

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School & Nursery, Marston Road, Stafford, Staffordshire
ST16 3BT

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 October 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?

Pupils enjoy learning and playing in St Patrick's Catholic Primary School. The distinctive Catholic ethos and values are seen in positive day-to-day relationships. Pupils and staff show each other kindness, valuing everyone for who they are. Pupils say they have a strong sense of belonging to the school and its community. They want to attend school every day as they enjoy their learning.

Reading is central to the school curriculum. Pupils learn to read fluently. There is effective teaching of early reading skills. Pupils progress well through the carefully organised curriculum. For example, in art and design, they create wonderful artistic products at the end of their studies.

Pupils meet the high expectations of staff. Pupils behave well around school. In lessons, they show good attitudes to their studies. Staff supervise the indoor and outdoor environments well. This supports pupils to feel safe when they are in school. Bullying incidents are very rare. Pupils say that if bullying happens, staff deal with it quickly and effectively.

Parents feel part of the school community. They value hearing from staff about how well their child is doing at school. Leaders ensured that staff supported pupils and families extremely well during the pandemic.

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

Leaders have developed the curriculum well. An ambitious curriculum is now in place. Pupils learn and remember important information through the well-sequenced series of lessons that make them think hard. Pupils learn the right skills and knowledge. However, teachers do not make sure that pupils practise their new skills and knowledge well enough in some lessons. Pupils do not build on their knowledge as well as they could in these lessons.

Leaders help staff develop their own practice during lessons. They do this by showing staff how to teach specific skills and knowledge better. For example, in phonics lessons, leaders pronounce and repeat letter sounds accurately, which staff then rehearse with pupils.

Leaders check how well the curriculum is being delivered by classroom staff. They do this by visiting lessons and talking with pupils about their learning. Some of this monitoring lacks detail. As a result, opportunities to identify where teaching could be adapted further to support pupils' learning are not always identified.

Children get off to a good start in the early years. They learn fundamental skills and knowledge which support them well in later learning. For example, they have time to think about numbers and practise counting. This enables them to tackle more complex mathematical learning in later years. Children stick to their activities and

they are not easily distracted. They learn to be resilient and this serves them well in the early years and for future learning.

Leaders prioritise reading. They ensure that staff teach phonics from the start of the early years. Pupils in the early years, in key stage 1 and those new to the English language read books which are well matched to their ability. They practise the letters and sounds they are being taught in class. Pupils become more fluent readers as they use this knowledge when reading more complex texts.

Staff often consider the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. In lessons, pupils use a range of resources which help them in their learning. For example, some pupils might require text in larger font size; others might require practical materials to help them grasp learning. However, teachers do not consistently provide this practical support in lessons. This means that pupils with SEND do not always learn as well as they could.

Leaders and staff ensure that pupils learn to appreciate and embrace diversity. Through their studies, pupils learn about life in modern Britain. By the end of Year 6, pupils are well prepared to consider more complex learning in their secondary schools.

The multi-academy company is effective in developing all leaders at St Patrick's. Subject leaders learn from the work of other school leaders across company schools. They do this by attending hubs which have been set up by the company. St Patrick's hosts the art hub. There is an excellent curriculum offer in this subject.

Pupils have positive attendance. Leaders track pupils' absence carefully. They work with families to enable pupils to attend more frequently. This is an example of the strong relationship between home and school.

Learning environments are calm and purposeful. Pupils respond well to the school's Catholic values. Pupils talk about these values. Pupils and staff respect each other. One pupil said that pupils do not judge each other but value each other, no matter who they are.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff know what to look out for in their daily roles to ensure pupils are kept safe. This is due to frequent training facilitated by the company and other agencies. Staff identify pupils who might be at risk quickly. Leaders ensure that they put appropriate measures in place to help keep pupils safe.

Leaders have a good understanding of current local safeguarding concerns. They use this knowledge to support staff and parents in being extra vigilant. Staff know it is their duty to report any concerns about a colleague's behaviour.

Well-planned teaching helps pupils develop an appreciation and awareness of diversity. Pupils understand the dangers of adopting stereotypical attitudes.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, teachers do not give pupils work that matches the aims of the curriculum. This means that pupils do not always spend their time building their knowledge and skills. When this occurs, pupils' progress through the curriculum is limited. Teachers should make sure that the work they give pupils ensures that pupils know more and remember more in all subjects.
- Staff do not always adapt the curriculum well enough for pupils with SEND. This is most notable in foundation subjects. When this occurs, pupils with SEND do not always learn as well as they might. Leaders should ensure that staff consider the needs of pupils with SEND when implementing the curriculum.
- Leaders are not always rigorous enough in checking the effectiveness of subjects being taught. This means that specific refinements needed to improve the implementation of the curriculum are not always identified and addressed. Leaders should consider how to gain a better view of how effectively the curriculum is taught.

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	142216
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10241263
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	Board of directors
Chair of governing body	Gemma Brookes
Principal	Mark Brandon
Website	www.st-patricks-stafford.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 May 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Patrick's Catholic Primary School is part of the Painsley Catholic Academy.
- This Catholic primary school is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in May 2019. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the chief executive officer of the company and school leaders. Inspectors met with the chair of the local governing body, the chair of directors and a diocesan representative.

- Inspectors checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They reviewed a range of documents and spoke with leaders, staff, pupils and parents about the school’s safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school. They spoke with pupils about their experiences in school, including how safe they feel.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through Ofsted Parent View, an online survey. They also read about staff views, using an online survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents shared by school leaders, including curriculum documentation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, art and design, mathematics and geography. 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.
- Pupils were observed reading to members of staff.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Johnstone	Ofsted Inspector

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