

Inspection of a good school: Bishop Justus CofE School

Magpie Hall Lane, Bromley, Kent BR2 8HZ

Inspection dates:

22–23 January 2020

Outcome

Bishop Justus CofE School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Bishop Justus CofE School has a strong, caring ethos and stresses the virtues of faith, hope, love, kindness, courage and wisdom.

Pupils explained what they like about the school. Teachers encourage them and they learn well in all subjects. Pupils are keen to answer questions in class. There is a calm learning atmosphere in most lessons and pupils generally work together well. In the playground and corridors, behaviour is mostly orderly. Staff use the school's behaviour policy to quickly settle occasional poor behaviour.

Leaders expect all pupils to achieve their best. Pupils respond well to their teachers' high expectations and achieve well. They are eager to learn. They receive extra help when they need it if they get stuck.

Pupils told us that they feel safe in school. Most agree that bullying is rare and teachers work hard to put things right if it occurs. Pupils are confident to tell teachers if they have any worries. Most pupils take part in the many available clubs and visits. Lower school pupils go to a popular 'Freshers Fair' where they can decide which clubs to join.

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

School leaders have put building pupils' knowledge at the centre of their curriculum plans. This means that pupils achieve well in most subjects. The curriculum, though, does not cover as many subjects as it should in Year 9. While there are opportunities for pupils to pursue interests in art and music through after-school clubs, some pupils do not study these subjects after Year 8. Leaders have well-established plans in place to improve the Year 9 curriculum next year.

Subject leaders organise lessons in sequences so that it is clear how pupils build their knowledge and skills across the year groups, including the sixth form. Leaders ensure that pupils revisit previous learning through quizzes and tests. This helps pupils know more

and remember more. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and explain tricky concepts to pupils well. This inspires pupils, who are generally attentive and focus well on their work.

Teachers highlight words that pupils need to know in their subjects. Pupils practise using them and collect new words in booklets so they can revise them. This helps pupils become skilled at using subject vocabulary. Disadvantaged pupils, in particular, benefit from this practice. The quality of their work shows they are achieving well.

Teachers use assessment effectively to identify where pupils need more help and encouragement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need in lessons. Some parents and carers reported that they were happy with the extra help their child receives. Others, though, expressed frustration that leaders do not act on their concerns well enough. Inspectors thought the extra support provided helped pupils to achieve well.

Leaders responded swiftly when pupils achieved less well than usual in mathematics last year. Leaders have established new plans for how mathematics is taught across the school. Teachers are using these plans well and pupils' knowledge has improved. Teachers routinely check that pupils understand new topics and return regularly to previous work so pupils remember it better.

Reading is not as high a priority in the school as it should be. Leaders have introduced a wider reading programme to encourage pupils to read more and develop their reading skills. However, leaders have not ensured that enough time is devoted to this or checked that pupils are benefiting.

There is a very wide enrichment programme of extra activities for pupils. This includes subject clubs, sports activities, drama clubs and a choir and a school band which both perform in termly concerts. There are drama showcases and a production every two years. Pupils are currently rehearsing 'Grease'.

The quality of the curriculum in the sixth form is high. Students have developed the skills they need to succeed in advanced study. They organise their work methodically to make revision easier. Leaders have provided informative careers advice and are preparing students well for the next steps in their lives. All students complete at least two weeks on work experience.

The school is very well led and managed. Teachers strongly support the headteacher's vision for the school. Their workload is carefully managed. They plan lessons together and share best practice. Representatives of the Aquinas Church of England Trust, which is responsible for the school's governance, provide strong support for the school. They are very knowledgeable and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and teachers are vigilant in their checks and measures to keep pupils safe. They ensure that pupils are aware of risks to their safety and that they learn how to avoid them. Staff have a caring approach to pupils causing concern and take prompt action to protect them. In school, there is a specially trained team to support pupils with worries and concerns. The school works well with external agencies to ensure that pupils get specialist help if needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not study some subjects such as art and music in the breadth and depth they should in key stage 3. Leaders need to ensure that they implement their curriculum plans so that pupils study a broad range of subjects and achieve well.
- The school is aware that a clear focus on reading for all pupils will improve their access to a knowledge-rich curriculum. Currently initiatives to develop a reading culture in the school are in their early stages. Leaders should ensure that improving reading skills is a high priority for the school.
- Some parents feel that their child with SEND do not receive the right support to achieve as well as they can. Inspectors judged that there was a range of effective provision. Leaders should ensure that their communication with parents is effective so that any concerns are resolved.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Bishop Justus CofE School to be good on 2–3 May 2012.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	136466
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10121563
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,292
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	218
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Simon Parker
Headteacher	Simon Murphy
Website	www.bishopjustus.bromley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 March 2016

Information about this school

- Bishop Justus is a Church of England School. The school is part of the Aquinas Church of England Education Trust.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- We did deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, science and drama. We met with the subject leaders and visited lessons in these and other subjects. We also held meetings with teachers and with pupils, and looked at pupils' work. We talked with pupils and staff around the school.
- We also held meetings with the headteacher, leaders, and representatives of the Aquinas Church of England Trust

- We looked at the single central register of checks on all employees and regular visitors to the school. We examined how the school followed up concerns about pupils by looking at referral records and checked that staff were suitably trained in safeguarding.
- We studied the 228 responses to the pupil survey, the 128 responses to the parent survey and the 72 responses to the staff survey. We also spoke with some parents by telephone.

Inspection team

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