

St Edward's Catholic Primary School

Greenland Road, Selly Park, Birmingham, West Midlands B29 7PN

Inspection dates

2–3 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors are passionate and committed people. They have fostered a strong sense of pride and ambition in the school workforce. They have secured rapid improvements in several key areas.
- The quality of teaching in key stages 1 and 2 is a strength of the school. Relationships between pupils and staff are very strong. Information about the individual needs of pupils is used well to inform planning and lessons.
- High standards have been maintained across the school. In most subjects, pupils' attainment is above that found nationally. However, there is scope to further develop the level of challenge offered to pupils, especially the most able.
- Although leaders and governors have accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for development, some aspects of self-evaluation and school development lack clarity. Though priorities are clearly identified, there is less effective scrutiny of some aspects of the school's work, including in the early years.
- Middle leaders have devised effective action plans to develop the subjects that they lead. They are keen to develop the wider curriculum but, given how new they are to post, require further development and support to help them fully evaluate the impact of their work.
- Assessment systems have developed considerably and provide valuable information about pupils' individual performance. However, there is less account taken of the progress made by some groups of pupils. As a result, governors are not able to fully interrogate standards across the school.
- Aspects of the wider curriculum and the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have many strengths. However, further emphasis on subjects such as history, geography and science is required to accelerate the progress that some pupils are currently making.
- Behaviour is good and pupils report that they are happy at school. Their conduct in lessons and around school is very good.
- Parents that responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire have mixed views about the school. Many are keen to celebrate how much their children love learning but some raised concerns. Leaders and governors are committed to listening to feedback and acting on it.
- The early years foundation stage is undergoing a process of redevelopment and change. Though improvements are already being secured, the leadership and teaching within this phase are not yet good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall provision of the early years by making sure that:
 - leaders' evaluations of the provision's effectiveness are more rigorous and the planned programme of improvement is carefully monitored
 - teachers' practice is developed through a programme of effective support and training
 - assessment information is routinely used to inform insightful planning that supports children to make rapid rates of progress
 - the learning environment is appealing and is designed to support children's development across the curriculum.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - self-evaluation and school development documents include clearer milestones and a sharper focus on the progress that pupils are making
 - governors further hold leaders to account by interrogating information about the progress made by different groups of pupils
 - middle leaders receive support and training to enhance the rigour with which they monitor and evaluate the impact of their work
 - the wider curriculum is monitored and developed further so that pupils' rates of progress in all subjects are at least in line with those found in English and mathematics
 - parental feedback is acted on quickly, leaders are readily available to speak to families, and parents are provided with timely and detailed information about developments within school.
- Improve the quality of teaching, and thereby pupils' progress, especially that of the most able, by making sure that:
 - teachers' planning offers sufficient challenge for all groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors have developed a wide range of systems and procedures in recent years. They have effectively improved provision in light of changes to the curriculum and assessment at a national level.
- There is a strong culture of aspiration at St Edward's. Every member of staff who responded to Ofsted's survey reported that they have a clear understanding of the goals the school aims to achieve. One member of staff, reflecting the views of many, stated: 'The staff are motivated and have embraced challenge and change.' St Edward's is proud of its Catholic ethos and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key strength of the school.
- Teachers that inspectors spoke to value the professional development that they are offered in school. Performance management systems are robust and set out clear objectives for all staff. The vast majority of staff that responded to the Ofsted survey feel that leaders have created a climate in which they are trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that are right for the pupils.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and developments and have devised action plans to drive improvements in the school. However, the milestones agreed by staff to keep a check on the impact of their work do not take sufficient account of pupils' progress. Leaders focus too much on where pupils get to, as opposed to the progress that they make from their different starting points. As a result, it can be difficult for governors to fully interrogate the impact of teaching across the school.
- Leaders and governors are aware that the early years stage is less effective than the rest of the school. Their plans for improvement recognise the correct priorities but require a greater focus on establishing what rates of progress they expect children to make. Leaders have brokered specialist support to accelerate improvements. Leaders and governors have a track record of raising standards and securing improvement in other aspects of the school. Inspectors therefore judge that the school has the capacity to quickly remedy this area of weakness.
- Middle leaders demonstrate a sound understanding of their respective subject areas. Some middle leaders are both new to the school and at the early stages of developing their strategic leadership skills. They require further support to help them fully gauge the ongoing impact of their work.
- The curriculum is well organised and provides pupils with opportunities to learn in different ways. Leaders use well-known texts to engage pupils, foster a love of reading, and support learning in a range of subjects. The walls of corridors, and doors of classrooms, are adorned with eye-catching displays to capture pupils' imagination. For example, Year 1 classrooms have been turned into a police station and jail to promote learning around their new text 'Cops and Robbers'!
- In key stage 2, pupils' books provide clear evidence of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding across a wide range of subjects within the curriculum. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make less progress in subjects such as

