

Inspection of St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School

Elmfield Walk, Stagborough Way, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire DY13 8TX

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 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

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School is a caring and welcoming place to learn. Warm relationships are at the heart of this school. Pupils are happy in lessons and when playing with friends on the playground. They clearly understand that everyone is equal, and assert that 'in this school, it is ok to be you'.

Pupils reach high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, pupils' achievement in several other subjects, including science, is more variable. The curriculum content in these subjects is not ordered well enough to enable pupils to build on their knowledge successfully.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are polite and respectful towards each other and to adults. Staff deal with any incidents of bullying quickly and effectively.

Leaders have ensured there are opportunities for pupils to be good citizens. Pupils contribute to the life of the school by taking on a range of leadership roles and responsibilities, these include worship leaders, house captains and sports leaders. Pupils enjoy a range of extra-curricular activities, including sports clubs.

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

The curriculum is well designed in English and mathematics. Leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn and in what order. The sequence of learning helps pupils to work towards planned end points. Teachers regularly check how well the pupils remember their learning and adapt their teaching accordingly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in these subjects, and as a result achieve well. However, this is not the case in all subjects. In other subjects leaders have not precisely identified what pupils must learn and in what order. This hinders how well pupils achieve in these subjects.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. Pupils enjoy reading and look forward to story time at the end of each school day. Staff are well trained and have the expertise they need to teach early reading well. Teachers ensure that books are matched to the sounds pupils are learning. Staff use assessment to identify pupils who need additional support to catch up. This helps these pupils to read with increased fluency and confidence.

Leaders have ensured that pupils study a broad and balanced curriculum. However, curriculum leadership is variable and not consistently effective. In several subjects, leaders' efforts to improve and better organise the curriculum are at an early stage. Subject leaders have not yet identified the important knowledge pupils need to learn.

Leaders work with a range of agencies to accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND. This starts from the early years. They use a variety of specific programmes to target areas such as language and communication, and reading. These programmes are having a positive impact on the learning of pupils with SEND.

Relationships between staff and children in the early years are strong. Routines are well established, therefore helping children to concentrate and listen well. Teachers have made deliberate decisions about the design of the early years curriculum to ensure that children remember intended knowledge and vocabulary. They know what they want pupils to know and when, so children are well prepared for Year 1. Teachers ensure that children have opportunities to listen to stories and songs, which children enjoy. This helps children to learn a wide range of vocabulary.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn about different cultures, religions and fundamental British values. They make a positive contribution to school life and the local community through charitable work. Pupils demonstrate an appreciation for differences in the wider world. They learn about how to show respect for the spiritual nature of the school chapel.

Historically, pupils' attendance has been an issue with some families, particularly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders and governors are aware of this and are taking appropriate actions to address this area. This work is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attendance.

Leaders and governors consider staff workload and well-being when making decisions. Governors make sure that resources are well managed. They play an active role in school life and provide support and some challenge to school leaders. However, they do not hold leaders to account fully for the quality of the whole curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and governors are well trained and knowledgeable about keeping pupils safe. The procedures in place to identify and report concerns are well understood by all staff. This work is effectively supported by the Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company.

Leaders are strong advocates for all pupils, including vulnerable pupils and their families. Where staff identify potential safeguarding concerns, leaders provide timely support. Leaders engage well with external agencies when needed.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including how to manage risks online. They know what to do if they have a concern about an aspect of their safety and well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leaders have not planned some curriculum subjects carefully enough to ensure progression in learning. This means that pupils' learning does not build on the knowledge they already have to enable them to remember more. Leaders need to ensure that they identify what they want pupils to know, and sequence learning in all subjects so that pupils' knowledge builds progressively. Governors need to hold leaders to account fully to check that curriculum developments are secured.

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	141444
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10242198
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	155
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joanna Griffin
Principal	Kim Savage
Website	https://stwulstans.sch.life
Date of previous inspection	13 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School joined Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company in 2021, previously known as Saint Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was in January 2019.
- Leaders do not use 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 the evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance.

- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, vice principal, the special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the trust and a representative of the Archdiocese of Birmingham.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, spoke to teachers, visited lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read.
- The lead inspector met with the principal, who is the designated safeguarding leader. Pupils' case files were reviewed. The single central record of the checks on staff's suitability to work with children was scrutinised.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about how safe they feel in school and how they learn to keep themselves safe.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, and the pupil and staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Emma Titchener, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Eve Morris

His Majesty's Inspector

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