

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Paul with St Luke CofE Primary Federation

Leopold Street, Bow, London E3 4LA

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 March 2025

Outcome

St Paul with St Luke CofE Primary Federation has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a caring and nurturing school. Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils meet these expectations with enthusiasm. They are attentive in lessons, work hard and achieve well, particularly in the core subjects. The school has established clear behaviour routines. From the early years onwards, little time in lessons is lost to learning as pupils are eager to do their best.

Pastoral support is a real strength. Pupils feel safe in school. They speak confidently and can name adults they can talk to if they ever feel worried. Relationships between pupils and adults are strong. Pupils know they are always listened to and valued.

Pupils appreciate the broad range of wider activities, including trips and visits. They hold positions of responsibility, such as eco-warriors, anti-bullying ambassadors and prayer and worship leaders. This helps pupils develop their confidence and leadership skills.

Playtimes are happy and sociable times which pupils enjoy because of the range of physical and sports activities available. Pupils also love lunchtimes and comment on the smell of freshly baked bread and healthy choice of foods on offer daily.

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

The school has recently designed and implemented a broad and ambitious curriculum which starts in the early years. Children quickly learn to communicate, count and express their ideas through language and the expressive arts. The school has organised each subject so that knowledge is taught in a logical order. Consequently, pupils build knowledge over time and achieve well by the end of key stage 2.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and present new information clearly. They check what pupils do and do not know in core subjects such as English and mathematics. However, the curriculum in a small number of subjects is new and sometimes staff do not deliver it as the school intends. In these subjects, pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they could. As a result, some of the work that pupils produce is not of a consistently high quality.

Developing early reading is a key priority for all staff. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read receive daily phonics teaching from expert staff. The school provides parents and carers with useful information about ways to support pupils with reading at home. Pupils who fall behind, quickly receive help and support to help them catch up. Pupils with SEND benefit strongly from the reading programme. Pupils read books at home and in school that are well matched to their knowledge of phonics. This helps pupils to swiftly become confident, fluent readers.

The school has introduced new action plans and extra staffing to provide support to families to overcome barriers to regular attendance. However, persistent absence remains high and some pupils still do not attend school regularly. This means that they miss out on valuable learning and other important aspects of daily school life.

The school provides a rich array of opportunities for pupils' wider development. Pupils value and engage with the school's offer. They enjoy clubs such as creative arts, cooking, archery and music, particularly singing and choir. Pupils know about keeping active, healthy and being safe, including when online.

Pupils learn about fundamental British values such as tolerance and respecting differences in background or religion. During this inspection, children in the early years were making and painting plates for the start of Ramadan and in older classes, pupils were learning recipes for pancakes and hot cross buns to celebrate Easter. Pupils know about different faiths, cultures and backgrounds and regularly visit local places of worship such as the local church and mosque. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They understand recent changes and feel their workload is manageable. They value the opportunities for professional development on offer. Governors, the local authority and diocesan board actively involve themselves in all aspects of the school's work. They are effective in their challenge and support of the school. They use their visits to assure themselves of the quality of education and its impact on both pupils' achievement and behaviour.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In relation to a small number of subjects, the school has not ensured that teachers have the knowledge and skills they need to deliver the new curriculum consistently well. As a result, in these subjects, pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they could. The school should ensure that teachers receive the support they need to teach the ambitious curriculum well.
- Rates of persistent absence for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and with SEND, continue to be high. This means pupils miss important learning. The school should continue to strengthen its work with families and external agencies to ensure that pupils attend school more regularly.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in November 2019.

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	100958
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10345701
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	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christopher Coyle
Headteacher	Fanoula Smith (executive headteacher) Tomas Hall (executive head of school)
Website	www.spsl.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England school, within the Diocese of London. The most recent section 48 inspection of schools with a designated religious character, took place in October 2023.
- The school joined a federation with St Saviour's Church of England Primary School in Tower Hamlets in September 2024.
- The executive headteacher, the executive head of school and the chair of governors were all formally appointed in September 2024.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club on the school premises.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the executive headteacher, executive head of school, senior and curriculum leaders and groups of staff and pupils.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair. He also spoke with representatives from the local authority and the London Diocesan Board.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses and the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector reviewed school documents, including those relating to governance, behaviour and attendance. The inspector scrutinised leaders' plans for improvement and their assessment of the school's effectiveness.
- The inspector spoke informally to pupils at breaktimes, in the dining hall and on the playground.

Inspection team

Sean Flood, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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