history and geography.

- Additional funding is used effectively to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils. In most subjects, this group of pupils make higher rates of progress than other pupils nationally. School assessment information and work in books shows that there are no gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other groups within the school. Pupil premium is used principally to fund the work of a learning mentor and the provision of additional adult support.
- The sport premium is being used to provide staff with additional training and create wider opportunities for pupils to attend extra-curricular activities. An evaluation of the impact of expenditure in the last academic year shows that the school established as many as 21 extra-curricular clubs including tennis, dodgeball and netball.
- The school has a dedicated team of specialists who support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A new leader has recently taken up post and the team are re-focusing their priorities following a period of change. Staff have devised plans for pupils that identify clear targets. Leaders hold meetings throughout the year to monitor pupils' progress. The team hold regular coffee mornings for parents and distribute newsletters about their work. Funding is used effectively for pupils who have special educational needs, for example to commission the work of specific agencies including professionals with expertise in supporting pupils' speech and language needs.
- The school promotes British values well. Pupils talk with confidence about their understanding of democracy and have a range of opportunities to vote and exercise their views. In Year 6, pupils articulately describe other faiths and the importance of tolerance and respect. Pupils vote for the weekly recipient of the golden certificate and thoughtfully set out their reasons for making their final choices.
- Parental views about the effectiveness of leadership and management are mixed. Leaders recognise that there is more work to be done in ensuring parents are kept fully abreast of developments in school. Some parents indicated that they would like more opportunities to meet with leaders should they need to. During the inspection, leaders were observed welcoming families into school and engaging with parents. Leaders and governors recognise that these arrangements must continue.
- The local authority have worked with the school to review its effectiveness. Support is minimal owing to the strong outcomes historically.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide effective challenge and support and are aware of their statutory duties.
- Governors:
 - have restructured meetings so that time is used effectively and members have a clearer view about the school's work
 - have supported leaders to foster a strong sense of values and positive ethos among staff
 - have a range of skills including expertise within different industries and the education sector

- know the school well and are clear about the developments required in the early years.
- Analysis of assessment information does not take enough account of the progress made by different groups of pupils. As a result, governors are not always able to fully hold leaders to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff have received training in the government's statutory guidance.
- Records are held securely and detail how leaders seek the support of other agencies and engage with parents if they have a concern about a child.
- The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to learn about how to stay safe and pupils know this. Pupils that inspectors spoke to were able to identify the leaders that are responsible for safeguarding. All of the pupils that responded to the online survey, and those inspectors spoke to, said that they felt there was an adult in school that they could talk to if something was worrying them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching across key stages 1 and 2 is strong and is improving in the early years.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils. These expectations result in a strong work ethic. Pupils want to do their best and listen carefully to their teachers. Pupils act quickly on advice and demonstrate a hunger for learning.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are exceptional. Pupils have great respect for their teachers.
- Teachers have very strong subject knowledge. They have developed detailed programmes of study and are supported in their work by enthusiastic subject leaders and phase leaders.
- The teaching of phonics is highly effective and is resulting in strong rates of progress. Teachers have fostered a love of reading in pupils. Staff have invested considerable time and effort in developing learning environments that inspire thinking and prompt discussion about a wide range of famous texts.
- Teachers' questioning skills are strong. Teachers use a range of skilful strategies to prompt discussions and help pupils secure progress in their learning. This was particularly evident in mathematics lessons across Year 6. Teachers used their excellent knowledge of pupils to expand their thinking and explore complicated problems. In one lesson, pupils were successfully calculating the area of a triangle. Pupils then used this understanding to explore multi-step problems involving 3D shapes and nets.
- Teachers meet with leaders to assess the progress that pupils are making across the year. This information is used effectively to devise additional support and modify plans.

