

Inspection of Saint George's Church of England School

Meadow Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 7LS

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The executive headteacher of this school is Simon Murphy. 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, Steve Carey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Till.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils across the school are happy and feel safe. They have a clear understanding of the school's motto, 'all different, all equal and all flourishing', which is demonstrated in the way they behave towards each other and staff. Pupils are respectful towards each other and the school is highly inclusive. They are taught how to behave well. They know whom to talk to if they have any concerns and that it will be dealt with quickly. The majority of pupils attend school regularly and enjoy coming to school.

The school is ambitious for what all pupils can achieve academically. Children in early years are especially well prepared for their next steps. Pupils are successful in reaching these ambitions because the school has considered the knowledge and skills pupils need to learn over time carefully. Students in the sixth form are provided with a wide range of courses and are well supported in realising their aspirations.

There is a clear focus on pupils' development beyond the academic curriculum. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in a variety of clubs, take on leadership roles and learn about the world of work.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum that focuses both on traditional subjects and vocational options for older students in the sixth form. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well in all phases. Their needs are identified quickly, and appropriate adaptations are put in place. The school also ensures that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds receive the help they need to achieve well.

In all phases of the school, the key knowledge that pupils need to know is identified and sequenced effectively in the curriculum. Pupils learn well. However, sometimes teachers do not check what pupils have learned precisely enough. This process does not always link closely to the curriculum in some subjects. This means that at times, teachers are not completely clear about what pupils know, and therefore how the curriculum needs to be adapted subsequently.

Learning to read is a clear priority in the school. Children begin reading right from the start of Reception and quickly learn the letters and sounds that they need. The school continues to develop reading throughout the primary phase and into the secondary age range. Those pupils who need additional help in learning to read receive this quickly, regardless of their age. All staff have received training in the phonics programme to ensure that pupils get the precise teaching that is needed. In addition, development of the vocabulary that pupils need in order to become fluent readers continues into the sixth form. Reading is celebrated throughout the school, and pupils are provided with many opportunities to read widely. Pupils become fluent and confident readers.

Pupils' knowledge in mathematics is strong. Staff check pupils' misconceptions carefully throughout lessons. As a result, pupils learn to use the mathematical knowledge and skills they need. They use the right vocabulary, including in Reception, to talk about their learning. In early years, staff ensure that there are frequent opportunities to revisit this learning throughout the day, so that children develop a secure understanding.

The curriculum in early years provides children with the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for the next stage. The school has considered how children will encounter this knowledge and what it will do to ensure that it is learned securely. Staff know the children's needs exceptionally well at this stage and make a range of adaptations to meet these. This includes children with SEND. Children therefore make effective progress in early years.

The expectations for pupils' behaviour and attendance are high, and the vast majority of pupils meet these. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere. When pupils need additional help to meet these expectations, the school provides it effectively. This includes the use of a nurture room and pastoral staff who support pupils to attend school.

The personal development of pupils is a real strength. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, nutrition and their physical health. The school is responsive to the needs of the pupils of different ages and has carefully considered the needs of all pupils. This includes the extensive careers programme, which begins in the primary phase. Pupils learn about the different jobs available to them, and pupils are well prepared to make the right choices later on. Additional advice is given to pupils with SEND as part of this carefully considered programme. The school makes use of the personal, social and health education programme to teach pupils how stay safe, including when online. Pupils know where to seek help if they need it.

Trustees and governors are clear about their roles and responsibilities and they work closely together to ensure that all pupils receive the right provision. There have been some recent changes in leadership in the school, and the trust has provided extensive support for this transition. The trust also enables staff to work across schools and phases to develop their knowledge of the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment does not always link closely to the curriculum. This means that staff are not able to use assessment fully effectively to identify and plan carefully for pupils' next steps. The school needs to ensure that assessment processes link to

the curriculum and that the information arising is used to inform adaptations to subsequent teaching in order to meet pupils' needs highly effectively.

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	137609
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10288010
Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,486
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	222
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Till
CEO of the trust	Steve Carey
Headteacher	Simon Murphy (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Aletheia Academies Trust.
- The school is an all-through school and includes a sixth form.
- The school runs a breakfast and an after-school club.
- The school makes use of two registered alternative providers of education.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 had 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.
- The inspectors completed deep dives in early reading, English, mathematics, art, science and modern foreign languages. To do this, they met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited a range of lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- The inspectors also scrutinised a range of documents, including the school and trust's evaluation of the school and their priorities for improvement.
- Inspectors met with a range of senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspectors also met with representatives of the trust, including the chief executive officer, and a range of trustees and local governors. They also met with the directors of primary education in the trust.
- 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.
- The views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff were considered through discussions and a review of the responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

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