

Inspection of St Edward's Catholic Primary School

Eastleigh Road, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN15 6PT

Inspection dates: 30 November and 1 December 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

St Edward's is a happy school. Pupils enjoy learning and playing with their friends. They told inspectors, 'We're like a family.' Staff know pupils well. There is a spirit of belonging and trust in the school. Pupils say that they feel safe. They know that staff are quick to sort out any worries for them.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. They regularly discuss these expectations. The school's 5 'Rs' promote pupils' well-being. Pupils understand these values. They think about their work and each other. Pupils work hard and don't give up easily. They contribute to the life of the school by helping in the reading shed, picking-up litter and collecting registers.

Pupils behave well. They respect each other. Pupils told inspectors that if bullying does occur, then staff are quick to deal with it. They have a clear understanding of equality. Pupils told inspectors that they accept those who are different.

Most parents and carers are positive about the school. One parent, whose comments were typical of many, said, 'Staff always make themselves available. Nothing feels too much trouble, and my children are happy and thriving.' Parents appreciate the warm and friendly atmosphere. Some parents would like more information about their children's learning.

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

Through their review of curriculum plans, leaders have set out an ambitious curriculum. The curriculum has been organised to ensure that pupils secure their understanding by building their learning gradually. Leaders have planned a multi-cultural curriculum, which takes account of pupils' backgrounds. However, in some subjects, from Reception to the end of key stage 2, leaders have not identified precisely the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. Sometimes, pupils are not clear about their learning. For example, some pupils confuse biomes and ecosystems. Other pupils do not understand that Russia sits across more continents than simply Europe.

Leaders ensure that reading is a priority. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics across the school. Pupils build up their phonics knowledge to enable them to learn to read. Books match the letters and sounds that pupils are learning. Pupils use their phonics knowledge to sound out unfamiliar words. Staff regularly check how successfully pupils learn new sounds. Leaders are quick to provide support when pupils fall behind. On occasions, some staff do not always give pupils sufficient opportunity to practise the new sounds they learn.

Leaders have planned the mathematics curriculum so that pupils build their understanding and skills securely. Pupils use mathematical vocabulary well. For example, pupils use 'part' and 'whole' when using the part-whole model. Other

pupils use and understand 'common factors.' Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to recap their mathematical knowledge. They frequently check pupils' learning. Teachers provide support if pupils get stuck. They provide mathematical equipment to help pupils to understand addition and subtraction.

Relationships between children and adults are very positive in the early years. The curriculum sets out a strong focus on children's communication and language. Children enjoy finding different ways to make the number five. Other children read several two-digit numbers. Staff ask questions which deepen children's understanding, such as 'What is one less?' The learning environment is very engaging, both inside and outside the classroom. Leaders are reviewing curriculum plans so that they connect with learning which children will encounter as they move up through the school.

Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding in phonics, early reading and mathematics. However, there is not an agreed approach to checking pupils' understanding in all subjects.

Leaders are quick to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work well with external specialists. Most staff ensure that pupils with SEND access the full curriculum. They mostly provide strong support to these pupils. However, on occasions, this support is not effective enough. Leaders are reviewing support for pupils with SEND.

Staff create a respectful culture. Pupils have a strong grasp of British values. They understand democracy and the rule of law. Pupils can talk about rights and responsibilities. They understand liberty and the need to show respect for people who are different. However, some pupils' understanding of different faiths is weak. Pupils talk positively about attending extra-curricular clubs once these begin again. They know how to eat healthily and keep fit.

Representatives of the multi-academy trust (MAT) and governors know the school well. They understand the school's strengths and what needs to improve. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Leaders work very well with staff. They consider staff well-being. They provide regular training. Staff are very positive about the school's leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils told inspectors that they know who to go to if they have a concern. They know that their concerns will be taken seriously.

There is a strong culture of care at the school. Leaders provide support to vulnerable pupils. Staff pass on concerns promptly. Record-keeping is robust. Leaders ensure

that they provide regular training for staff and governors. They check that staff know how to spot pupils at risk. Governors and representatives of the MAT check the school's safeguarding procedures.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The key knowledge and content that pupils need to learn in some subjects, such as physical education (PE), art and geography, are not sufficiently well planned and sequenced. It is not yet fully clear what pupils should learn and when, to build their knowledge over time. However, leaders have begun to review and plan the curriculum from Reception to the end of key stage 2 in these subjects. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans for all subjects set out the knowledge that pupils should know and by when.
- Not all staff routinely ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum well enough. As a result, pupils with SEND do not always benefit from a good-quality education. Leaders should make sure that pupils with SEND receive the support they need so that they achieve as highly as they should.

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	141634
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10200118
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christopher Donnellan
Headteacher	Pauline Cuddihy
Website	www.st-edwards.northants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 January 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The chair of governors took up his post in September 2018.

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 met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for the provision for pupils with SEND, and a sample of teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, the executive leader and the school improvement director of the MAT.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, PE, art and geography. 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 a sample of pupils' work.

- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader and the family support worker. Inspectors considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. Inspectors also considered the responses to the survey for staff and the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

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