- Work in books shows that pupils are making strong rates of progress across English and mathematics. Teachers set well-pitched challenges in most mathematics lessons to move pupils' learning on further. On occasion, some pupils can find tasks a little too easy to complete. As a result, pupils do not always make the more rapid rates of progress that they are capable of. Over a quarter of pupils who responded to the online survey felt that learning was only challenging in some lessons.
- The quality of teaching and learning across the wider curriculum varies across the school. In key stage 1, pupils' progress in subjects such as history and geography is not as strong as that found in English and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured. During the inspection many pupils were quick to engage with inspectors and explain what they were learning about.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. They want to do well and listen attentively to staff. During social times they cooperate well and demonstrate exceptional manners.
- Pupils know how to stay safe. They proudly told inspectors that they have five adults who are specifically responsible for keeping them safe. All of the pupils who responded to Ofsted's online survey reported that there is an adult that they can talk to if anything is worrying them.
- During the inspection pupils did not raise any concerns about bullying with inspectors. Pupils demonstrate a good awareness of how to stay safe online and are taught how to stay safe through assemblies and topics in class.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around the school and within lessons is very good. Inspectors found no instances of poor behaviour or low-level disruption.
- Pupils that inspectors spoke to were positive about behaviour and believe that it has improved over time. Pupils also report that staff respond quickly to any issues. Pupils are clear about the rewards and sanctions that have been established.
- The school environment is calm and orderly. Pupils take pride in their school and are positive about the support that they receive from staff.
- Overall attendance is in line with national levels. In the last academic year, attendance was low for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, absence for this group of pupils has improved considerably since September 2016 and is currently above the national average.

- Leaders have introduced a new system for tracking any incidents of poor behaviour. Information is used by phase leaders to support individual pupils and check for improvements. Data is not yet used at a whole-school level to analyse any frequency or trends for particular phases or groups of pupils.
- Some parents expressed concerns about behaviour during the inspection. Inspectors considered these concerns very carefully and checked what behaviour was typically like in school and were satisfied that, when incidents of poor behaviour occur, they are dealt with well. Inspectors have, however, recommended that leaders develop communication channels with parents further, and ensure that they respond quickly to any concerns that families may raise.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes across the school are above those found nationally in almost all subjects. Particular strengths are in reading and mathematics in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2. Pupils make rapid progress in English and mathematics from their different starting points.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has been above national levels for the last two years, following very low outcomes in 2014. Children continue to make at least typical progress in the early years. However, there is scope to secure much more rapid rates of progress in this stage, given children's starting points. Children start St Edward's with levels of attainment which are typically in line with or above those found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been consistently above national levels for several years. Current rates of progress remain strong as a result of effective teaching.
- Rates of progress were particularly strong in reading and mathematics in key stage 2 in 2016. Pupils, including those that are disadvantaged, made more progress than pupils nationally. However, progress in writing was not as strong. The school recognised this area of weakness and swiftly took purposeful action. Staff were trained as designated leaders and to be moderators for the local authority. The school's actions and growing expertise are sharpening the judgements that are being made by teachers about pupils' writing. Pupils' English books demonstrate clear progress across key stages 1 and 2 since September 2016.
- The school's assessment information and work in books demonstrate that disadvantaged pupils currently make rates of progress in line with their peers. In 2016, this group of pupils secured levels of achievement above those made by other pupils nationally in most subjects.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively and are progressing in their learning. The school's inclusion team monitor rates of progress carefully and make adaptations to provision in light of any changing needs.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported effectively at St Edward's. Pupils' needs are assessed on entry and programmes are used to establish any additional support that may be required. This group of pupils are well supported in class by highly skilled teaching assistants who understand their roles and help pupils to

secure progress.

