

# St Edward's Catholic Primary School

New Road, Sheerness, Kent ME12 1BW

## Inspection dates

21–22 May 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher delivers her clear and ambitious vision for the school with passion and diligence. Along with senior leaders, she has established a good standard of education across the school.
- Senior leaders provide helpful support for newly appointed middle leaders, whose effectiveness is developing.
- Pupils learn to be caring, thoughtful young people. Leaders ensure that the school's considerate values are promoted reliably as an intrinsic part of pupils' daily life.
- Pupils enjoy school and rarely miss a day. Robust safeguarding systems ensure that pupils are safe.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They are very polite, respectful and strive to do their very best in lessons. They demonstrate an obvious pride in their school and their personal achievements.
- Pupils are successfully prepared to be kind citizens in modern Britain. Opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are carefully woven throughout the well-developed curriculum and the life of the school.
- The multi-academy trust knows the school well, rigorously holding leaders to account for standards of teaching and pupils' outcomes. The local governing body is developing its effectiveness.
- Pupils learn well across the school. Teachers use their subject knowledge effectively to plan interesting and engaging lessons which meet the needs of most pupils well.
- Children in the early years make strong progress, often from very low starting points. Effective teaching and support enable children to learn and develop successfully within a safe, stimulating and happy environment.
- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress from their typically low starting points, especially in reading and writing. At times, work set for pupils does not challenge the most able pupils precisely enough.
- Although pupils learn well in mathematics, they make less progress during key stage 2 than in reading and writing. Leaders' work to further develop the teaching of mathematics is not yet fully effective.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen further the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - developing the effectiveness of middle leadership on the quality of teaching and the curriculum, including in mathematics
  - developing the skills and effectiveness of governors.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that the needs of the most able pupils are met consistently, leading to improved outcomes.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher maintains high and uncompromising aspirations for pupils' achievement and staff performance. Along with other leaders, the headteacher has successfully gained the confidence and support of parents and staff. Parents and carers are hugely positive about the school and the quality of education that their children experience.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team know their school very well and take effective action to improve the areas that they identify as needing to develop.
- Staff benefit from useful training to develop their teaching expertise. This has impacted positively on the quality of teaching in reading and writing, where pupils' progress is strong. Similar promising developments in mathematics were introduced more recently. As such, their impact is currently less evident.
- Pupils experience a carefully planned curriculum. Leaders are determined that pupils acquire a rich variety of valuable knowledge and understanding of the world. Helpful links between subjects encourage pupils to think about the how the world is connected.
- Through the wider curriculum and the life of the school, pupils' SMSC development is successfully promoted and they are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Leaders have successfully created a caring school where a compassionate ethos, based on the school's Catholic values, is evident throughout. For example, pupils talk enthusiastically about the wide variety of charities that they support. Older pupils enjoy performing songs for people at a local dementia café. Pupils from different cultures are welcomed, for example through newsletters helpfully translated for families.
- The promising work of newly established middle leaders is beginning to contribute successfully to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Examples are evident in the art curriculum, for example, and the teaching of mathematics. This early success by middle leaders is well supported by senior leaders to ensure further development.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to boost disadvantaged pupils' achievement. Instrumental tuition, specialist music teaching and regular educational visits, such as to London museums, are relevant examples of how the funding is used to engage and enthuse pupils. Activities which support leaders' vision of all pupils achieving 10 aspirational goals by the age of 10 are a further example. Leaders also use the funding effectively to support pupils and families with improving attendance.
- Sports funding is used to successfully engage pupils in regular physical activity. For example, pupils and their families have participated in active and fun dance workshops such as a hip-hop workshop and a Bollywood routine.
- Pupils with SEND are provided for very well. Leaders identify pupils' individual needs swiftly and accurately, putting effective support in place. The special educational needs coordinator's conscientious and knowledgeable work successfully involves parents and external agencies.
- Leaders listen well to the views of pupils. Pupils appreciate how much they can

influence their school, for example through choosing which charities they support.

## **Governance of the school**

- The multi-academy trust staff offer regular, effective support and challenge to leaders. The trust has secure systems in place to ensure that leaders are held stringently to account for all aspects of the school.
- As a result of effective recent training provided by the trust, governors are increasingly well informed about their roles. They are developing helpful systems to offer effective support and challenge to school leaders, but these are not yet well established.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have established robust systems which successfully ensure that children are safe. Clear systems for recording concerns allow leaders to notice, and act upon, emerging patterns quickly. Leaders are tenacious in securing support from external agencies for pupils and their families when needed.
- Leaders demonstrate effective efforts in providing relevant safeguarding training for staff. Staff are well equipped for their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Parents believe their children are safe and well looked after at school, with one parent stating their child told them, 'It's like one big, happy family and I have made lots of friends.'

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning. As a result, pupils try their very best in lessons and complete their work with pride.
- Teachers use accurate assessments of pupils' learning to inform their planning. However, at times, this is not used precisely enough to plan the next steps for the most able pupils. Consequently, effective challenge, leading to high levels of achievement by these pupils, is not systematically secure.
- Phonics is taught systematically and successfully. Pupils make reliable progress over time as a result of teachers' careful assessment of their progress to inform the teaching that they provide. Leaders successfully promote reading, both at school and at home.
- Teachers' secure subject knowledge enables handwriting and spelling, punctuation and grammar to be taught well throughout the school. Consequently, pupils across the school make consistently good progress in reading and writing. This was evident in the positive outcomes that pupils achieved by the end of Year 6 in 2018.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics is currently less well developed than the teaching of English. Leaders' work to strengthen opportunities for pupils to deepen their mathematical thinking and problem-solving skills is ongoing. Pupils' progress in mathematics is not currently as strong as for reading and writing.
- Staff use a well-considered range of approaches for pupils with SEND, which allows these pupils to make good progress from their starting points. Staff are well informed

about pupils' specific needs and plan successfully to meet them. Additional adults support pupils' learning effectively.

