

Inspection of Eltham Church of England Primary School

Roper Street, Eltham, London SE9 1TR

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Parents and carers are full of praise for the school. They talk about how well staff nurture and support their children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils enjoy school. One reason for this is that leaders have made sure that strong relationships are at the heart of its work. Staff take every opportunity to encourage pupils. They help them learn to manage their emotions and cope with the challenges of growing up. Pupils know that adults are there for them. Pupils are kept safe and well.

Staff teach pupils about what makes people and their families different. Leaders organise events such as 'show racism the red card'. They carefully choose books, so that pupils learn about different cultures and religions. Leaders do this at the same time as celebrating the school's own faith. All this work combines to mean that pupils respect each other's backgrounds and are kind to one another. Incidents of bullying or discrimination are extremely rare.

Leaders' high expectations mean that pupils learn the importance of routines, listening and working hard, right from Nursery. Pupils respond to these expectations. They behave exceptionally well.

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

Leaders ensure that pupils study all subjects of the national curriculum. They use it to help plan what pupils should be learning and when. Leaders are ambitious for what they want pupils to achieve, for example pupils study French from Year 1. Pupils engage in a range of sports as part of their physical education (PE), including dance and swimming. In the early years, language and communication is promoted well. Children are also provided with a range of activities that develop their balance and coordination.

Leaders launched a new phonics programme at the beginning of this academic year. They made sure that all staff were suitably trained and that the books pupils read match the sounds they are learning. Pupils begin their journey of learning to read right from the beginning of Nursery. There are daily catch-up sessions for pupils who need additional support. However, when adults listen to weaker pupils reading, including those in Years 2 and 3, there are occasions when they do not help pupils to use their phonics as well as they should. As a result, these pupils are not making the full gains towards becoming the fluent readers that they could be. Older pupils also enjoy reading for pleasure. They enthusiastically talk about characters and plots from the books that they have read.

In some subjects such as mathematics pupils build up a strong body of knowledge. They become fluent with using numbers and their multiplication tables. Leaders are

currently working on further developing pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills. Children in the early years learn to count, add and subtract well.

In a few subjects, including in the early years, the specific knowledge and skills that leaders want pupils to know and remember are not as clearly identified as they should be. This makes it harder for teachers to know precisely what they need to teach and to know what pupils have been taught previously. Leaders are also currently working on improving the depth of content in the music curriculum.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They use a range of resources and activities to help pupils to learn well and to check their understanding. In French for example, pupils' ability to use accurate grammar and pronunciation is reviewed carefully. Leaders identify any possible SEND right from the early years. They make sure that teachers know pupils' needs. Staff adapt their teaching to help pupils learn the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders have made sure that pupils with SEND, who have more complex needs, are learning in the step-by-step way that is needed.

Pupils, staff, and parents all comment positively about the high standards of behaviour. Low-level disruption does not disrupt teaching. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning.

Staff give pupils a range of experiences, such as 'maths is magic' week and 'HOW week'. These help pupils to work with guest speakers and to visit local businesses. Leaders also help pupils to understand the world around them through topics, such as child poverty and deforestation. Leaders use regular assemblies and collective worship to remind pupils about the importance of respect and democracy. Pupils give back to their communities, including through a range of fundraising activities. The digital ambassadors in Year 6 also help teach other pupils how to stay safe online. Leaders have plans to develop the current offer for in-school clubs and activities, particularly to increase the participation of older pupils.

The governing body are deeply committed to the school. They know the school well, attending events and visiting the school to talk to staff and pupils, for example.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand the risks that pupils may face from living in the local area. They know the signs to look out for that may mean a pupil needs help. Leaders pick up any reported concerns from staff quickly, including reaching out to external agencies should further support or advice be needed.

Leaders provide lots of opportunities for pupils to be taught how to look after their own well-being and safety. This includes when they are online or using technologies. Parents are highly positive about how well the school cares for their children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn are not identified with enough precision. In a few others, leaders are reviewing the scope of the curriculum. As a result, pupils have not built up a deep body of knowledge and skills. Leaders need to review their curriculum thinking in these subjects, being clear on the vital knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember, right from the early years.
- Occasionally, when staff listen to weaker pupils reading, they do not make sure that pupils take maximum opportunity to use their phonics. Consequently, sometimes weaker readers, including those in Years 2 and 3, are not being supported in developing fluency as well as they could. Leaders need to refine their training and sharpen their monitoring of this work.

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	100167
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10228769
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	458
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rupert Osborn
Headteacher	Matthew Wills
Website	http://www.elthamcoeschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	10 and 11 June 2008

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England primary school in the Diocese of Southwark. It had its last section 48 inspection in June 2018.
- The headteacher took up their post in June 2022.
- The school does not use any registered or unregistered alternative provision.

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 the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior staff. The lead inspector also held separate meetings with representatives from the local governing body, the local authority and the diocese.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, French and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and pupils about their learning. Inspectors reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders, pupils and looked at pupils' work in other subjects, including geography, music, art and computing. They also considered provision in the early years.
- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and behaviour. They reviewed a range of documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff, case studies and attendance information. Inspectors also considered the views of parents, staff and pupils when evaluating the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors considered replies to Ofsted Parent View and the online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Sam Hainey, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
James Robinson	Ofsted Inspector
Sacha Husnu-Beresford	His Majesty's Inspector

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