

Inspection of St Bartholomew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Wigginton

Common Field, Wigginton, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 6EP

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since November 2012. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

In this small, close-knit school, staff know pupils and their families very well. Pupils are happy to be here. Staff take good care of them. The sense of community and positive working relationships with adults make them feel safe. Everyone who joins the school is made to feel very welcome. Pupils of all ages show good discipline and can be relied upon to act sensibly as they move around the school and on the playground.

Staff ensure that pupils in all year groups and classes enjoy a broad curriculum. Pupils are expected to complete all their work, although sometimes they are not challenged sufficiently to produce the highest standards of which they are capable.

Staff make sure that a suitable range of extra-curricular clubs are available to meet pupils' different interests. These include sporting activities, construction club and gardening club. Pupils sing tunefully and with great gusto in assemblies. All pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in a big choral event at a large arena in London. Pupils learn the importance of treating everyone fairly and equally. However, their experience and understanding of cultures and communities other than their own are quite limited.

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

The school's curriculum has undergone considerable revision in the past three years. Staff faithfully and consistently follow the new phonics scheme. Children in the early years quickly learn letters and the sounds they make. By the end of Year 1, pupils can confidently understand difficult words. The few who struggle get effective support to help them catch up. Older pupils enjoy reading and have a good range of appropriate books to choose from in their classrooms and in the school library. As a result, pupils become enthusiastic and fluent readers.

From Year 1 to Year 6, pupils study the full range of subjects in the national curriculum. Staff ensure all the requirements of the early years foundation stage are met. Links between the early years programme and learning in key stage 1 are developing. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together in a way that supports pupils at different stages in their learning. Staff identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff know pupils' needs and how to meet them. Consequently, all pupils are helped to participate equally in all learning activities.

Teachers present information clearly and confidently. They have suitable knowledge of the different curriculum subjects. While this ensures that all content is covered thoroughly, teachers do not always check pupils' understanding. This means that some activities do not help pupils gain a secure understanding of what they have learned previously or build on previous learning. In particular, this leads to some pupils' work not being as good as it could be, for example in their written responses or in their drawing.

Attendance is high, with staff following up on any absences swiftly. Pupils are polite and show excellent manners as they play and move around the school. The kindness they show each other reflects the behaviour staff model for them. Pupils who sometimes find it

difficult to behave get help to keep control over their emotions. This keeps them involved in learning. While pupils always show respect in lessons, on a few occasions they lose concentration and need reminding to keep their focus. This happens particularly when teaching does not capture their interest or attention. In the Reception class, children quickly learn to take turns and listen attentively.

Some aspects of the school's work to promote pupils' personal development are very strong. Pupils have opportunities to be reflective and thoughtful. The personal, social and health education programme allows them to discuss important issues about relationships and their safety in an age-appropriate way. Staff are sensitive and take account of the different stages that pupils are at, particularly in the mixed-age classes. Pupils are taught the importance of showing equal respect to everyone. The curriculum includes some units featuring, for example, art from different traditions and the geography of different countries. However, pupils have fewer opportunities to learn about cultures and societies that are different to their own.

Staff are very positive about the support they receive through training and the school's consideration of their workload. Governors are knowledgeable, providing a good balance of support and challenge to leaders at all levels. Working relationships with parents and carers are strong. The school is particularly careful to ensure that pupils and their parents are afforded equal opportunities and respect, whatever their backgrounds.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always check on pupils' understanding effectively. This means that teaching activities do not always ensure that pupils learn and remember more to achieve a greater depth of understanding. Some pupils' work is not of a consistently high quality. The school should ensure that teachers use their checks on pupils' learning to ensure that learning activities always build on pupils' previous learning effectively or help to consolidate pupils' understanding.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to learn about a range of different cultures beyond their own school community. Pupils' understanding of cultural diversity is not as strong as other aspects of their personal development. The school should provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural diversity.

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	117463
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10323650
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kathryn Carlisle (Co-Chair) Jennie Arthur (Co-Chair)
Headteacher	Victoria Mowbray (Co-Headteacher) Kelly Wall (Co-Headteacher)
Website	www.stbarts.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 November 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of St Albans. The school has a religious character, Church of England, and was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 on 20 February 2018. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years of that date.
- The school provides before- and after-school wraparound care, managed by the governing body.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. These provide for Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6. A fourth class is for children in the Reception Year.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and

management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also discussed other aspects of the curriculum with leaders and teachers, looked at pupils' work and visited classrooms in some other subjects.
- The inspectors met with the co-headteachers and other members of staff. They also met with the co-chairs and other members of the local governing body.
- 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 inspectors met with groups of teaching and support staff and with groups of pupils from across the school. They took account of nine responses to Ofsted's inspection survey for pupils, 19 responses to Ofsted's inspection survey for school staff and 59 responses to Ofsted's survey of parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Mark Phillips, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Georgina Nutton

Ofsted Inspector

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