

Inspection of a good school: St Gregory Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Street, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2BJ

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

St Gregory Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Gregory Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School are happy and enjoy their learning. They listen respectfully in lessons to adults and each other. Classrooms are calm places where pupils can focus on their learning. This helps most pupils to achieve well.

Trips and visits provide opportunities to further develop pupils' learning. For example, a trip to see 'Matilda' followed a 'Matilda' book study. The range of clubs on offer helps to nurture pupils' talents beyond the classroom. For example, the choir has performed at a world-famous concert hall and at a local care home.

There are many ways for pupils to take on responsibilities, including leading prayers and being team point monitors. Pupils can also contribute to changes in the school through their school council. For example, the school council's work led to the creation of a 'kindness corner' on the field. It is a space for pupils who prefer quieter places to play.

Pupils feel safe. If they have a worry or a concern, they know that there are always adults who they can talk to. If bullying happens, they can tell an adult and it will stop.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum to sequence learning in sensible steps. This is to make sure that what pupils know and understand deepens over time. In most aspects of the school's curriculum, this is securely in place and pupils achieve well over time. Teachers have good subject knowledge and present information clearly. They introduce new key vocabulary using clear explanations. This helps pupils to understand the new

words and use them in their learning. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding, which helps them to spot and address any mistakes made.

However, there are some subjects where subject leaders do not have regular opportunities to monitor how well their subject's curriculum is being taught or how it is meeting the needs of all pupils. Where this happens, how the curriculum is taught does not fully reflect what leaders have planned. For example, pupils do not frequently revisit and practise previous learning. They do not consistently achieve as well as they should.

Leaders focus on making sure that all pupils develop into confident readers and writers. This starts in Nursery, where the children hear sounds in words and join in enthusiastically with story time. Reception children quickly recognise the sounds that letters make and use this to help them read simple words. Book studies continue to develop the reading skills of older pupils. If pupils are falling behind with their reading, leaders take prompt action to address any gaps through catch-up programmes and regular reading.

Leaders and teachers know their pupils well. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are quickly and accurately identified. Appropriate support is carefully planned and put in place. This ensures that most pupils with SEND achieve their best. Pupils in the specialist support unit are included as part of the whole school wherever it is appropriate for their needs. This provides regular opportunities for them to learn alongside their peers. This includes attending trips and being on the school council.

All staff have high expectations for behaviour, which pupils understand and respect. This means that teachers can make the most of every learning opportunity.

Children in the early years are engaged and enthusiastic about their learning. They know and follow class routines confidently. They develop their knowledge and understanding through exploring the wide range of activities available in their classrooms, such as by extracting numbers from ice, then sorting and counting how many they found of each number. The early years curriculum, in all areas of learning, is carefully linked to the subjects children will move on to learn. This ensures that they are well prepared for their next stage.

Leaders plan and promote pupils' personal, social and health education and personal development well. Leaders make sure that pupils learn how to nurture healthy relationships and look after their well-being. This knowledge is developed in an age-appropriate way. This helps pupils to be respectful, tolerant and resilient citizens.

Governors know the school well, despite several being new to the role. This ensures that governors are able to support and challenge leaders about continuous school improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a positive culture for safeguarding. Staff are well trained on what signs to look out for if pupils are at risk. Staff know how to report concerns.

When concerns are raised, these are followed up promptly by leaders. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to ensure that families can access the support they need.

Pupils know how to keep safe both in school and in the wider world, such as knowing how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders have few opportunities to monitor the aspects they oversee to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented as they intend. This means some issues, such as whether teachers ensure that pupils sufficiently revisit and secure key knowledge, are not identified and resolved quickly enough. Leaders should ensure that there is a clear cycle of monitoring to inform training and support for teachers to further strengthen all pupils' achievement.

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 school to be good in April 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](#)' 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	124757
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10241629
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Damian Thomas
Headteacher	Daniel Woodrow
Website	www.stgregoryschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 April 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specialist SEND resource base, which is a provision for pupils across reception, key stage 1 and key stage 2 who have moderate learning difficulties.
- The school has a Christian religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2016. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.
- Leaders provide a daily breakfast and after-school club.
- Leaders make use of a registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator.

- The inspector met with four members of the governing body. This included the vice-chair of governors. The inspector also looked at minutes from the governing body meetings and governor monitoring.
- Deep dives were carried in reading, mathematics and art. The inspector met with curriculum leaders and visited lessons. The inspector reviewed pupils' work in these subjects, as well as speaking with teachers and pupils.
- Pupils were observed reading to a familiar adult by the inspector. The inspector looked at pupils' behaviour at lunchtime and at breakfast club.
- Arrangements for safeguarding were looked at by the inspector. This included scrutinising the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks and meeting with the designated safeguarding lead to review other safeguarding documentation.
- The inspector considered the 46 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 32 free-text comments.
- The inspector also considered the 35 responses to the Ofsted staff survey and 47 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Sharon Waldron, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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