

# Inspection of a good school: The Faber Catholic Primary School

Cotton Lane, Cotton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST10 3DN

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Inspection dates:

5 March 2020

## **Outcome**

The Faber Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

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

This is a happy school which takes good care of its pupils. They enjoy school and attend well. Pupils know that staff want them to do their best.

Behaviour is good around the school. The school is calm and orderly. Pupils know how staff expect them to behave. Pupils say that bullying just does not happen. They trust staff to sort out any other incidents. Pupils want to get their names on the 'sunshine and rainbow' and, in doing so, show that they are making the right choices.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They learn about this in lessons and assemblies. They have a good understanding of online safety.

Pupils achieve well in all subjects. Visiting teachers from the multi-academy trust add strength to the school's curriculum. Partnership work with the local secondary school allows pupils and staff to benefit from a range of expert teachers. This helps pupils to learn well across a range of subjects and prepares pupils well for when they leave the school.

Many parents are satisfied with the school and how well staff cater for the needs of pupils, though some parents believe that leaders could improve communication processes.

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

Children in the early years get off to a good start, which continues into Year 1. Relationships between staff and children are strong. Children are very quick and happy to respond to instructions. The current topic, 'On the move', encourages writing and mathematics through engaging activities linked to papier mâché hot-air balloons. Activities are well planned, and children develop their skills effectively across the early years curriculum.

Reading is taught well across the school. Staff are well trained in teaching phonics. If pupils are struggling, teachers use a range of ways to help them practise words. However, some pupils' books do not contain the sounds that the pupils are currently learning. This limits the progress that pupils are capable of. Older pupils believe there could be a wider selection of books to read.

Leaders have identified that pupils' attainment in mathematics could be stronger. Recent developments in mathematics are improving how pupils are learning. More pupils are now explaining their mathematical thinking using a range of resources. This approach has yet to work its way through the school. Not all teachers have had training to implement leaders' plans.

Sharing staff expertise within the multi-academy trust is enhancing the curriculum. For example, science is taught by subject specialists. This is a strength of the curriculum. Pupils develop a rich understanding of the subject. They use scientific terms and vocabulary accurately. They behave well in classrooms and respond positively to the challenges.

In subjects such as modern foreign language, leaders have begun to refine the lessons to strengthen pupils' skills and knowledge even further. For example, in Spanish, younger pupils can respond to verbal instructions. Older pupils progress to building and writing Spanish sentences. Not all curriculum subjects have the same rigour. Leaders intend to apply the same review process and, in doing so, embed training for staff to deliver the planned curriculum.

Leaders regularly check on the quality of education provided. Colleagues from other schools visit and work with leaders to identify strengths and areas to improve. This helps leaders and governors to have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This information has helped leaders put in place a well-balanced curriculum.

Across different subjects, teachers check on how well pupils are learning. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff provide more support within the classrooms where this is needed. This system of careful assessment and additional support means that pupils with SEND achieve as well as other pupils.

Leaders carefully consider pupils' personal development. Many parents are positive about how the school has helped their children to develop. Leaders are keen to ensure that the social and emotional needs of pupils are well supported. For example, frequent visits of staff from the feeder secondary school help pupils to prepare for the move to what is a much larger school. Pupils appreciate this.

Staff are positive about the support they receive from leaders. They appreciate efforts to manage workload and to check on their well-being. This includes how leaders provide opportunities to visit other schools, sharing effective practice.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a priority for all leaders and staff. Staff and governors understand the role they play in keeping children safe. Leaders regularly review arrangements to make sure pupils are safe and feel safe. Leaders, governors and all staff receive regular training and updates. All staff are clear about how to identify and report risks. Leaders make sure that all staff understand these procedures well when they start at the school.

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

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

- Since the last inspection, leaders have taken action to improve the quality of the curriculum. However, some curriculum plans are not yet fully embedded across the school. This means that some subject-specific content can be missed. Subject leaders should continue to develop their role in supporting staff to implement and monitor the plans.
- Recent changes to the implementation of the curriculum have improved pupils' learning in mathematics, but not all teachers are using the school's chosen strategy consistently. Not enough pupils are learning mathematics in the depth that they might. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the necessary skills to use the new strategies for the teaching of mathematics.
- The school teaches reading successfully. However, in a small number of cases, books do not always match the sounds that pupils are learning at the moment. This limits these pupils' progress. Leaders should ensure there are sufficient books to help pupils maximise their progress in reading, including books matched to sounds for early readers.

## 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 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 the predecessor school, The Faber Catholic Primary school, to be good on 17–18 November 2011.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138722
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111798
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	66
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mr Nick Harrison
<b>Principal</b>	Mrs Lisa Machin
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.faber.staffs.sch.uk">http://www.faber.staffs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 February 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The Faber Catholic Primary School is part of The Painsley MAC (Staffordshire).
- The school provides before- and after-school care.
- A section 48 inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of The Faber Catholic Primary School and the school's provision of Catholic life took place in April 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, we visited classrooms to watch pupils learn. We observed pupils at playtime. We spoke to them about their work and daily life at school. We looked at the work they do and checked how well they are learning the curriculum.
- We focused on reading, mathematics, science and modern foreign languages.
- We met with leaders and staff from the school. We spoke to them about the quality of education provided by the school, the pupils' wider development, pupils' behaviour and staff workload. We met with members of the governing body and representatives of

the board of trustees. We had a telephone conversation with a representative of the diocese of Birmingham.

- We scrutinised a range of key documents, including safeguarding records and published information about pupils' attainment and results. We took account of 44 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the text message responses too. We met with parents at the start of the school day.

### **Inspection team**

Richard Kentish, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Dave Gilkerson

Ofsted Inspector

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