

# Inspection of an outstanding school: St Catherine's Catholic Primary School (Hallam)

Firshill Crescent, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S4 7BX

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Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

## **Outcome**

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School (Hallam) continues to be an outstanding school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils thrive at this exceptional school. Leaders have developed highly effective training and support for staff. The expertise staff develop ensures pupils achieve extremely well. Staff have high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviours. They offer just the right support and challenge to ensure pupils succeed. Pupils are attentive in lessons. Pupils are safe, happy, keen to learn and very persistent. They are ambitious and excited about their futures. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive an exceptional education. Teachers know how to help pupils with SEND to learn and succeed.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Bullying almost never happens. The rare incidents of poor behaviour are managed extremely well by staff. Pupils develop a strong sense of community. They are proud to be part of a multicultural school. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Children in the early years get off to a superb start. Staff understand children's needs well. They provide purposeful activities for children to access independently. These activities build on what pupils have been taught by their teachers.

The school building has been thoughtfully designed to inspire pupils. Leaders celebrate much-loved books and curriculum subjects using stunning wall sculptures, such as the woolly mammoth. The school is a joy to walk around.

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

Curriculum planning is very detailed. Leaders specify the most important things they want pupils to know and remember. This enables teachers to emphasise important knowledge. Leaders design assessments, so that they closely match curriculum content. This ensures that assessment tasks accurately pinpoint what pupils do and do not know. Teachers identify pupils' misunderstandings and address them effectively. Pupils develop

an excellent understanding of each subject. They use sophisticated vocabulary with ease. Teachers design learning, so that pupils develop high levels of independence. They also work well together, sharing ideas and debating points with interest. Pupils with SEND excel in their learning. Classroom teachers provide support and challenge to enable all pupils to flourish. Leaders ensure that high-quality specialist teaching and support is provided for those pupils who need it.

Leaders prioritise reading. Children learn to read quickly. They get the right support to catch up if they start to fall behind. Pupils encounter a wide range of challenging texts, which helps them to develop vocabulary and knowledge. The curriculum in the early years is well planned to ensure that pupils are ready for Year 1. Leaders assess pupils regularly to identify what each child should learn next. Children play well together. Behaviour in the early years is excellent. Staff establish clear, effective routines right from the start.

The curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education prepares them well for secondary school and beyond. Teachers regularly discuss short stories with pupils and help them explore what they would do if they were in that situation. This helps pupils learn, for example, how to manage feelings and navigate friendships. Pupils value and respect one another. They have a strong sense of belonging to a community. Pupils also learn about the wider world through exploring other faiths and cultures.

A range of clubs are available to encourage pupils to develop their talents and interests. Leaders plan educational visits to support pupils' learning of the planned curriculum. For example, they visit Kelham Island Museum to learn about the history of Sheffield's steel industry. From Year 2 onwards, annual residential visits are available to all pupils, including those entitled to receive pupil premium funding. Pupils enjoy the trips and gain confidence coping with unfamiliar surroundings.

Those with responsibility for governance are deeply committed to the school. They help to create a positive school environment, where staff feel valued. Governors and trustees support and challenge leaders to maintain the exceptionally high standards leaders have set. Leaders support and develop staff through an excellent training programme. Senior staff train their more junior colleagues by working alongside them. Staff are proud to be part of such a happy and successful school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant in making sure that children are kept safe. Pupils feel safe. They have a trusted adult in school that they can turn to if they need support. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. Staff know about risks to pupils and report all concerns. Leaders follow up concerns quickly and effectively. They work well with other agencies, such as local authority children's services when needed. Everything is recorded in detail using the school's reporting system.

Leaders carry out checks to make sure staff and visitors are appropriately vetted and safe to be with children.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in January 2017.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140588
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240617
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	469
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Kevin Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Fiona Rigby
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stcatherines.academy">http://www.stcatherines.academy</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 January 2017

## Information about this school

- The school recently joined St Clare Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school uses alternative provision for one pupil. This is delivered through a registered provider, Paces High Green School for Conductive Education.
- The school has a nursery. Children attend from age three.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held several meetings with the headteacher during the inspection.
- A meeting was held with two members of the governing body and the chair of trustees.
- The inspector met with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and, where appropriate, looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Pupils talked to the inspector, formally and informally, about their learning and experiences at school.
- Safeguarding documentation and records for behaviour and attendance were considered.
- The inspector reviewed the responses received through the Ofsted's survey, Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspector considered responses received through Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson visits and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. The inspector spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school.

### **Inspection team**

Zoe Helman, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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