

Inspection of a good school: St Martin de Porres Catholic Primary School

Oakland Road, Moseley, Birmingham, West Midlands B13 9DN

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 September 2021

Outcome

St Martin de Porres Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love this school and so do their parents and carers. Pupils say they learn new things every day. One pupil said, 'It's great, it makes our brains get bigger and bigger.' Staff know pupils and their families really well. They offer strong support to parents. This helps parents understand their child's learning and so they are able to help them at home.

Leaders' expectations for each and every child are high. This helps pupils believe in themselves and do well. Leaders want everyone to succeed. Staff value and celebrate all the diverse cultures that make up this happy school. All parents responding to the Ofsted parent questionnaire would recommend the school.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. The inspector agrees they are kept safe. Pupils say that if bullying happened adults would stop it quickly. Behaviour in lessons and in the playground is good. Staff intervene in a kind and sensitive way as soon as they spot any issues.

The school has developed a 'magical garden'. Parents and members of the community helped pupils create this special learning space. Pupils help to grow fruit and vegetables in the raised beds in this area. Everyone enjoys the end produce.

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

Leaders want all pupils to be confident, eager learners. Pupils told the inspector, 'Learning is fun.' Others said, 'I love a challenge.' They enjoy their learning and do well. Leaders have created a curriculum that helps pupils build on previous learning. It widens their vocabulary, language development and understanding. The school curriculum is well designed.

Early reading is a strength of the school. Books are everywhere. Staff bring stories to life in the daily story times. This helps pupils develop new vocabulary and supports their writing. Reception-aged children enjoyed learning the word 'squabbling' and repeated it

after the teacher. Pupils in Year 6 enjoyed exploring the language choices made in a Michael Morpurgo novel.

Leaders ensure phonics is well planned. Staff receive high-quality training that helps them teach phonics well. The use of experienced teaching assistants to support pupils who are falling behind is effective. Pupils decode and blend words well. This helps them to read books, well matched to the sounds they know, with accuracy and fluency. Leaders believe in the importance of teaching each pupil to read as early as possible. They offer effective targeted support, and help parents hear their children read, so no pupil struggles.

Pupils enjoy learning about art and famous artists. Clear planning helps pupils develop knowledge and skills. Artists' work helps pupils explore and practise their skills. Leaders have introduced sketch-books so pupils can experiment. They have planned key vocabulary into the art curriculum, which pupils use enthusiastically.

Leaders have reviewed the mathematics curriculum. Leaders' plans are effective. Pupils' arithmetic skills are good. Leaders are working well to develop problem-solving skills. Pupils talk about mathematics and explain their reasoning with increasing confidence. They could tell the inspector what they have learned in the past and how this helps them with new learning. They enjoy the 'five-a-day' challenges that revisit previous learning.

Sometimes, in mathematics, staff do not expect enough of pupils, especially those who are higher-attaining. Work is not suitably demanding enough to help pupils build on what they already know and can do. This means that some pupils, including those in early years, do not achieve as well as they could.

Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Staff step in quickly when pupils need help. Leaders use external agencies effectively. Pupils with SEND take part in all aspects of school life. Expectations of these pupils are high. Staff adapt learning carefully to meet pupils' needs, allowing them to feel secure and to succeed.

Pupils take on extra responsibilities in school. They enjoy visits to the theatre, museums and local parks. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 go on residential trips. The school supports a range of charities. All pupils take part in after-school sporting clubs. Many learn to play a musical instrument. As a result, pupils develop wider skills and talents.

Pupils told the inspector they have lots of friends and enjoy learning about the different cultures celebrated in school. Pupils care for each other. They know it is important to treat others kindly. Pupils know staff care about them. Pupils' attendance is good.

Staff are happy in school. They feel valued by leaders. Governors take staff well-being seriously.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff and leaders care about the pupils and their families. Safeguarding is at the forefront of their minds. Staff follow safeguarding procedures confidently. Pupils learn in a safe environment. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They understand why it is important to stay safe and help others keep safe.

Training is rigorous and includes everybody. Governors take their responsibilities seriously and carry out all the required checks before appointing staff. Vulnerable families receive swift support from the school, which they welcome.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Expectations of the most able pupils are not always high enough. As a result, these pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that work set is sufficiently demanding so that pupils consistently build on what they know and can do from the moment they start in early years.

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 outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Unique reference number | 103467 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 10200279 |
| 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 | 205 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Chris Packham |
| Headteacher | Kathleen Laird (Co-Headteacher) Siobhan Braithwaite (Co-Headteacher) |
| Website | www.stmartindepores.org.uk/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic school. It was inspected by the Archdiocese of Birmingham under section 48 in May 2017.
- The two interim headteachers were appointed in April 2021.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation.
- The inspector met with the two interim headteachers, other leaders within the school and teaching and non-teaching staff. She also met with the chair, vice-chair and four members of the governing body. She had a telephone conversation with a representative of the archdiocese.
- The inspector met with key staff responsible for safeguarding and checked the single central record and procedures for the recruitment of staff. She discussed procedures and policies relating to safeguarding and the welfare of pupils.

- Subjects inspected in depth as part of this inspection were reading, mathematics and art. The inspector visited lessons with senior leaders, looked at pupils' work and met with pupils and staff from these lessons. She observed phonics teaching in Reception and Years 1 and 2 and observed pupils read. She also met with the school council to hear their views of the school.
- The inspector watched pupils' behaviour in class and at other times during the day. She spoke to parents, staff and pupils about behaviour.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the school day. She considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the Ofsted Parent View free-text responses. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire or the staff online questionnaire.
- The inspector studied the school's website and public information.

Inspection team

Tina Willmott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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