, staff give pupils extra booster sessions if they have struggled to master a specific skill.

There is a strong commitment to ensuring that inclusion and diversity are embedded in the school. This influences the choice of texts that are read in English. Pupils are exposed to literature reflective of a wide range of communities and experiences. It also impacts on the choice of resources, such as dolls in the early years that reflect different cultures and disabilities. Subject leaders arrange enrichment activities like clubs, educational visits and visitors to the school. These are planned to extend pupils' knowledge and whet their appetite for the subjects. For example, children in the early years had a video link with an American-based palaeontologist, who was digging up a dinosaur. As part of the annual Year 5 residential trip to France, to learn

about World War 1, pupils visit the war cemeteries. They specifically visit the grave of a soldier who had been a pupil at this school. The school employs a scientist in residence. She runs extra workshops for every class to broaden pupils' scientific knowledge. As a result, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, achieve exceptionally well across both the school and their subjects.

Teaching of reading is a top priority. From Reception, well-trained staff are proficient in delivering the school's chosen phonics programme to a high standard. Staff ensure that all pupils are supported to keep up with the expectations of the programme. As such, pupils become confident and fluent readers. Lots of activities promote pupils' love of reading. There are weekly visits to the school's well-resourced library, as well as visiting authors. Every class is named after a living poet. Staff teach pupils about the chosen poet, and they learn some of their poems by heart. The school also arranges opportunities for pupils to communicate with their named poet. From early years upwards, staff focus very sharply on developing children's and pupils' vocabulary and speaking skills. Staff encourage pupils to voice their thoughts and opinions. Pupils thus learn to engage in conversation with confidence and are highly articulate.

Early years staff establish clear routines for behaviour from the start. Children quickly learn to follow the instructions of adults. They pay attention to formal teaching sessions and work well together. Pupils work diligently and collaboratively in class, as they want to achieve their best. These positive attitudes make a strong contribution to pupils' high achievements.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development is exceptional. There is a very high uptake of the many clubs on offer. Equality is at the heart of the school's work. During their time at the school, every pupil is given an opportunity to take on a leadership role and to take part in competitive sport. Every pupil has a part in the annual end-of-year musical production. Pupils choose the charities they want to support. They make their own arrangements for raising funds. The school works to raise pupils' aspirations for the future, such as through the 'cracking careers' programme. Lots of people, including parents, come in every half term to talk to pupils. They discuss their careers and how their education helped them in their journey. There are many opportunities provided to nurture pupils' talents. For example, some talented musicians are helped to get scholarships to attend specialist music schools. During their time at school, all pupils are taken on five residential trips.

Governors bring a range of expertise and experience to their work. They play a key role in supporting the school and checking that it provides an excellent education for all. Staff said that leaders are considerate of their workload and welfare. They greatly appreciate the many opportunities they have to develop their careers. There is a strong sense of camaraderie, and staff retention is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	100353
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10267922
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	442
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Su Wijeratna
Headteacher	Michael Schumm
Website	www.ststephensce.lbhf.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 May 2011

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has expanded from a one-form entry to a two-form entry school.
- The chair of governors took up her post in September 2018.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in May 2023.
- School leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID 19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They spoke with the chair and eight other governors. They also spoke with a representative of the local authority and of the Diocese of London.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including looking at records of pupils' behaviour. Inspectors also had formal meetings with staff and with pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey. They also spoke with parents on the playground. They considered the responses to the staff and pupils surveys.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alan McDougall	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathan Newby	Ofsted Inspector
Karyn Ray	Ofsted Inspector

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