

Inspection of St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Englefield Green

Bagshot Road, Englefield Green, Egham, Surrey TW20 0RY

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 2022

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

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

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 at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils treasure belonging to this inclusive, caring and nurturing community. They are always polite to each other and staff. Pupils enjoy learning and work hard in lessons. However, they do not achieve as well as they should because of weaknesses in the curriculum. Leaders are working resolutely to improve the quality of education.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. All pupils rise to these expectations. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Playtimes are cheerful occasions where pupils have fun. Pupils know that staff will deal with any unkindness quickly. This helps pupils to feel safe. Bullying is not something they worry about.

Pupils fully embrace the school's 'FAIR values' of 'faith, articulate, appreciative, independent, initiative, resilient and respectful' in all that they do. For instance, they demonstrate resilience and independence in how they tackle unfamiliar tasks. Children in early years delight in receiving a 'gold coin' for good listening and showing initiative. Pupils take great pride in showing appreciation of their Catholic faith as 'spiritual leaders'. Other roles, such as librarian, house captain and sports crew, enable pupils to make a purposeful contribution to St Cuthbert's School.

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

Since the previous inspection, the quality of education has declined. The school has been through a turbulent period in recent times. It is currently being led by an acting leadership team and many staff are new to their posts. Leaders and governors are taking decisive action to rapidly bring about the much-needed improvements. They are focusing on addressing the most important things first. Leaders, staff and governors have welcomed the support that Xavier Catholic Education Trust and the local authority are providing. Nevertheless, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are not achieving as well as they should. This is because most of the changes have only just been introduced.

Leaders have designed an ambitious and engaging curriculum. Across subjects, they have precisely identified the essential knowledge and skills pupils need to remember. Rightly, there is an explicit focus on developing pupils' vocabulary. The early signs are promising that pupils are beginning to remember what they have been taught. However, the early years curriculum is not as well defined across the seven areas of learning. Consequently, children are not prepared sufficiently well for the next stage of their education.

Despite leaders' ambitious changes to the curriculum, teachers still lack the expertise in implementing the school's curriculum. Not all staff have strong enough subject knowledge or provide pupils with activities that help pupils to build their knowledge securely. Most teachers do not check what pupils know and understand

well enough and so do not identify gaps in their learning. This means that pupils do not embed their knowledge as well as they should. Leaders have introduced a comprehensive training programme for staff to address this.

Reading is a high priority. Each week, pupils look forward to visiting the well-stocked library to choose a book to share with their families. Children in early years get off to a strong start. Staff give parents helpful advice so that they can support their child's reading at home. Pupils regularly read engaging books which are well matched to the sounds they are learning. Most staff quickly spot when pupils fall behind and give extra help when it is needed. However, while the teaching of phonics is carefully organised and largely effective, leaders have identified that some staff require further training to develop their expertise.

Overall, pupils behave well. They follow the well-established routines. Staff are quick to re-engage anyone who is distracted or less focused. In early years, the calm, caring environment ensures that children settle quickly. Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND to participate fully in all aspects of school life and achieve as well as they should. Leaders have rightly begun to improve how they identify and meet the needs of these pupils. They have strengthened how they communicate this to parents.

Leaders' work to promote pupils' personal development is strong. Pupils discuss and debate their ideas with an appreciation and respect for different views. They debate their ideas maturely and talk knowledgeably about healthy relationships. Pupils learn about different faiths and religions. They relish opportunities to make a positive difference. For instance, pupils regularly raise funds for a range of charities, collect donations for the local food bank and organise litter picks around the local community.

Governors increasingly offer leaders well-informed support and challenge. Governors understand what is going well and what still needs to improve. For example, they are aware that many subject leaders are new to their posts and do not have a precise oversight of how well pupils are achieving across all the different year groups.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. Regular training ensures that all staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Any worries are reported promptly. Leaders are tenacious in their work and follow up on any concerns swiftly. They work closely with relevant external agencies to ensure that pupils get the right support. All necessary recruitment checks are carried out on new staff, and records are meticulously maintained. Pupils are taught how to stay safe and how to make good choices. They are confident that staff will help them with any issues they may have.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Most subject leaders are new to their roles. They do not have a clear enough oversight of how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum. Leaders should implement the planned programme of professional development to ensure that subject leadership is consistently strong in all subjects.
- Across many subjects, including phonics, teachers' subject knowledge and teaching skills are too variable. Consequently, pupils, including those with SEND, do not learn as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that staff have the expertise they need to teach all subjects effectively.
- Some teachers do not check effectively how well pupils have understood what they have learned. In most subjects, they do not know whether pupils have gaps in their knowledge or struggle to recall prior learning. Leaders need to ensure that all teachers consistently assess pupils' knowledge accurately in order to make good decisions about what to teach next.
- Leaders have not yet planned the early years curriculum in sufficient detail. This holds back children's learning. Across the seven areas of learning, leaders should ensure that the essential knowledge and skills children should learn in early years are precisely mapped out.

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.

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	125209
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10228696
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	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dave Barrett and Paul Mould (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Jackie Gillin
Website	www.stcuthberts.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 June 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is a voluntary-aided Roman Catholic school in the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. The last inspection of the school's religious character was in March 2019.
- The school is in the process of joining Xavier Catholic Education Trust.
- At the time of this inspection, the headteacher was absent from school. There was an acting leadership team in place, consisting of an acting executive headteacher, an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 met with the acting executive headteacher and the acting headteacher. They also meet with other school leaders, staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with six governors, including the co-chairs of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke with a representative from Surrey local authority and the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and science. 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.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspection team considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. An inspector talked with some parents on both mornings of the inspection.
- The inspection team met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school development plan and pupil premium funding plan.

Inspection team

Louise Walker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mark Cole

Ofsted Inspector

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