

St Saviour's Church of England Primary School

Chrisp Street, Poplar, London E14 6BB

Inspection dates

8–9 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders, governors and staff are wholeheartedly committed to providing high-quality educational experiences that make a significant difference to pupils' lives.
- Leaders have developed a range of very effective partnerships that help them to share good practice and engage in high-quality professional dialogue. This ensures that they continue to hone the quality of education so that it constantly evolves and improves.
- Leaders and governors use their in-depth knowledge of the school's context to provide a carefully planned curriculum that meets pupils' needs exceptionally well. As a result, outcomes are strong across subjects.
- Teachers have very high expectations and thorough subject knowledge. They are adept at questioning pupils in a way that deepens their understanding.
- There is a strong focus on developing pupils' vocabulary. Teachers explain words in detail and encourage pupils to think about words' origins as well as their meanings. As a result, pupils are extremely articulate and use complex vocabulary well in their writing.
- Leaders have worked effectively to improve attendance. Consequently, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen considerably.
- Children make very strong progress in early years, because provision is well thought out to meet their needs.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development exceptionally well.
- Regular philosophy lessons develop pupils' critical thinking skills. Pupils learn to express their opinions and listen to the views of others.
- Respect underpins the excellent relationships in the school. Pupils are clear that adults show them respect and that, therefore, they must do so in return.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the school. Those who completed the online survey Parent View would unanimously recommend it.
- Leaders promote healthy lifestyles. There is a very wide range of sporting opportunities on offer and pupils run a daily mile. However, pupils do not routinely choose the healthy option at lunchtime, particularly in the younger years.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed healthy eating habits from early years onwards.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders, managers and governors have built a culture of exceptionally high expectations and no excuses. They refuse to let pupils' backgrounds define what they can do or how well they can achieve. They are uncompromising in their determination and have deliberately designed a curriculum that will enable pupils to excel.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have rich experiences that lead to exceptional outcomes across a range of subjects. For example, the primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is targeted where there is most need. It ensures excellent teaching and a wide range of clubs with high participation rates. All classes in key stage 1 and key stage 2 complete a daily mile, which pupils really enjoy. This strongly supports pupils' stamina and physical development.
- Leaders at all levels have exemplary skills and knowledge. They lead and develop their areas of responsibility exceptionally well. They use partnerships and research to ensure that they have the most up-to-date intelligence available. This includes, for example, knowing how the brain works, how children learn and which pedagogic approaches are the most successful.
- Professional development is highly effective. Leaders ensure that all staff get the opportunity to develop new skills or refine their existing talents in order to improve their practice. Of particular benefit are the opportunities to engage in research-based learning, often with experts from other related fields.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and use this knowledge to plan carefully to continually hone provision. They use funding highly effectively to meet pupils' needs. For example, the funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) provides bespoke interventions so that pupils make strong progress. The pupil premium funding is equally well used. Disadvantaged pupils in the school do exceptionally well, often outshining non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.
- Partnerships are an integral part of the school's success. There are very strong links with local groups of schools and schools in the same deanery. They work together to share best practice and high-quality professional dialogue. Leaders bring in other partners who can provide bespoke solutions. For example, they are currently working with a professor of cognitive neuro-science from University College London on how to strengthen pupils' learning attributes and skills.
- Leaders welcome constructive criticism, because it highlights areas where they can make further improvements. They willingly seek this from external partners, such as the local authority and the diocesan board. These advisers provide precise and well-evidenced challenge.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development permeates everything the school does. Pupils know the school's values well and understand how these help them in everyday life. Close links with local churches and visits to other places of worship, the awe of singing in venues such as St Paul's Cathedral and the wonder of nature as seen through outdoor learning all contribute to the spiritual aspect of pupils' personal

development. Pupils' cultural awareness is very well promoted through visits to art galleries, theatres, the ballet, museums and concerts. Leaders provide a range of excellent opportunities for pupils to mix with others of different ages, both within the school and in the wider community. This, together with the school's philosophical thinking skills lessons, promotes pupils' social skills exceptionally well. Teachers select texts for pupils that provide strong moral messages. Pupils take part in discussions on ethical issues and sophisticated moral dilemmas. As a result of all this, pupils demonstrate a level of maturity beyond their years.

