

Inspection of St Thomas' CofE Primary School

Appleford Road, North Kensington, London W10 5EF

Inspection dates:	14 and 15 January 2025
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

St Thomas' CofE Primary School is a vibrant and inclusive community, where pupils thrive in a supportive environment. Pupils benefit from a nurturing atmosphere, where caring adults ensure they feel valued and secure. Pupils know they can rely on trusted staff members and the well-established routines to keep them safe and provide a sense of stability.

High expectations are embedded in every aspect of school life, and pupils consistently rise to meet these challenges. This starts in the early years, where children are taught the foundations of respect, cooperation, and curiosity. Pupils develop confident attitudes and take pride in their accomplishments. They achieve highly and are well prepared for life beyond school.

The school's ethos is underpinned by a focus on inclusion, character development, and moral values. Behaviour is excellent; pupils treat each other with kindness and work hard in lessons. Activities including debates and cultural visits, as well as learning to play instruments such as the ukulele and steel pans, encourage them to develop resilience, creativity, and empathy. This distinctive approach ensures pupils leave St Thomas' as articulate and well-rounded individuals.

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

St Thomas' CofE Primary School offers a highly ambitious curriculum that has been carefully crafted to meet the diverse needs of its pupils and develop their cultural awareness. Leaders continually refine the curriculum, ensuring that pupils build on their knowledge successfully.

Teachers use their subject expertise to deliver well-structured lessons. They regularly check pupils' understanding and adapt their teaching to help pupils connect new learning with their prior knowledge. Developing foundational skills such as handwriting is a priority. As a result, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, consistently produce high-quality work. Pupils gain confidence and can explain complex ideas, equipping them for future challenges. Pupils in the early years access a range of carefully considered and exciting activities that build their knowledge sequentially in all the areas of learning.

Inclusion is a key strength. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive excellent support and achieve well because staff identify their needs early. Staff work closely with parents and carers and specialist staff to ensure every pupil is fully supported to access the full curriculum.

The school's approach to teaching reading is particularly strong. Systematic phonics teaching begins in Reception, helping pupils gain fluency and understanding. Struggling readers receive expert support to catch up and close any gaps they may have. The school has created a culture of reading, with regular library visits, author workshops, and activities that spark pupils' imaginations. As a result, pupils become fluent and confident readers by the end of their primary education.

Behaviour at St Thomas' is exemplary. Pupils live out the school's values in the way they speak to and about each other. High expectations for behaviour are evident across the school. There is a calm, focused atmosphere in lessons. When pupils face challenges, staff are highly skilled in addressing any early signs of dysregulation. They provide very effective support to help pupils stay on track. The school's approach to promoting positive behaviour ensures that all pupils flourish. These behaviours are first established in the early years, where expert staff ensure there are clear systems, consistent routines, and high expectations.

Attendance is a key priority. The school rigorously analyses attendance data to identify causes of any persistent absence. Staff work closely with families to provide support. This relentless work is improving many pupils' attendance and punctuality.

Pupils reflect maturely on their learning about equity and equality through the thoughtfully developed personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum. The curriculum is designed to help pupils develop a strong understanding of fundamental British values, healthy eating, online safety, and emotional well-being. The school's 'beyond the curriculum' offer provides rich opportunities for character development. For example, discussions about complex issues and fundraising events encourage empathy and responsibility. Visits to universities and performances deepen cultural awareness and aspirations. All pupils have opportunities to lead through initiatives, such as the 'circle of friends.' Leadership roles challenge older pupils to take on additional responsibilities and contribute positively to the school community.

Leaders, staff, and governors work together harmoniously to ensure that the school's vision for success is understood and consistently implemented by all. Governors actively set the school's strategic direction. They ensure statutory requirements are met and hold leaders to account for their work. Leaders prioritise professional development through regular training and coaching, while also ensuring staff feel valued and supported. This contributes to the consistently high quality of education across the school.

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

Unique reference number	100492
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	10345656
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	201
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Ros Sacher
Headteacher	Sarah Bouette
Website	https://www.stfed.rbkc.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 th and 5 th November 2014 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is federated with a local primary school and is in partnership with another primary school in a neighbouring local authority.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with those responsible for governance, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to staff.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- 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 took account of a range of other information, including the school's improvement plans, policies and minutes of governing body and board meetings.
- Inspectors took account of the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sabrina Edwards, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ray Lau

Ofsted Inspector

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