- While the number of pupils achieving the expected level of attainment was above national levels in key stage 1 in 2016, fewer pupils achieved at a greater depth. Pupils' work in books, particularly in mathematics, shows that there is scope for a greater level of challenge. On occasion, pupils, including the most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not routinely challenged. Some activities are completed with ease and are not re-shaped quickly enough to accelerate rates of progress.
- Pupils make progress across the wider curriculum, though this is not as strong as outcomes in English and mathematics. In key stage 1, work in history and geography does not offer the breadth and challenge found elsewhere.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Leaders are open and frank about the priorities for development and have rightly made wholesale changes to the provision in this stage. Leaders have brokered the support of specialists and experts to ensure the early years rapidly moves towards good. However, the impact of leadership over time requires improvement. Many developments are new and more effective practice is not yet embedded within the provision.
- Work has already begun to improve the practice of all adults and has been received positively by staff. Adults within the early years have areas of expertise and strengths that they use to enhance the curriculum. They are committed to improvements and ensuring children get off to the best possible start at St Edward's.
- Assessment information is not yet used well enough to inform day-to-day planning. Children engage in the activities planned for them but these often require a greater degree of challenge. Though outcomes are now above those found nationally, rates of progress are not currently rapid enough given children's different starting points.
- There are aspects of the curriculum that are not demanding enough. The exact purpose of some activities is not always clear and so staff are not in a position to check what children have learned. Staff are working hard to develop a greater sense of balance between activities that children access independently and those that may require more adult support.
- The quality of teaching varies across the setting. Teachers are not routinely using what they know about children to structure learning that builds on their interests, skills and enthusiasms.
- The behaviour of children is good, though, on occasions, some become inattentive when activities are not well matched to their needs.
- Support staff use skilful questioning to help children think about what they are doing and why. Staff know children well and form very positive relationships.
- Partnerships with parents are effective. Staff ensure that parents receive regular opportunities to talk about learning and share successes.
- Though rates of progress are not always as rapid as they could be, children are ready for the transition to Year 1 by the time they leave the early years.
- Safeguarding is effective and there are no breaches in welfare requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	103447
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10025347

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	413
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Connolly
Headteacher	Joanne Kennett
Telephone number	0121 464 1730
Website	www.stedward.bham.sch.uk/
Email address	enquiry@stedward.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- St Edward's is larger than the average primary school.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- A new headteacher took up post in September 2015 and a new assistant headteacher joined the school in September 2016.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with national figures.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is twice the national average.
- Approximately a third of pupils speak English as an additional language.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities without a statement of support is above average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons or part lessons. Over half of the observations were conducted with senior leaders. Inspectors observed leaders providing feedback to teachers.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher and two assistant headteachers to review the school's self-evaluation and development plans.
- Pupils' books were scrutinised during observations and in meetings with leaders.
- Inspectors met with parents at the school gate, and received letters and an email outlining parents' views. Inspectors scrutinised the 85 responses to free text and 95 online submissions to Parent View.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, assistant headteacher and school business manager to review a range of documents relating to safeguarding including: the single central record, child protection files, personnel files, training records, certificates, referrals to other agencies, risk assessments and governing body minutes.
- Inspectors took account of the 26 responses to the staff survey and 105 responses to the pupil survey. Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors also met with groups of pupils to gather their views about aspects of school life including learning, behaviour and safety.
- The lead inspectors heard pupils read from Year 2.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the governing body including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors met with the leaders of: inclusion, assessment, curriculum subjects, attendance, pupil premium expenditure and the early years.

Inspection team

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Michael Appleby	Ofsted Inspector

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