- Leaders work closely with the local community. They provide parents with comprehensive information about what is on offer and what the school's expectations are. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many commented on how much it has improved since the current headteacher joined. Comments left on the free-text facility on Ofsted's online survey Parent View were often glowing. Accolades, such as 'fantastic', 'amazing' and 'inspirational', were used to describe leaders and teachers.

Governance of the school

- Governance is highly effective because governors:
 - share leaders' passion and commitment
 - see the school as an integral part of the community and are determined that pupils leave with as many options as possible for their future lives
 - have an astute view of the school's strengths, based on rigorous analysis of a range of information
 - are humble and believe that, however effective they are, there is always more that they can do – for example, they are currently working with caterers to deliver healthy meals in a more enticing way, so that more pupils choose this as an option for their lunch
 - fully discharge their statutory duties, placing pupils at the heart of everything they do
 - have a strong understanding of the school's context and think carefully about what that means for safeguarding practice
 - embrace the partnerships that have proven to be so effective in developing and sharing best practice
 - challenge school leaders and hold them to account for pupils' outcomes
 - support leaders to ensure that this striving for excellence does not come at the cost of staff well-being.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Strong systems ensure that pupils' safety is at the forefront of the school's work. For example, pre-employment vetting checks are comprehensive and meticulously recorded.
- The procedures for administering first aid and supporting pupils who have medical

needs are exceptionally thorough. Staff request regular updates from parents to ensure that they have the most current information about pupils with medical needs. These updates include checking that medications, such as asthma pumps and delivery systems for anti-allergy products, are always in date. Processes for ensuring that there is no cross-contamination from possible allergens are taken very seriously. For example, surfaces in the dinner hall are cleaned especially carefully.

- Leaders have ensured that a particularly high number of staff are trained in first-aid. This means that there are always qualified first-aiders available to accompany groups and classes on trips without leaving the school short-handed.
- Staff work highly effectively with a range of agencies to seek the best possible support for vulnerable pupils and their families. Leaders make referrals in a timely manner and follow these up to secure a positive outcome.
- Pupils stated that they feel safe at the school because they know that staff care about them and will always look out for them. Comments left by parents on the free-text facility echo this.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching is highly effective. Staff plan exceptionally well-sequenced lessons that build progressively on pupils' existing knowledge. Teachers share the view that pupils need to practise and revisit skills and knowledge to embed these in their long-term memory. For example, revision of knowledge covered and regular quizzes ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn.
- The focus on high-quality texts, from the early years to Year 6, provides a very good foundation for learning. The texts inspire and engage pupils, and the associated tasks are carefully planned to deepen learning. For example, Year 6 pupils are reading the book 'Once' to link with their topic on the Second World War. Through skilful questioning, pupils explored the hypothesis that the book was written from a naïve perspective. This use of highly effective questioning probing pupils' understanding is typical across the school.
- Teachers' excellent subject knowledge strongly supports learning. Teachers have exceptionally high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is particularly evident in their work on vocabulary. Throughout the school, new words are explored from several angles, including their definition and etymology. This helps pupils to learn about root words and word families. For example, in one lesson, pupils were looking at the origin of the word 'social' as coming from the Latin 'socius', meaning 'friend'. This led them to a deeper understanding of the meaning of 'social skills' and 'social groups'. They could see that 'society' was part of the same family too.
- Teachers use a range of highly effective strategies to ensure that pupils develop a strong conceptual understanding across a range of topics. For example, pupils regularly create timelines, which they add to as they learn about new events or periods in history. This deepens their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are vigilant in checking pupils' learning in lessons. They encourage them to move on to harder work or clarify any misconceptions. Inspectors saw examples of this in a mathematics lesson, where pupils who had

completed the pattern correctly, and could explain this, were given more demanding work.

