

Inspection of a good school: Sutton-at-Hone Church of England Primary School

Church Road, Sutton-at-Hone, Dartford, Kent DA4 9EX

Inspection dates:

3–4 March 2020

Outcome

Sutton-At-Hone Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Sutton-at-Hone is a happy and welcoming school. Pupils are very proud of their school, their own achievements and those of others. They are happy and thrive in this trusting and caring environment. Christian values and a strong sense of community and belonging underpin all that the school does. Staff know pupils very well. There are very positive relationships between pupils and with adults. Pupils work and play exceptionally well together.

Pupils enjoy learning and know that teachers want them to 'be the best they can be'. They learn to persevere and not give up. Leaders make sure that pupils experience a wide range of opportunities during their time in school. Each pupil is expected to complete the '50 things to do before you leave Sutton-at-Hone'. Pupils said that they feel very lucky to have a swimming pool.

Parents, staff and pupils all agree that pupils are safe in school. Pupils behave very well. They say that there is no bullying in school but are confident that if it did happen, teachers would listen to them and sort things out quickly and fairly. There is an atmosphere of respect and kindness. Older pupils are good role models for younger pupils.

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

Sutton-at-Hone provides a good quality of education and pupils achieve well. Leaders are not complacent. They know there is room for further improvement in the pursuit of excellence. Leaders, staff and governors value the support and challenge from the trust. All benefit from it and are able to work with other schools in the trust, share good practice and broaden their expertise and skills. There is a great sense of pride in the school. Teachers feel valued. They feel that leaders consider their well-being and workload.

Curriculum planning maps out the skills and knowledge pupils need to learn over time in all the subjects. Teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. They provide work

that makes learning purposeful and interesting. Curriculum leaders have good subject knowledge and are continuing to develop their leadership roles. They have worked hard to make sure that there is a logical progression to learning in the foundation subjects. Leaders and teachers are evaluating these recent plans and adapting them if necessary. Teachers make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in all aspects of school life. Staff make sure that pupils with SEND are well supported in class and have additional help when they need it.

Teachers consistently provide pupils with thinking and discussion time. This helps them to build on what they already know. For example, in mathematics, pupils explained how they needed to learn certain calculations before they could solve problems. In history, pupils built on their previous study of the Romans to help them understand the Anglo-Saxons.

Pupils have very positive attitudes, a thirst for learning and they want to do well. These attributes mean that they respond well when teachers' expectations are high and work is demanding. This deepens their knowledge and understanding. However, expectations are not consistently high. There are not always enough challenging opportunities across subjects.

Reading is a priority at the school. Phonics teaching is well organised and effective. There is a consistent approach. Children get off to a good start in Reception Year. Phonics teaching starts as soon as children begin Reception and builds rapidly as they move into Year 1. They are given suitable books to read. Any who fall behind with reading are given effective help. Pupils use their phonics skills well for reading and writing.

Pupils read often and enjoy listening to stories. Children in Reception Year and Year 6 pupils enjoy learning together as reading buddies. Teachers help pupils to foster a love of reading and stories. Teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of authors and styles of writing. Pupils' reading has a considerable impact on the quality of their writing. Pupils read aloud with fluency and good expression.

Pupils actively promote the school's values. They work together exceptionally well and know that they can learn from each other. Pupils are friendly, polite and respectful of each other and adults. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to enhance their learning and excel in a range of skills. Pupils enjoy taking on a variety of responsibilities, such as play leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that pupils' safety and welfare have high priority. Staff are well trained. There is a strong sense that it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that pupils are safe and well looked after. Staff know the pupils very well. This means that they can spot any concerns quickly and act upon them. They know the procedures to follow. Records are organised online effectively and information is shared quickly with external agencies when needed. The appropriate checks are carried out on adults who work in the school. Pupils, parents and staff all agree that the school keeps its pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

Leaders have developed a broad, engaging and interesting curriculum for all pupils. It is well planned and sequenced. Recent work by curriculum leaders ensures that progression is mapped out clearly in the foundation subjects. Leaders have ensured that pupils generally develop the expected knowledge and skills across the curriculum. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop a greater depth of knowledge and understanding and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. All curriculum leaders should further develop the impact of their work by ensuring that there are consistently high expectations and more opportunities to provide demanding, challenging work to deepen pupils' understanding.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Sutton-at-Hone Church of England Primary School, to be good on 17–18 January 2013.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

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| Unique reference number | 144910 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 10135843 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 413 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Mr Anthony Smith |
| Headteacher | Mrs Karen Trowell |
| Website | www.sutton-at-hone.kent.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Sutton-at-Hone Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy on 1 October 2017. When its predecessor school, Sutton-at-Hone Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school's last statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS), under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 was in January 2016. It was judged to be good. The next SIAMS inspection is due to be in 2021.
- The headteacher was appointed in May 2017 after working as the acting headteacher for the school from January 2017.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and teachers.
- I had a meeting with the chief executive officer of the trust. I met with the chair of the local governing board and one other governor.

- I did deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each of these subjects, I met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers. I also heard some pupils read.
- To inspect safeguarding, I met with the headteacher, who is the lead designated safeguarding leader, and the inclusion leader, who is the deputy designated safeguarding leader. I looked at the single central record of recruitment checks and safeguarding documentation, spoke with governors and talked informally to pupils and staff.
- I considered the 72 responses to Ofsted's confidential questionnaire Parent View, including 40 free-text comments. I also took account of 27 responses to the confidential staff questionnaire and 54 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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