

Inspection of St Catherine's Hoddesdon C of E Primary School

Haslewood Avenue, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire EN11 8HT

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 February 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending St Catherine's and are proud of their school. Everyone is made to feel welcome. Pupils play an active role in the local community. They take part in activities, including services at the parish church and parades with the Love Hoddesdon organisation.

Pupils are kind and considerate. They play well together. They enjoy using the outdoor play equipment and being physically active. Pupils behave well. They listen well in lessons and let others learn without disruption. They are polite and courteous.

Pupils trust staff to keep them safe and help them when needed. They believe adults want the best for them. Pupils understand and know about the different forms of bullying. Incidents, on the rare occasion they arise, are dealt with swiftly.

Pupils develop well both academically and socially. Staff encourage pupils to excel in all they do. Pupils rise to the challenge and do their best. Most achieve well.

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

Leaders have worked hard to improve the reading curriculum. Teachers do a good job of teaching young children how to read. They know their pupils well and match books carefully to pupils' phonics knowledge. This ensures that pupils experience success with their reading from the outset. Pupils get appropriate support to develop fluent reading. In all classes, teachers read books at the end of every day to promote a love of literature.

Leaders have planned the English, mathematics and science curriculums well. They have identified the important subject knowledge that pupils need to learn and have put this into a logical order. As a result, pupils remember this knowledge. Most achieve well in these subjects.

Pupils study the full range of subjects. However, the way leaders have organised their curriculum means that some subjects are not taught each term. This means there are gaps between when pupils learn these subjects. Leaders have not ensured that teaching in some of these subjects emphasises and revisits the most important subject knowledge pupils should learn. Consequently, pupils forget some important ideas over time. Their understanding in these subjects is not as secure as it should be. Leaders have already made plans to address this.

Leaders use assessment to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge. They adjust the curriculum appropriately to address these. Senior leaders have a secure understanding of the curriculum. However, some subject leaders do not yet understand the curriculum in their subjects in sufficient detail. This means they do

not check that teachers are delivering the curriculum as intended or that pupils are learning as well as they should.

Pupils' needs are well met, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum. Staff are well trained to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. They adjust the curriculum in most subjects well to support pupils' learning. Consequently, pupils with SEND make the same strong progress in their learning as their classmates.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. Opportunities to extend learning beyond the curriculum are well considered. Pupils learn about different faiths and explore ethical issues. Leaders have established links with local businesses. These help pupils see how what they learn connects to the real world.

Pupils learn about healthy relationships. They learn to respect others' cultures and beliefs. Through the school council, pupils share their views with staff and are kept well informed about developments. Pupils learn to care for others. Everyone feels welcome.

In Reception, children enjoy stimulating activities that meet their needs and help them learn. They play well together. They live up to adults' high expectations of behaviour. Leaders work closely with parents to help them support their children at home. Leaders also work closely with teachers in Year 1 to ensure that children leave Reception ready for the next steps in their education.

Leaders ensure that staff workload and well-being are prioritised. Staff appreciate their efforts and enjoy working at the school. Governors take steps to retain staff, meaning staff turnover is low. Consequently, staff know the pupils and their families well.

Governors carefully evaluate the quality of the school's provision. They support and challenge leaders effectively in order to meet their high expectations.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training on how to identify signs of harm and keep pupils safe. Leaders take swift and appropriate actions, including referring to outside agencies, when needed, so that pupils quickly get the support they need. The inclusion team provides a range of well-being support for pupils.

Leaders complete all required checks on the suitability of adults to work with pupils thoroughly. Governors check the record of these checks carefully to confirm that leaders carry out their duties effectively.

Pupils learn how to recognise risk and stay safe in different situations, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum is not planned or sequenced to ensure that pupils remember important subject knowledge. Pupils do not achieve as well as they could in these subjects. Leaders need to sequence the curriculum for all subjects to ensure that key knowledge is learned by pupils.
- Some subject leaders do not have a clear understanding of the design of the curriculum. These leaders are not able to track the delivery of the curriculum to make sure that it is being learned by all pupils. Senior leaders need to ensure that subject leaders have the expertise to check that the curriculum is implemented effectively and supports pupils' learning equally well in all subjects.

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	133773
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10240240
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	361
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Falconbridge
Headteacher	Angela Wallis
Website	www.stcaths.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 October 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has grown in popularity and the number of pupils on the school roll has increased. The number of pupils with SEND has increased. The proportion of pupils attending the school who have an education, health and care plan is now above the national average.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The previous inspection of the schools' denominational education and collective worship, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, was conducted in March 2016. The next section 48 inspection is due within eight years of this date.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, physical education and religious education. In each subject, inspectors spoke to subject leaders about the curriculum and met with teachers from the lessons visited. The inspector looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read to a known adult.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, the business manager, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority and the diocese education service.
- The inspectors looked at the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks and spoke to leaders, teachers, governors and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, which included the wider curriculum, and leaders' self-evaluation and development plans.
- The inspectors looked at a large sample of pupils' work from across the curriculum.
- The inspectors considered the 65 responses, including free-text comments, made by parents to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They also considered 28 responses to the staff survey and 83 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

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