

Inspection of an outstanding school: St John the Baptist Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Cron dall Street, London N1 6JG

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 November 2023

Outcome

St John the Baptist Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

At this school, pupils come first. This is because staff have high expectations for all, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils appreciate the help and support they receive from staff to help them learn. Behaviour is exemplary and attendance is high. Pupils are extremely polite and considerate towards adults and peers alike. Bullying is not tolerated; any rare incidents are dealt with swiftly. As such, pupils are kept safe and feel safe at school.

The school's curriculum is ambitious and supplemented with a planned programme of enrichment that inspires and motivates pupils to learn. For example, pupils enjoyed their residential trips to Ufton Court. Pupils work hard and are resilient. Over time, pupils develop a rich body of knowledge and understanding. This means they are well prepared for their next stage in education.

Pupils love to sing loud and proud at this school. Through music, they discover the importance of cultural identity and mutual respect. They particularly enjoy Motown and jazz. Weekly singing assemblies are lively and promote a deep sense of belonging.

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

The school has designed and implemented a rich, broad and ambitious curriculum. Leaders have identified the key knowledge and skills they want pupils to know and learn. These concepts have been sequenced in a logical order. This means that pupils learn and remember more. For example, in mathematics, children in early years learn to count, sort and classify objects through joining in with nursery rhymes and stories. This helps older pupils to confidently draw on their knowledge of numbers to reason and solve increasingly complex word problems. Similarly, in history, younger pupils explore the local area. This

helps older pupils link significant events with broader historical concepts. For example, pupils understand how the Match Girls' Strike of 1888 at the Bryant & May match factory in Bow was an example of protest that enacted positive change.

Children embark on their reading journey from the moment they start school. This early start is driven by the school's commitment to ensuring that every pupil becomes a fluent and confident reader. Children's reading is systemically checked as a result, and books accurately match the sounds pupils know. Staff provide effective support for pupils who fall behind. They ensure that any gaps are promptly and efficiently addressed for all pupils, including those with SEND. Pupils develop a love of reading. They read widely and enjoy sharing books with their peers and adults. They particularly enjoy authors who reflect the diversity of the wider community, for instance books by Malorie Blackman and S.F. Said.

Leaders and staff are aspirational for all pupils, including those with SEND. Swift identification and effective support for pupils is prioritised. Teachers adeptly modify activities and resources, ensuring that pupils with SEND access an equally ambitious curriculum as their peers. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and typically check pupils' knowledge and understanding. Misconceptions are identified and addressed swiftly. In lessons, pupils embody the three school rules, to be ready, be safe and be respectful. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour for learning are exemplary. They work collaboratively and respectfully with their peers. As a result, there is no disruption to learning.

Celebration, cooperation and determination are three of the school's key values. With this in mind, pupils are rightly proud to be eco-warriors, members of the school council and well-being ambassadors. Year 6 pupils take on the role of school prefects. They wear their badges with honour and pride. Younger pupils say that they look up to the Year 6 pupils. They say they are their role models. Pupils are very well-prepared for life in modern Britain. Through the wider curriculum, there are many opportunities for the pupils to debate current and challenging issues such as modern-day slavery and human trafficking.

Teachers and staff, including those in the early stages of their careers, feel valued by leaders and those responsible for governance. Staff are particularly grateful for the 'helpful Wednesday' initiative in which leaders work alongside teachers to support them. Staff are committed to the pupils and rightly proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged outstanding in October 2017.

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	100266
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10296688
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Adediran (local advisory body)
Headteacher	Toni Mason Sian Davies (executive principal)
Website	www.st-john.hackney.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 October 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St John the Baptist Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School is part of the Primary Advantage Federation consisting of eight local schools.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector held meetings with the senior leadership team, members of the local governing body, the executive principal and a representative from the local authority.

- 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 scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to pupils' personal development and behaviour.

- The inspector met with groups of staff and pupils to discuss aspects of the school's work.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The inspection took account of responses to online surveys for staff, pupils, and parents and carers.

Inspection team

Dawn Titus, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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