- Lesson time is well used. Pupils' behaviour in class is exemplary. They settle down to work quickly because they are keen to learn, and routines support this.
- The strong focus on teaching philosophy creates excellent opportunities for discussing contentious issues in a safe space. Consequently, teaching promotes equality and challenges discrimination and stereotyping. Pupils have a strong sense of what is morally acceptable and challenge what they believe is wrong.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are extraordinarily confident learners. They have a strong understanding of what they do well and how to further improve their work. For example, they know that practising skills, such as those required in arithmetic, helps to embed these into their long-term memory. This means they approach tasks that require them to practise skills with enthusiasm because they understand the benefits.
- Pupils are aspirational, eloquent and want to do well at the school and beyond. They love coming to the school and said that their philosophy lessons have helped shape the way that they think. They feel that it is healthy to challenge others' views but also to listen, because they might change their mind. They know that, providing they justify their opinions, they can disagree with their classmates; however, they should do so 'gracefully'.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are proud of their achievements. They enjoy the challenge of the ambitious curriculum. This prompts them to engage willingly in extra learning at home, above and beyond the set homework.
- Pupils feel that they have a strong voice in the school. They ask for particular clubs or activities for playtime or after school, and adults do their best to arrange these. Pupils raise funds for charities and often make things to sell. For example, the gardening club was busy making lavender pouches with the unique selling point that one cost 50p, but you could get three for £1!
- Pupils have a secure understanding of bullying, including the responsibilities of bystanders. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 act as anti-bullying ambassadors. Others can go to them if they have any concerns. Their role ensures that younger pupils know what bullying is and desist from engaging in it. Pupils said that incidents of bullying are exceptionally rare and, if they did occur, would be taken very seriously.
- Relationships across the school are exceptional and are built on mutual trust and respect. Pupils cited these strong relationships when they talked about how safe they felt in school. One pupil explained it as school being like 'the eye of the hurricane, a safe refuge from all the horrible things that happen outside in the world'.
- Pupils are very knowledgeable about online safety. As well as the dangers of cyber bullying, pupils understand that you must never give out your details or arrange to meet anyone. They are aware that some sites are inappropriate and that opening or

downloading attachments can result in viruses attacking the system.

- Leaders are very successful at meeting pupils' emotional, psychological and pastoral needs. There is a therapist on site, and leaders use partnerships and local agencies well.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunities for promoting their physical well-being. They talk of the daily mile 'refreshing' them. All pupils get the opportunity to represent the school at sport, which they find really motivational. However, despite there being healthy options available at lunchtime, pupils, especially younger ones, do not routinely choose them. Leaders are working to improve this.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They conduct themselves impeccably in lessons and around the school. No low-level disruption was evident during the inspection, and staff and pupils say this is the norm. Older pupils regularly support younger pupils, for example with clubs at lunchtimes.
- There is a varied range of activities available at playtimes. Skills such as chess, gardening and board games are promoted, alongside a range of sports clubs and time with the librarian. This results in a convivial atmosphere, where pupils of all ages mix harmoniously.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve the attendance of pupils whose rates of absence were persistently high. Working closely with families, using a range of approaches, has been very successful in significantly reducing the number of pupils who fall into that group.
- Pupils learn how to manage their own behaviour very effectively. This especially benefits pupils with particular behavioural needs, who develop key strategies to self-regulate which will stand them in good stead in the future. This means that the school has an exceptionally low level of exclusions. In most years, there are none.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils have an excellent range of knowledge across the curriculum. For example, they had retained a lot of information from previous history and geography topics, which they related confidently to inspectors.
- Pupils have responded very positively to the changes in the science curriculum. They clearly understand what constitutes a fair test when devising and conducting experiments. They particularly like the fact that lessons now always start with a mini experiment that they watch and discuss. This new approach has seen attainment in science rise at the end of both key stages.
- The standard of work in art is exceptionally high. Pupils as young as Year 1 produce elaborate pieces combining intricate drawings with complex collage. Their skills are extremely well developed for their age. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, the standard of their artwork is remarkable. For example, they produced exquisite and intricate models, made from out-of-date and damaged books, that represent famous works such as 'Macbeth'.

