

Inspection of St Richard's Catholic Primary School

Cawley Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1XB

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and feel safe at this school. They are consistently polite, respectful and kind towards others. Pupils want to show themselves at their best, especially to new arrivals and visitors. If pupils are unkind to each other, including bullying, there are plenty of adults who help to sort out any concerns effectively.

The school's mission of 'to know, to love, to serve' is exactly what happens here. Everyone in the school is committed to every pupil's welfare, well-being and academic success. As a result, pupils thrive.

The school's culture is highly inclusive. Pupils talk maturely about diversity and difference. Relationships between everyone are exceptional. It is a happy and welcoming place. Children enjoy coming to this school to see their friends and learn new things.

Pupils are proud of their school and delight in the contributions they make. Older pupils take their responsibilities as 'faith buddies' very seriously and care deeply for younger peers. Pupils' character development is exceptional. For example, the 'Mini Vinnies' raise money, build relationships and make a tangible difference in the school and community. One pupil said, 'At St Richard's, we look after each other and you'll never want to leave.'

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and ambitious, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have improved what they teach already, such as in mathematics and physical education (PE), and have identified what needs to be done next. For example, in history and geography, there is insufficient detail of precisely what pupils need to learn and when. Leaders have adapted the curriculum in the early years to prioritise and support children where initial assessments highlight gaps in their knowledge. However, there is also more to be done to precisely identify and teach the small steps in learning.

Right from the start, children in Reception begin to learn phonics through a systematic programme. They continue to build their knowledge and skills through Years 1 and 2, learning and recognising increasingly complex combinations of sounds. Consistent teaching helps pupils respond well because they know what is expected. However, the school does not currently have enough sets of reading books that precisely match the sounds that pupils have learned in lessons. This makes it harder for pupils to practise reading and, therefore, develop their fluency.

Staff accurately identify, plan and provide support for pupils with SEND. These pupils have their needs met and achieve well. Where the curriculum is more carefully planned, such as in science and music, teachers are better equipped to check pupils' understanding before moving on.

Pupils throughout the school, including in the early years, behave very well. This is because staff model their high expectations about behaviour and because pupils themselves know it is the right thing to do. Pupils' attitudes and commitment to their education are impressive. Pupils are motivated to work hard in class and focus on their learning, without distraction. They socialise happily at playtimes and are considerate of others. Pupils respect the school's rules, routines and each other. Relationship education is at the heart of life-long learning at St Richard's. Together with the rich array of opportunities and visits, pupils are well prepared for their next stages of education.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development and make sure the provision is of high quality. Leaders start a clear programme from the early years onwards so that knowledge and understanding builds coherently. Pupils learn about tolerance and why it is important to treat others as they would wish to be treated. Pupils are also taught about different faiths, religions and cultures. When asked about diversity, one pupil explained, 'It is a chance to learn about someone else's heritage.' Pupils have a role in decision-making, either through the school council, community projects or following personal interests. Pupils embrace debating topics such as the environment, homelessness or refugeehood. Peer mediators and 'faith buddies' are genuine opportunities for pupils to understand responsibility.

Governors are knowledgeable and have an accurate view of the school's strengths and next steps. They provide the support and challenge leaders need to manage the school well. Governors work strategically to maintain effective oversight of the school. Staff are proud to be part of the team. They appreciate and value that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. Leaders know their school well and have clear priorities for continued improvement in the future.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to recognise potential signs of harm to children. They report any concerns promptly and leaders make sure that these are followed up. Leaders get to know pupils and their families well. They understand the community and whether there are any local risks. The school works effectively with other professionals to reduce harm to children and get them the help they need. Information about child protection is comprehensive and overseen methodically to ensure that concerns are not missed. Checks on adults appointed to work in the school are carried out meticulously and monitored by governors.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum thinking in subjects such as history and geography, and also in the expressive arts area of learning in Reception, is not sufficiently detailed. This

means that precisely what should be learned is not set out as well as it is in other subjects. This affects how well teachers teach the subject and means pupils do not always learn as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that the revised curriculums are introduced and that teachers are well trained to help improve their subject knowledge. This will enable teachers to understand how to build cumulatively sufficient knowledge so that pupils can achieve even more.

- The school does not currently have enough books that precisely match the sounds that pupils have learned in phonics. Pupils are not always able to read words with the sounds they are learning now and, therefore, develop their confidence and fluency. Leaders need to ensure that there are sufficient decodable, matched books for children to purposefully practise with.

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	126038
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10211978
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Barry Mockett
Headteacher	James Field
Website	www.strichardsprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A section 48 inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Richard's Catholic Primary School as a Catholic school took place in October 2018. The school's next inspection is due in October 2023.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and the special needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body.

- The lead inspector spoke separately by telephone with a representative from the local authority. An inspector spoke separately with a representative from The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, geography and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard pupils read.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents, including the school's record of recruitment checks. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke with pupils and staff.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses to the survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' written comments. An inspector also talked with parents on the morning of the first day of inspection.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views throughout the day, including during classroom visits, as well as at playtimes and lunchtime. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff to gather their views about the school and took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey.

Inspection team

Gareth Flemington, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jo Petch	Ofsted Inspector
Shazia Akram	Her Majesty's Inspector

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