

# Inspection of St Paul's Catholic Primary School

Sisefield Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham, West Midlands, B38 9JB

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Inspection dates: 16 and 17 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	Requires improvement

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

St Paul's is a small school with a pleasant community atmosphere. Pupils enjoy coming to school because leaders and staff have created a caring environment. Caring for each other and growing in self-esteem are key aims of the school. Pupils respond well to these aims. They are confident and get on well with each other.

Teachers want pupils to leave school with good knowledge in a broad range of subjects and a love of learning. They make lessons interesting and enjoyable. Pupils are well prepared for secondary education by the end of Year 6.

Pupils are keen to learn. They work well together in lessons. They like getting rewards for excellent work and good behaviour. During morning break and lunchtime, pupils enjoy playing games or reading in the reading hut in the playground. They are happy and well behaved.

Pupils feel safe at school. They say that pupils don't bully each other. They trust staff to help them if they have problems. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 volunteer as mediators to solve disputes between pupils.

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

Teachers work as a team to design and teach a programme of learning that helps pupils to make good progress. Teachers always make sure that pupils have understood what has been taught before moving on to new learning. In mathematics, pupils practise what they have learned in previous lessons at the start of every lesson. In history, teachers help pupils to understand the links between each period they study. Teachers make sure that pupils make the progress they need to move on to the following year. Pupils' transition from year to year is smooth.

Relationships between pupils and staff are positive. Pupils enjoy learning, stay on task, and do not disrupt lessons.

The school is part of a multi-academy trust. Subject leaders successfully developed the curriculum with colleagues from other schools in the trust and adapted it for their own school. New leaders in some foundation subjects have not been able to complete this process yet because of delays caused by COVID-19. Teachers check pupils' work and help them correct their mistakes during lessons. At the end of each unit of work, pupils do tasks to test their knowledge. However, where work on the curriculum is not yet complete, assessment of pupils is not yet consistent.

Staff in Nursery and Reception prepare children well for key stage 1. The curriculum in the early years matches the ambition of the curriculum in key stages 1 and 2. Staff teach children the first elements of literacy and numeracy that will give them a good start in Year 1. Children make good progress in the early years. Staff support

their personal, social, and emotional development. However, this aspect of the curriculum is not sufficiently structured.

Reading is a top priority in the school. Staff start teaching phonics in Nursery. In Reception and Year 1 pupils make rapid progress. Those who find learning to read difficult get help to keep up. Almost all pupils can read well for their age by the end of Year 1. Staff support pupils who continue to have difficulties in Year 2. Pupils in Year 3 can read well.

The school helps pupils to develop as well-rounded and responsible people. Pupils can develop their interests and talents in the sports, music, or gardening clubs. They take part in fund raising events for charity. Pupils take on responsibilities in the school council or as mediators to help other pupils. A link with a school in Beirut allows pupils to understand what it is like to grow up in a different culture.

Leaders and staff make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) take part in the full range of school activities. The special needs coordinator collaborates with teachers to plan support for pupils with SEND in lessons. Teachers give pupils with SEND extra support to do some tasks. Learning assistants make sure pupils with SEND keep up with others in lessons or in short catch up sessions outside lessons.

Leaders and staff work well together. Staff enjoy working at the school because leaders take their views into account and support them.

The school helps parents to support their children's education. For example, this term, teachers invited parents to a mathematics workshop.

The multi-academy trust has a positive impact on the school's improvement agenda. Trust directors work well with the school's governors to support leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are aware that safeguarding is a priority in their job. All members of staff are confident to identify and report issues that may affect children. Leaders make sure that all staff have up-to-date training. Leaders work well with external agencies and families to protect children when serious situations occur.

Leaders and governors have been trained in safe recruitment and know how to deal with concerns about staff.

Staff teach pupils about risks as part of the curriculum. Pupils learn how to avoid risky and inappropriate behaviours online. They also learn to manage risk in their everyday life outside school.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Curriculum leaders in some foundation subjects have not yet finished work to adapt the multi-academy trust's curriculum to meet the context of the school. As a result, there is inconsistency in assessment practices between subjects. Leaders need to make sure that these curriculum leaders can develop the required assessment systems in their subjects.
- The planned personal, social, and emotional development of children in the early years is not sufficiently detailed in the curriculum. This may lead to inconsistencies in practice. Leaders should ensure there is a clear and structured plan for personal, social, and emotional development in the early years curriculum.

## **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>	141830
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10201050
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	188
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Annette Manning
<b>Principal</b>	Nichola Damms
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stpaulrc.bham.sch.uk/">www.stpaulrc.bham.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 – 7 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The principal and vice principal were appointed in September 2018.
- The school is a Catholic school, within the archdiocese of Birmingham. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in July 2017. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.

## 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher who is also designated safeguarding lead (DSL), and the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector spoke with the chair and vice chair of the governing body, and the chief executive of the multi-academy trust. The lead inspector also had a telephone conversation with a representative of the archdiocese of Birmingham.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, art, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors checked safeguarding arrangements and school records. The inspectors discussed safeguarding policies and case studies with the DSL. They talked to teachers and other staff about the safeguarding training they had received and how they put this training into practice.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes and talked to parents at the start and end of the school day.
- The inspectors considered responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online inspection questionnaire including written responses. They also considered responses from staff to their online inspection questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Patrick Amieli, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lindsay Nash

Ofsted Inspector

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