

# Inspection of St Elphege's RC Infants' School

Mollison Drive, Roundshaw, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 9HY

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Inspection dates: 26 and 27 June 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020 the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding 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 May 2013.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a school where pupils flourish. The school's values are embedded into daily school life. Pupils across the school are hardworking and have positive attitudes to their learning. The school is determined that pupils should achieve highly. As a result, in 2023 the published outcomes at the end of Year 2 were high.

Children are taught how to conduct themselves from the moment they start in the early years. Pupils behave incredibly well because staff have very high expectations for behaviour. Relationships between staff and pupils are nurturing. Pupils know that if they have a worry that they can speak to a trusted adult who will help them. This helps pupils to feel safe.

The school prioritises opportunities for pupils to help others. For example, pupil parliament representatives are elected by their classmates. Pupil parliament decided to donate food items to 'Sutton Night Watch' as it is a local charity.

Pupils enjoy the range of enrichment activities on offer. For example, some pupils were given the opportunity to perform as part of the school choir at a national conference. Leaders provide a range of clubs including ballet, chess and multi-sports. These activities aim to help pupils to develop their talents and pursue their interests.

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

The school has designed an extremely well-sequenced curriculum. Leaders have thought carefully about the important knowledge, skills and vocabulary that they expect pupils to know and remember which starts from the early years.

Teaching staff have excellent subject knowledge. Therefore, they explain concepts clearly and address misconceptions swiftly. Questioning is used effectively to develop pupils' understanding. For example, in the early years children are asked to describe the 'features of a horse' and the 'characteristics of a house'. This means that children in the early years have opportunities to practise using subject-specific vocabulary.

Pupils remember detailed knowledge of what they have been taught. For instance, in geography, pupils in Year 2 explain the features of a locality using vocabulary such as 'beach', 'cliff' and 'coast'. This is because they have previously been taught about human and physical features.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Children start learning to read right from the start of joining Reception. This is because the school wants all pupils to read with confidence and without delay. The school has identified the stories and rhymes that they expect pupils to know 'inside out'. Children in the nursery listen with

excitement when being read to. They join in with repetitive phrases with delight. These experiences develop a love for reading.

The early reading programme is well structured. Staff are experts in the teaching of reading. The sounds that pupils need to know are taught in a logical order. This is because staff have received effective training. Pupils are given regular opportunities to revisit previously learned sounds which they recall with confidence. Books are closely matched to the sounds that pupils have been taught. This means pupils read with developing fluency. Staff check the sounds that pupils know regularly. Pupils who need support to keep up with their peers are given the help that they need.

The school's high expectations for achievement extend to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff work with a range of external professionals such as speech and language therapists and educational psychologists. These professionals provide training and support to staff. Therefore, pupils with SEND are supported effectively and achieve very well.

Behaviour is exemplary across the school. This means the curriculum is taught without any interruption. Pupils are proud of their learning. They are highly motivated and resilient.

The wider curriculum is extremely well-structured. Pupils are taught what makes a good friend. Pupils explain that a good friend has 'compassion, gives encouragement and smiles'. Consent is taught in an age-appropriate manner. The wider curriculum is effectively adapted so that pupils learn about local safeguarding issues.

This is an inclusive school where everyone is valued. The school provides opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths. This is because the school wants pupils to respect difference and celebrate others.

Governors are knowledgeable about the school. They have an accurate understanding of what the school is doing well. There are appropriate processes in place for governors to check on the effectiveness of the school.

Leaders have created a happy, harmonious environment for staff and pupils. Staff are extremely proud of the school, which they describe as a 'family'. Staff value the support they receive from leaders to fulfil their role and support their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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

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|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 102997                                                                             |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Sutton                                                                             |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10323347                                                                           |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Infant                                                                             |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided                                                                    |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3 to 7                                                                             |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                              |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 333                                                                                |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                                                 |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Tom Tamplin                                                                        |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Laurence Hawkes                                                                    |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.stelphegesrcschools.org.uk">www.stelphegesrcschools.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 2 and 3 May 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005                        |

## Information about this school

- This is a Roman Catholic school under the Diocese of Southwark.
- The school received a section 48 inspection in November 2022.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- This school is part of The Federation of St Elphege's and Regina Coeli Catholic Schools which consists of three schools.

## 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 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 held meetings with the senior leadership team to discuss school development.
- The inspectors met with representatives of the governing body, and representatives of the local authority and the diocese.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to pupils' personal development and behaviour and attendance. The inspectors also met with groups of staff and pupils to discuss these aspects of the school's work.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and design technology. For each deep dive, the 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.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The views of parents and staff were also considered, including through Ofsted's online surveys.

## Inspection team

|                                 |                         |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Deborah Walters, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Neil Harvey                     | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Rekha Bhakoo                    | Ofsted Inspector        |

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