

Inspection of St Benet's Catholic Primary School

Ringsfield Road, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9PQ

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 July 2022

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 Benet's Catholic Primary School is a small school where every child is valued and well cared for. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy lessons. Staff know and support pupils as individuals and encourage all pupils to succeed. One pupil voiced the thoughts of others by saying, 'I love coming to school, because we all get on together and the teachers really care about me.' The school environment is high quality, with lively, interesting classrooms and a wealth of different outdoor areas to stimulate pupils' learning.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils live up to these expectations. Pupils treat each other with respect and are polite. When any minor misbehaviour or bullying occurs, staff quickly sort out the issues using a restorative approach.

A range of activities effectively support pupils' personal development. Pupils in all year groups are a credit to the school. Most pupils, including those children in Reception Year, take part in a range of interesting extracurricular pursuits.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They appreciate the excellent communication and are grateful that teachers are approachable and sort out any concerns quickly.

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

Leaders have recently designed and introduced a broad curriculum that clearly identifies what pupils need to know and remember. From early years upwards, knowledge is organised in a logical way. Where the curriculum is well established, pupils remember their learning over longer periods of time. Most teachers regularly check what pupils know and can do. They monitor the small steps in pupils' learning and check that the 'golden nuggets' of the curriculum are remembered. This means that teachers mostly adapt what they teach to a level that helps pupils learn quickly.

Some staff do not always recap the content that has been previously taught sufficiently well. This means that, on occasion, pupils do not consolidate what they have learned in the past as well as they could.

Children in early years enjoy listening to stories that they know well. The curriculum has been carefully planned to help them learn both indoors and outdoors. Teachers use children's interests to help inspire and motivate them. Children listen attentively, and chat confidently to each other. They develop key planned knowledge quickly, for example when working hard on activities that require resilience, such as counting or construction challenges.

Leaders place a high priority on pupils learning to read well. They have recently implemented a new phonics programme. This clearly sets out the sounds and words that pupils will learn each week. The well-planned sequence of texts and teaching

inspires a love of reading. Pupils who are not making as much progress as they could in reading are quickly identified and given the extra help they need. As a result, pupils of all abilities become confident readers. While most staff are trained well, a small number of newer staff require additional support to ensure consistent delivery in every lesson.

Leaders carefully consider and identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In lessons, staff adapt their teaching and class activities well so that these pupils access the curriculum alongside their classmates. Effective additional support is provided based on individual needs. Close partnerships with parents of pupils with SEND ensure that they feel involved in their child's education plans.

Pupils' wider development is well supported through a range of carefully mapped out learning opportunities across all year groups. Pupils spoke with excitement about their experiences of a range of activities, such as going on school visits, exhibiting their artwork in town, looking after the school garden and meeting some owls in assembly. A warm, nurturing environment in Reception Year helps children to have positive attitudes to their learning. This continues throughout the school. A well-planned personal, social, health and economic education curriculum enables pupils to become kind, caring and socially responsible.

In class, behaviour is generally calm and purposeful. Learning is rarely disrupted and pupils show resilience when asked to work on challenging tasks. Working well together is valued by everyone and pupils concentrate when working in groups on activities in the school grounds.

The local governing body and the trust work closely together in partnership to provide effective governance. Governors know the school well, make regular visits and keep a close eye on safeguarding and health and safety matters. The trust provides additional support for the school. This has effectively accelerated the rate at which school improvement has taken place.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and governors all understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Staff receive regular, up-to-date training. Recruitment is managed well to ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on staff. There are robust procedures for recording and monitoring concerns about pupils. When pupils need help, leaders work closely with families and external agencies to get pupils the support they need.

Pupils are taught what bullying and harassment are and what to do if they have a concern. Pupils know how to protect themselves in a variety of situations, including how to stay safe when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has changed its approach to teaching phonics. Not all staff have been fully trained in this new approach. As a result, not all lessons are delivered consistently to ensure that all pupils reach the ambitious targets set in reading. Leaders should ensure that all staff deliver the phonics programme effectively and with confidence.
- Subjects are planned and taught around a carefully sequenced curriculum. However, in a few instances, teachers do not take into account the prior learning of pupils. This limits pupils from building on what they remember and what they can already do. Leaders should ensure that all staff use assessment well to help pupils to build on what they have learned in the past.

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	142786
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10227321
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	79
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ruth Hollis
Executive headteacher	Samantha Barlow
Website	www.st-benets.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 and 11 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Benet's Catholic Primary School is part of St John the Baptist Multi Academy Trust.
- Leaders do not use any alternative education provision.
- The executive headteacher leads one other local primary school in addition to this one.

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 had 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 spoke with school leaders, members of the local governing body, representatives of the trust, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors viewed a range of safeguarding documentation. They spoke with staff to check how well they understood their safeguarding responsibilities. Inspectors checked leaders' procedures for the recruitment of staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime, as well as in lessons. They spoke with pupils to gather their views about behaviour and safeguarding.
- One inspector heard a group of pupils reading aloud.
- Inspectors considered the 79 responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the 29 free-text comments. They also considered the 13 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 61 responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to explore their views about workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Duncan Ramsey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

John Crane

Ofsted Inspector

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