- Teaching is interesting and highly engaging across the curriculum. Teachers use their wide range of subject knowledge well to plan learning that ignites pupils' interest. As a result, pupils successfully develop specific skills and knowledge.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

## **Outstanding**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' pride in their school is palpable. Pupils learn to be considerate, compassionate young people who contribute not just to the success of their own community but also beyond the school through their acts of charity and kindness.
- Staff successfully monitor and address how pupils are feeling through the use of an emotional checkpoint every morning. The pastoral support adviser provides pupils and their families with a wealth of invaluable support, which they fully appreciate.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They talk confidently and accurately about what they have learned in assemblies and workshops during focus weeks such as anti-bullying and internet safety week. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils believe that bullying in their school is extremely rare and if it does happen it is dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Pupils relish the rich opportunities that encourage them to be healthy and enjoy being outdoors. For example, most pupils participate in 'Walk in Wednesday', enjoying and benefiting from the walk to school. Learning outside in the school garden environment is also a helpful experience appreciated by pupils. Pupils benefit from a sociable start to the day during breakfast club.
- Pupils work hard to ensure that friendships remain healthy through their successful use of restorative justice. Monitored by staff, pupils offer systematic support to each other, which enables any problems to be dealt with rapidly.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils conduct themselves impeccably in class and around school. Well-established routines inspire and encourage pupils to achieve of their best. Parents appreciate and value the improvements in pupils' behaviour since the headteacher joined the school.
- Pupils play happily together at breaktimes. They support each other to successfully resolve any friendship issues that arise, with the help of well-trained and attentive adults. Pupils believe this is part of the reason that their school is so friendly.
- Leaders' effective work ensures that pupils attend school regularly. Absence rates are consistently below the national average for primary schools. Staff act promptly and successfully to follow up specific concerns that arise about attendance.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most pupils make strong progress during their time at St Edward's, from starting points that are often very low. By the time they leave the school, pupils' progress in reading and writing is significantly stronger than the rates of progress made by pupils nationally with similar starting points. Their progress in mathematics is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who attain the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is above the national averages. Published information for 2018 shows that at the age of 11 pupils leave school ready for secondary school.
- Across key stage 1, pupils make strong progress in reading, writing, mathematics and phonics, from below-average outcomes at the end of early years. Over time, the proportion attaining the expected standard by the end of Year 2 is improving securely towards the national averages.
- While pupils with the lowest starting points make strong progress, the progress of the most able pupils is not as robust. The proportion of the most able pupils attaining the highest levels of learning is below the national average.
- Leaders' early and accurate identification of the specific needs of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, results in effective provision. Consequently, they make good progress over time

## Early years provision

Good

- Children's experience in the early years prepares them well for their next steps. They are happy, confident learners who develop successfully because their needs are met.
- Leaders demonstrate a determined approach to equip children with the fundamental knowledge and skills that they need to succeed as they progress through life. Although the proportion of children who reach a good level of development is below the national average, well-organised learning journals demonstrate the consistently strong progress that children make in their early learning goals.
- Adults plan usefully demanding experiences that help children improve the areas of development that they struggle with the most. Time is used productively. For example, a session concentrating on naming mathematical shapes also encouraged children to run around to find the shapes, developing their physical skills. Children learn consistently well across the curriculum.
- Adults know children well and look after them with care and attention. The environment is safe and engaging. Pupils extend their learning successfully inside and outside, working well together or individually.
- Leaders ensure that communication between parents and staff is strong. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. The 'open door' policy for parents each morning contributes to the successful start to the day that children have in the early years.
- Staff have consistently high expectations for children's behaviour. Along with clear and

established routines, these lead to a fun, yet focused, learning environment, where children behave well. Children feel safe and are encouraged to take appropriate risks that help them to learn.

## School details

Unique reference number	141386
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10088098

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Father Philip Gilbert
Headteacher	Sara Wakefield
Telephone number	01795 662 708
Website	<a href="http://www.st-edwards-sheerness.co.uk">www.st-edwards-sheerness.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@st-edwards.kent.sch.uk">headteacher@st-edwards.kent.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Edward's Catholic Primary School is a smaller-than-average, one-form-entry school.
- The school joined the Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership multi-academy trust in July 2016. The trust includes 23 other Catholic schools in Kent.
- The trust board oversees four committees and the local governing board.
- The local governing body is relatively newly formed and has delegated authority from the trust for standards of education and safeguarding within the school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with the second largest group being of Any other White background, including families of Eastern European heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is above the national average.
- The school has a higher-than-average proportion of pupils with SEND.
- The school's most recent inspection of denominational education and collective worship took place in November 2016. The school was judged to require improvement overall.



- There is a breakfast club every day for pupils.

## **Information about this inspection**

- This was the first inspection carried out since the school became an academy.
- Inspectors visited lessons, many alongside the headteacher and deputy headteacher. These visits included a range of subjects and were across all key stages. In lessons, inspectors spoke to pupils and looked at work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils to hear their views, observed and spoke to pupils eating lunch and playing at breaktimes, and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors met with leaders, teachers, parents, members of the local governing board, representatives of the multi-academy trust and spoke with the chief executive officer of the trust.
- A wide range of information was scrutinised, including documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Safeguarding procedures were reviewed by inspectors.
- Along with leaders, inspectors scrutinised samples of pupils' work and information about their current progress and attainment.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed in 36 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 16 free-text responses. The views of 22 pupils and 22 staff who completed Ofsted's surveys were also taken into account.

### **Inspection team**

Maxine McDonald-Taylor, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Siân Thornton

Her Majesty's Inspector

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