

Inspection of a good school: Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School

Trinity Road, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1LU

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 October 2023

Outcome

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Pamela Gough. This school is part of Aletheia Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Stephen Carey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Till.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be members of their highly diverse school community. The actions of staff and the school's caring ethos help pupils to feel welcomed and supported. Pupils from all backgrounds relate to the school's values of 'respect, honesty and love', and they strive to embody them.

Pupils feel a real ownership of the school because of the well-judged opportunities provided for them to take on responsibility. This leads to a calm and welcoming atmosphere. Sports leaders and Year 6 prefects act as role models for younger pupils, who aspire to be like them. At break and lunchtime, 'pupil mediators', elected by their peers, help to resolve any conflict that may arise. This is typical of pupils' willingness to contribute to the life of the school.

Pupils say that they value the wide range of additional activities the school provides. These include sports clubs and competitions, artistic endeavours, and performances. Pupils are proud of performing in school plays and concerts with audiences of their classmates and parents. One described how they were 'nervous at the start', but their teacher's faith in them helped them to know they could do it.

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

The school has rapidly improved the quality of its curriculum. Teachers are passionate about the individual subjects they lead and aspire for all pupils to flourish in their learning. This has resulted in the planning of effective lessons that clearly identify and sequence knowledge. However, the impact of this work is not yet consistently seen in every subject. For example, some pupils are not yet able to use subject-specific vocabulary fluently. This reduces their ability to explore and then understand concepts. The school recognises this

and is determined to ensure that the ambitious curriculum is taught consistently and that pupils achieve highly in every subject.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are carefully considered. Specific support is routinely given in lessons to ensure that pupils with SEND can learn with their peers. The school is skilled in securing external support to help pupils with more complex SEND. Efficient review processes ensure that all support is well-considered and effective.

The trust has supported the school in rapidly improving the quality of education that pupils receive, including in early years. The school understands that this is an area that, previously, has not been as strong as it needs to be. Children now make a successful start to their education. Learning is focused on providing the skills children need as they move into key stage 1. An example of this is the focus on improving children's fine motor skills.

Reading is central to the learning of every pupil. Early readers are taught by well-trained staff to help develop reading confidence and fluency. Pupils at all stages of reading, including those who find it more difficult, excitedly describe their favourite books. Reading books in the early years, some of which are in the different languages that children speak at home, help the children to engage with stories and share them with both friends and adults.

Behaviour in lessons is calm and purposeful. High expectations and clear routines help all pupils to understand how they should behave. During social time, pupils interact well. This is supported by routines such as organised play actives. Pupils who find it more difficult to manage their behaviour are given a fresh start the following day. Tailored support is provided for individuals to ensure that pupils have the guidance they need to succeed.

While many pupils attend well, the attendance of some pupils is not yet high enough, and too many pupils are persistently absent. This means that they do not learn as much as they could. The school has developed processes to improve attendance, and these have started to have a positive impact.

Pupils embrace each other's cultures and are interested in each other's way of life. The school has started to reflect this in the way it celebrates a wide variety of cultural festivals. This supports the school's work to build stronger community links. This includes working with local religious groups to further pupils' understanding of the world around them.

Teaching of the personal, social and health education curriculum helps to prepare pupils for life beyond school. Pupils say these lessons are helpful. They also enjoy the wide range of extra opportunities and clubs on offer. The school monitors club attendance to make sure all pupils, including those who are more disadvantaged, are included. The school recognises the need to continue to focus on this to ensure that all pupils benefit from these opportunities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, some of the specific knowledge and vocabulary that pupils will learn are not precisely and explicitly taught. This means that pupils are less secure in using and applying subject-specific knowledge to explore and deepen their understanding. The school should continue with its work in helping pupils learn the intended knowledge across the school's curriculum.
- Some pupils are not yet attending school as regularly as they should. As a result, they are missing out on vital learning. The school needs to continue to strengthen its actions to support improvement in the attendance of these pupils.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, to be good in September 2018.

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	148217
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10288099
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	448
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Mark Till
CEO of the trust	Stephen Carey
Headteacher	Pamela Gough
Website	www.holytrinity-gravesend.kent.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Aletheia Academies Trust in November 2020.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Rochester. The last section 48 of the school's religious character inspection took place in July 2016.
- The school currently uses no alternative providers.

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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, early years leader, curriculum leaders, and other staff.
- The inspector met with governors and leaders from the trust. He also talked to a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked

at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to a sample of pupils read.

- The inspector examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- 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 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ed Mather, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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