

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

High Street, New Town, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5DJ

Inspection dates:

10–11 December 2019

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

St Philip's is a friendly, welcoming school. There is a happy atmosphere and a strong sense of belonging to a caring, kind community. One parent wrote, 'We feel so blessed to be part of the St Philip's community.' Pupils are great advocates of the school's values and the Catholic ethos, which permeate all that the school does. They are very happy at school and live up to the school motto of 'Let Your Light Shine'.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very positive attitudes to learning. Leaders have high ambitions for all their pupils. Teachers make sure that there are interesting lessons and activities to stimulate and challenge pupils. There are very positive, trusting relationships between pupils and adults. Everyone feels included. Pupils are confident to express themselves and try things out because they know their opinions and efforts are valued.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They work and play together very well. Pupils feel safe and secure in school. They say there is no bullying. They are confident to turn to staff if any problems arise and know they will be listened to.

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

The school continues to provide a good quality of education. This is because the headteacher, senior leaders and governors provide effective and determined leadership. Leaders have a clear overview of what they want pupils to learn. The knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn are well established in the school's plans for reading, writing, mathematics and religious education. Leaders have recently worked hard to make sure that the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn for the foundation subjects are equally well organised into subject plans. This means that teachers know what to teach and when, and plan work to build on what has gone before.

Teachers help pupils make connections with what they already know and remember and what they next learn. Pupils ask and answer questions and have lots of opportunities to

talk and discuss their learning with each other. Pupils are proud to be able to use what they know to learn more. For example, in history, pupils reflected on what they had learned in previous lessons on the Romans. This helped them create a timeline for the Seven Wonders of the modern world.

Reading has a high priority in the school. Children are taught to read from the start of the Reception Year. Phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) teaching is well planned, organised and structured. Children quickly learn the skills they need. If they do not, they have effective extra support to catch up. A love of reading is fostered right from the start and continues as pupils move through the school. There is an expectation that every child will learn to read. To help pupils do even better, a new approach to reading lessons has been introduced in Years 3 to 6.

Pupils enjoy a rich and broad curriculum. They achieve well. Leaders provide high-quality training for staff. This improves their skills and expertise. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Staff give the right sort of help and the right amount. They make sure that pupils with SEND develop their skills and knowledge and have the same opportunities to learn as others.

Teachers work hard to broaden pupils' learning. They plan trips linked to topics, provide a range of clubs and organise special events such as the recent 'Survival Day'. This provided opportunities for Year 6 pupils to explore team-building activities. Specialists provide a range of opportunities for pupils. These include learning to play instruments, ballroom dancing and physical education activities. One parent of a child in the Reception class wrote, 'They have had lots of activities, including emergency services day, super hero day, a visit to the fire station, a puppet show, and a visit from a poet. The variety has been brilliant.' Pupils show respect and kindness. They understand and accept that sometimes people have different needs to others.

Parents are very happy with the school and the leadership. Staff work as a strong, supportive team. They appreciate the support from leaders. They say that leaders care about their well-being and are mindful of their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils very well. Staff quickly spot any signs that a pupil may need some additional support or help. All staff are well trained and informed about all aspects of safeguarding. They are regularly updated if there are any new requirements. Staff know exactly what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's safety or well-being. Leaders are vigilant in following up with appropriate action. Leaders have created an environment that nurtures pupils. This is valued by pupils and parents and helps pupils thrive at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently implemented revised medium-term plans for the foundation subjects. These are logically sequenced, building skills and knowledge with clear end points. They enable teachers to know what to teach and when and to be clear about the standards to be reached each year. Leaders should continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum, to ensure that pupils know more and remember more over time.
- Leaders have taken action to ensure continued success in pupils' development as readers in key stage 2. A different approach to the guided reading sessions has been implemented to improve pupils' skills and knowledge further, including comprehension, retrieval and inference skills. Leaders need to ensure that the new approach is consistently implemented.

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 St Philip's Catholic Primary School to be good on 16–17 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 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	114569
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10111370
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mrs Geraldine Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Joanna Sanchez
Website	www.stphilips.e-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 May 2016

Information about this school

- St Philip's Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Meetings were held with five governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- I had a telephone conversation with an adviser from the local authority.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each of these subjects, I met with curriculum leaders, carried out lesson visits, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers from the lessons visited.
- I spoke to pupils in and out of lessons. I talked with them about their learning and heard some pupils read.

- The school's safeguarding arrangements were reviewed. I met with the school's designated safeguarding lead, looked at records, spoke to pupils and staff and scrutinised the school's single central record.
- I took account of 25 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 23 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- I took account of 35 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and 31 free-text responses.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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