

# Inspection of St Paul's Catholic Primary School, a Voluntary Academy

Buckstone Crescent, Alwoodley, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS17 5ES

---

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2021

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Paul's Catholic Primary School, a Voluntary Academy, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged St Paul's Catholic Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened in St Paul's Catholic Primary School, a Voluntary Academy's effectiveness before and after it converted to academy status.

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

St Paul's Catholic Primary School is a caring and safe place for pupils to learn. Pupils' behaviour is a strength of the school. All pupils speak with enthusiasm about the points they are awarded for their behaviour, hard work and positive attitudes. As a result, classrooms are purposeful and calm. Pupils can learn without interruption. Pupils thrive here.

Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful. Pupils always get the help they need if they are worried about something. Incidents of bullying are incredibly rare. However, when it does happen, adults sort this out quickly.

Pupils have roles and responsibilities that they enjoy. Pupils selected to be 'Mini Vinnies' help to promote the Catholic life and values of the school. Leaders prioritise and promote virtues, such as hope, forgiveness, tolerance and respect. As a result, all pupils value and celebrate difference. One pupil told inspectors, 'St Paul's is a kind school. People look after one another. We respect each other.'

Pupils are encouraged and supported to lead healthy lives. Regular fitness lessons throughout the week help to keep pupils active. A growing range of clubs allows pupils to take part in sporting and non-sporting activities after school. Leaders want to widen this offer further, particularly for the younger pupils.

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

Since the last inspection, the leadership of the school has changed. Leaders have rightly focused on developing curriculum leadership in subjects such as English and mathematics. In other subjects, such as computing, leadership is very new. Leaders have not had the opportunity to make the ambitious changes to the curriculum that they want. Because of this, they do not have a clear picture of how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Curriculum leaders' actions are not sharply focused on improving their subject.

Leaders have continued to make reading a high priority. Phonics teaching begins for children in Reception as soon as they start school. They learn new sounds quickly and are encouraged to use their phonics knowledge when they are learning through play. Leaders ensure that all staff have the skills and knowledge they need to teach the phonics programme. Teachers use assessments to accurately match the books to the sounds pupils already know. This helps pupils to develop fluency with their reading. As a result, most pupils start Year 3 as confident readers. Older pupils that have not secured their phonic knowledge get the help they need to catch up.

In mathematics, the curriculum is well sequenced. Pupils' learning is broken down into small, manageable steps. Teachers revisit pupils' learning and check pupils' understanding regularly. Learning moves on when pupils are ready. This helps pupils to remember what they have already been taught. Some pupils understand mathematical ideas quickly. When this happens, they are given extra challenges that

broaden and deepen their understanding. The same ambitious curriculum is in place in the early years. Teachers introduce number to pupils immediately and so Reception-age children learn to count and identify numbers at an early stage. They use mathematical language with increasing accuracy.

In subjects such as computing and history, the curriculum is well sequenced. It builds on what pupils have already learned. This is helping pupils to remember and know more over time. Leaders' chosen computing curriculum provides additional support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Instructional videos and extra practice are available for pupils if they need more help. This ensures that pupils with SEND keep up with their peers. However, approaches to assessing pupils' learning in the wider curriculum are not well established. This means that teachers and leaders do not know, in enough detail, what pupils can remember.

Leaders have robust procedures in place to identify and support pupils with SEND. These are regularly reviewed to ensure the support leaders provide is making a positive difference. Support plans for pupils with SEND are used by teachers to ensure that pupils have the resources they need to access an ambitious curriculum.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is strong. Pupils learn about and visit the places of worship of other faith groups. The curriculum promotes acceptance and tolerance. Pupils learn about cultural diversity through curriculum focuses, such as Black History Month. A well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum means that pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships.

The academy council know the school well. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They monitor the impact of leaders' actions carefully. Leaders at all levels are very ambitious for their pupils. The trust has started to provide opportunities for leaders to share practice across all schools. Staff speak positively about leadership. They say that leaders are considerate of their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that the necessary checks are made on adults who work with pupils.

All staff have received the safeguarding training they need. This means they have the knowledge and skills to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Systems for recording concerns are well established. All adults know what to do and who to speak to if they are worried about a pupil.

Online safety is regularly revisited across the curriculum so that pupils are clear on what they need to do to be safe online.

Leaders work with other agencies to ensure that pupils have the social and emotional support they need. Groups, such as play therapy, are available for those pupils that need it.

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

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

- Assessment of pupils' learning, in the wider curriculum, is not precise enough. It does not give teachers and leaders the information they need to plan the next steps for pupils or monitor the impact of the curriculum with enough rigour. Leaders need to ensure that the assessment of pupils' learning in all curriculum areas accurately captures pupils' skills and knowledge.
- Curriculum leaders, in subjects other than English and mathematics, have not had the training or time they need to monitor the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning. As a result, curriculum leaders are unclear how the curriculum is helping pupils to remember, know and do more. Leaders need to develop the role of curriculum leaders so that they have the information they need to make the informed decisions to improve their subject area.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	147485
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199329
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	John Weaving
<b>Headteacher</b>	Philip Bowker
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stpaulscps.com">www.stpaulscps.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Paul's Catholic Primary School, a voluntary academy converted to become an academy school in April 2020. When its predecessor school, St Paul's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school joined the St Gregory the Great Catholic Academy Trust in April 2020.
- A new headteacher joined the school in September 2017. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was working as an interim executive headteacher supporting another school within the trust.
- The number of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The school last received a section 48 inspection in July 2018
- The school is Catholic but accepts pupils of different faiths.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors completed deep dives in reading, mathematics, history and computing. Inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked in pupils' books and talked to teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors also met with the curriculum lead for physical education.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read an unseen text to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of the trust and two members of the academy council, including the chair.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson time and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records relating to behaviour and attendance. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about behaviour in school
- The single central record and safeguarding documents were reviewed, including the school's safeguarding policies. Inspectors met with the school's safeguarding leads.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start and end of the school day. Inspectors took account of the 110 free-text responses to the parent questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered 18 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Pearce, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Downs

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2021