- Outcomes in PE are strong, because teaching is effective. There is a wide range of sporting activities on offer, including fencing and archery.
- Phonics outcomes are strong. Pupils at the early stages of reading use phonics strategies with resilience to decode unfamiliar words. This gives pupils an excellent start as readers. Pupils and parents are enthusiastic about reading.
- Pupils supplement their phonics knowledge with a range of other cues to help them understand what they are reading. By the time pupils get to Year 6, they talk with great knowledge about what they have read. They often choose to prepare presentations on their favourite books, so that others will be inspired to read them.
- There is a consistent focus on promoting the use of sophisticated vocabulary in a range of subjects. Pupils get regular opportunities to express their ideas. Consequently, pupils are very articulate and confident.
- Work in English and mathematics books shows that pupils make strong progress and can explain their understanding confidently. As a result, the proportion of pupils that reach at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 is regularly well above average. From low starting points on joining, pupils make excellent progress.
- Progress is strong for all groups. This is because provision is geared to match pupils' needs. Staff go the extra mile to ensure that this is the case.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The engaging curriculum ensures that children embark on their school journey equipped with the skills and knowledge that they will need for their future learning. For example, they learn traditional tales and classic poems. Children's spiritual, moral and social development is very well promoted, and they receive a solid introduction to British values. Recently, children in Reception experienced democracy in action. They visited a polling booth and placed their mark on the sheet provided to vote for the names of the school's pet rabbits.
- The strong focus on storytelling helps children develop an interest in reading and see themselves as confident writers. During the inspection, inspectors saw children using their phonics knowledge to write versions of 'The Three Little Pigs'. They demonstrated sustained concentration and high levels of engagement.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and meets children's needs very well. For example, the well-established outdoor learning area encourages children to explore. They show curiosity and determination as they look for bugs, examine leaves and listen for the sounds in nature. During the inspection, children explained that they could hear birds singing and the 'rustle' of their waterproof clothing.
- Learning outdoors often links to the high-quality texts children are reading. At the time of the inspection, the class text was 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. In the school's 'secret garden', teachers had prepared trays with mud, ice and grass to simulate the different environments the story characters visit. Furthermore, the grass in the garden had been left to grow a bit longer, so that it made a 'swishy-swashy' sound as children walked through it. Bringing texts alive in this way ensures that children gain a deep understanding of the value of words and text.

- Leaders have very high expectations. Staff share this vision. This leads to ambitious learning. During science week, children in early years read about the life of Albert Einstein and wrote about his accomplishments. Staff model language highly effectively, which leads to children gaining confidence and expressing themselves increasingly effectively.
- Children work collaboratively with enthusiasm and sensitivity. They have excellent attitudes to learning, showing curiosity, resilience and a willingness always to have a go. For example, they feel safe and trust adults enough to take calculated risks, such as trying the climbing equipment for the first time. For some, this was initially a very daunting prospect.
- Staff work extremely effectively as a team and embrace professional development opportunities in and beyond the school. This ensures that practice is of a consistently high quality.
- As a result of exceptionally strong teaching, care, guidance and support, children make excellent progress in their learning and development. Consequently, from very low starting points, the proportion of children who reach a good level of development is in line with the national average.

School details

Unique reference number	100961
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10058962

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Coyle
Headteacher	Fanoula Smith
Telephone number	020 7987 4889
Website	www.stsavioursschool.org.uk
Email address	sbm@st-saviours.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 June 2018

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is more than double the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is much higher than average.
- The school serves a diverse community, with 12 different ethnic groups in its community. The largest of these groups is pupils of White British backgrounds, who make up just over half of the school's population.
- The school is a Church of England voluntary aided school in the Diocese of London. Its last diocese inspection (S48) took place in October 2015.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes at least once to look at learning across a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics, Spanish, geography, history and outdoor learning. The vast majority of these visits were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke to pupils in lessons, informally around the school and in the dinner hall to gather their views. They also held more formal meetings with pupils about their work and attitudes to learning.
- The inspection team scrutinised a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, and information about pupils' academic performance and the content and design of the curriculum.
- Inspectors met with parents at the beginning and end of the school day to gather their views. They also took account of the 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View and the comments left in the free-text facility.
- Inspectors met with staff, representatives of the local authority and the diocesan board, and a group of governors, including the chair and the vice-chair.
- Inspectors attended assemblies and looked carefully at displays and the learning environment.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Rekha Bhakoo

Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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