

# Inspection of a good school: St Swithun's Catholic Primary School

Taswell Road, Southsea, Hampshire PO5 2RG

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Inspection dates:

24–25 September 2019

## **Outcome**

St Swithun's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils like their school a lot. They enjoy coming to school and talk with great enthusiasm about lessons being fun and the support that they get from staff. This helps them to feel very safe in school. Pupils said that they really like the opportunities outside lessons. They value the sports clubs and the chance to learn a musical instrument including the flute, violin and trumpet.

Staff aim high for pupils' academic success, personal development and behaviour. Pupils are eager to learn new things and are quick to respond to instructions. They are courteous to adults and each other. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. They play well together, with older pupils looking after younger ones, especially when being a 'buddy' to another pupil.

Pupils said that bullying is rare. They understand the effect that it can have on others. Pupils know what to do if they know of any bullying and are confident that staff will deal with any issues quickly and effectively. Parents and carers like the school. One parent said, 'My children love the school and are thriving.' Many parents spoke of the genuine warmth and respect that staff show their children.

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

Leaders, including governors, and staff aspire for pupils to experience a vibrant curriculum. They know clearly what pupils should learn and by when. Subject leaders plan learning that requires pupils to think hard and use skills and knowledge from different subjects at the same time. This ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to the learning of pupils with SEND. However, pupils generally do not have deep enough knowledge in geography and history. This is because learning is not always planned well enough to build pupils' understanding in a logical order.

Pupils' broader development is a high priority. Staff plan experiences that ensure that

pupils take a full part in the life of the school and local community. For example, pupils sing and play music at local community groups and events. The school works well to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are opportunities for pupils to think deeply about the school's values. Consequently, pupils know what is right and what is wrong. Pupils said that they liked and learned much about teamwork and animal welfare by 'working' on the residential farm visit in Year 5.

Leaders prioritise teaching pupils to read. They have chosen effective ways to help pupils want to read often, widely and for enjoyment. As a result, pupils take every opportunity to read. For example, during a wet playtime during the inspection, pupils chose to read rather than play games. Teachers use the phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) scheme consistently well. The teaching of phonics continues whenever it is needed to help pupils catch up if they are a little behind where they should be. Pupils in key stage 2 develop good skills of understanding because of the carefully chosen texts that pupils read in class.

Pupils' behaviour is very good. Their conduct in lessons and around school, including at breaktime and lunchtime, is extremely sensible. There is very little interruption during lessons because of poor behaviour. As a result, pupils learn without being disturbed. In class, pupils listen respectfully to each other and to their teachers.

Learning continues far beyond the classroom. Pupils improve their historical skills and understanding when visiting places of interest related to what they have been studying in lessons. These visits are precisely placed in the planned series of history lessons. This makes the most of these visits to help pupils see for themselves and remember important information.

Leaders support staff well to carry out their duties effectively and efficiently. They ensure that teachers and teaching assistants do not complete unnecessary tasks. One member of the staff said, 'Teachers' opinions are taken into account and used to adapt policies. These are reviewed regularly.'

Children make a good start to their learning in early years. The curriculum, particularly in reading and mathematics, is well planned and carefully balanced. Children's learning in reading provides them with the skills to make a successful start in Year 1. Teachers provide time for children to consolidate their skills carefully. The curriculum is used effectively to encourage a keen sense of curiosity. For example, children explore number by representing amounts in a variety of different ways. Children behave well and are kind to one another.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that detailed checks are completed on those who work at the school. All staff make sure that pupils are kept safe. Pupils are helped to know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Visitors provide specialist knowledge; for example, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) has

provided training for staff to understand their responsibilities.

Leaders make referrals to outside agencies swiftly and follow these up if they continue to have concerns. Leaders and staff have high expectations of other services and work well with them.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders need to continue their work to improve some parts of the curriculum, such as in geography and history. In these subjects, leaders should develop how learning builds on what pupils already know and understand, so that they learn important aspects, such as historical chronology, more deeply.

## **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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 3–4 February 2016.

## **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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116386
<b>Local authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111285
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	355
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Ben Foy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Olive
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stswithuncatholicprimaryschool.co.uk">www.stswithuncatholicprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3–4 February 2016

## Information about this school

- St Swithun’s Catholic Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school receives light-touch support from the local authority.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school-club.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, middle leaders and other staff. The inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority. Discussions explored a wide range of subjects, including safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the school day. Account was taken of the 60 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, the 30 responses to the staff survey and the 18 responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents. These included those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, and the quality of teaching and learning. The inspector looked at plans for improvement, as well as leaders’ evaluation of the school’s performance.

The inspector also considered the information on the school's website.

- The inspector held discussions with senior leaders and scrutinised a range of documents about safeguarding.
- The inspector looked in detail at three subjects. These were reading, music and mathematics. This was undertaken to consider the quality of education. The inspector visited 11 lessons with senior leaders. The inspector also met with teachers, curriculum leaders and pupils, and looked at a sample of pupils' work in these subjects.

### **Inspection team**

Richard Blackmore, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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