

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Martins Church of England Junior School

Ashley Road, Epsom, Surrey KT18 7AD

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 March 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The co-headteachers are Maggie Down and Kate Marchesi, who are responsible for this school. The school is part of Enlighten Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mike Boddington, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Helen Coulson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming school. Pupils appreciate that staff are 'loving and caring'. The school has high ambitions for all pupils. Teachers make learning fun and intriguing. Pupils thrive on the opportunities given to extend and challenge their thinking. Staff ensure that pupils are safe and build healthy, respectful relationships.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are courteous, polite and well mannered. The school's values are well embedded in the school culture and curriculum. Pupils secure knowledge and understanding of the school's values. For example, pupils show that they are determined in taking risks and being courageous. Pupils try their best, even in the face of challenges.

The school provides an extensive range of opportunities to enrich pupils' personal development through carefully planned programmes and activities. Staff help pupils develop a strong sense of their contribution to school life through a range of leadership roles, including eco-reps, pupil, prayer and play leaders. Pupils are proud to represent their school in various sporting competitions and performances in school and at other local music venues and theatres. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education.

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

The school delivers a highly ambitious and well-organised curriculum. Pupils develop detailed subject knowledge as they move through the school. For example, pupils in Year 3 skilfully use artefacts and different sources to interpret historical information. Teachers present information clearly and encourage high-quality discussions. They routinely use questioning effectively to check what pupils know and remember. This helps pupils to understand key concepts and remember crucial information well. Pupils practise and apply their knowledge and understanding extremely well to different contexts. Teachers' accurate feedback enables pupils to independently improve their work.

Ambitions for pupils are high, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff are swift in identifying pupils' individual needs. Teachers use appropriate strategies to adapt teaching and tailor learning experiences specifically to pupils' needs. Staff inspire pupils in knowing that there are no limits to what they can achieve. Pupils are eager to do well. They flourish here and achieve extremely well through the curriculum.

The school places great importance on instilling a deep love for reading. Teachers promote the development of communication, language and reading skills effectively. Pupils apply these skills when exploring texts or structuring their own stories. The school has been careful in linking what pupils read to the topics they study. Pupils enjoy visiting the school library and reading a wide range of rich texts. They read fluently and confidently.

The school has created a positive environment, where pupils thrive. The expectations of pupils' behaviour are clearly communicated, modelled and managed by staff. Pupils display positive learning behaviours. They know and follow the school routines. They respond to instructions quickly. Pupils consistently demonstrate responsibility through high levels of self-discipline and confidence.

The school prepares pupils exceptionally well for British society. Pupils take the lead in supporting a local children's hospital. They organise school assemblies with an emphasis on sharing information about neurodiversity and being young carers. Pupils have regular opportunities to participate in outdoor activities, for example, through a range of outdoor learning opportunities and the recently developed lunchtime activities. This encourages pupils to develop their social and interaction skills. They play well during social times.

Staff feel highly supported and valued. The school considers their well-being and workload. Staff feel confident that the workload is manageable because staff work together in teams to assist with planning and leadership responsibilities. Those responsible for governance, and trustees, offer strong support and challenge when holding leaders to account. They are proud of the culture of 'no barriers or limits' they have generated within the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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/outstanding 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Martins Church of England Junior School to be good for overall effectiveness in 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 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	149003
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10341917
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	362
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helen Coulson
CEO of the trust	Mike Boddington
Headteacher	Maggie Down and Kate Marchesi (co-headteachers)
Website	www.stmartinsepsom.school
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Enlighten Learning Trust.
- St Martins Church of England Junior School converted to become an academy school in April 2022. When its predecessor school St Martin's CofE (Aided) Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good for overall effectiveness.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school in the Diocese of Guildford. The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in June 2018, when the school received a judgement of outstanding.
- There have been significant changes to the senior leadership team, including the appointment of the co-headteachers in September 2023.
- The school makes use of one registered 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the chief executive officer, the chairs and members of the trustee and governing boards, senior leaders and a range of staff.
- The inspector carried out activities including discussions with leaders and teachers about the curriculum, visiting a sample of lessons, speaking with groups of pupils about their learning, and considered pupils' work.
- 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 considered the views of parents and staff, including through Ofsted's online surveys. There were no pupil responses to the survey.

Inspection team

Lascelles Haughton, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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