Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Margarets CofE Primary School

15-19 North Street, Barking, Essex IG11 8AS

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 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 headteacher of this school is Sophie Bannon. This school is part of the Genesis Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Beverley Hall, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Graham Moss. There is also an executive principal, Jenni Matthews, who is responsible for this school and two others.

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is valued in this welcoming and inspiring school. It is committed to ensuring pupils receive an exceptional education. Pupils from all backgrounds and cultures thrive. They receive an excellent start to their education. This begins from children's first days in Reception.

The school makes sure that pupils' achievements academically and socially are maximised. It has designed a highly ambitious curriculum. Pupils develop a deep breadth of knowledge as they move through the school. The school prepares pupils to be curious and confident learners. They develop a love for learning.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They respond well to the high expectations of behaviour, both in the classroom and around the school site. Pupils feel safe. Staff show great care and compassion towards pupils. Pupils play happily and harmoniously together at social times. They are focused and respectful in lessons. Pupils are polite to each other and visitors.

Pupils have an exceptionally strong voice at this school. They take on numerous leadership roles to promote each other's well-being and digital skills. These opportunities enhance pupils' personal skills and enable them to contribute significantly to the life of the school.

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

Leaders have developed a rich curriculum that exceeds the national curriculum. It provides teachers with detailed guidance about what to teach and when. Effective staff training means that teachers have strong subject knowledge. This enables staff to present subject content to pupils skilfully. Teachers check pupils' understanding expertly and address misconceptions quickly. This means pupils do not repeat errors, and pupils' work is of a high quality. Pupils achieve extremely well across the school.

Pupils develop a very strong understanding in all subjects and then learn to apply these as they move through the curriculum. For example, in mathematics, pupils quickly develop fluency and understanding of number. This starts in Reception, where children start to double and write numbers up to 10 confidently. This helps pupils to solve more complex mathematical problems as they get older. Older pupils in science can apply their earlier learning about floating and sinking to their current understanding of density and buoyancy. In history, pupils can discuss the importance of learning about the past changing how we do things in the future.

The teaching of reading is prioritised. Staff teach pupils phonics particularly well. In early years, children get off to an excellent start in their reading. Pupils at the early stages of reading receive targeted and effective support. They read books closely matched to their phonics knowledge, which helps pupils to read confidently and with increased fluency. Pupils develop a love of reading through high-quality texts, including through using class libraries regularly. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their love of reading and authors. This begins in Reception, where staff introduce children to a range of stories and rhymes.

The school is very ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It considers each individual pupil's needs so they receive expert support to thrive. Learning is carefully adapted so that all pupils learn the curriculum successfully. The school works closely with external agencies when appropriate so pupils with SEND receive the right support.

The school ensures pupils develop key skills such as confidence and a sense of community. It prioritises developing the character of pupils. Staff enable pupils to understand the importance of caring for others. They provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity. For instance, pupils take part in rock wall climbing and public speaking events. The school ensures that all pupils take part in these planned activities. Pupils talk about how they now have more confidence in making friends and wanting to look after people in their community. They understand the importance of using the school's values and fundamental British values in their daily lives. In Reception, staff support children to learn about the importance of leading healthy lives.

Staff are rightly proud to work at the school. The trust values the importance of developing staff expertise. This is achieved through a rich programme of professional development opportunities. This helps to ensure that the curriculum is implemented with expert precision. Staff appreciate the focus on their well-being and workload.

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 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 school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 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	144035
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10346041
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	375
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Graham Moss
CEO of the trust	Beverley Hall
Headteacher	Sophie Bannon
Website	www.st-margarets-barking.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a two-form entry Church of England primary school that is part of the Genesis Education Trust. The school converted to an academy on 1 April 2018.
- This is a Church of England school and is in the Diocese of Chelmsford. Its last section 48 inspection education was carried out in January 2020.

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 executive principal, the headteacher, other leaders and a range of staff. They also met with the CEO and other representatives from the trust.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning, looked at samples of pupils' work and met with some staff.
- 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 scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to pupils' wider development, behaviour and attendance. The inspector also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and during breaktime.
- The inspector gathered the views of parents and carers, pupils and staff through both discussions and responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sarah Lack, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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