

# Inspection of St Edward's Catholic First School

Parsonage Lane, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 5EN

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Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
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 are very happy. They are confident and eager to talk about their school, learning and play. Visitors to lessons are met by 'class greeters' who explain the work going on in their class. Pupils take pride in being reading ambassadors, well-being champions and house captains, and taking on other roles of responsibility.

Adults have high expectations of behaviour and the atmosphere within the school is calm and friendly. Pupils enjoy assemblies. Here they develop an understanding of how they should treat others and that bullying is never tolerated. Pupils are accepting of each other's differences and are kind to each other. Pupils eat together at lunchtime before going out to play. They learn about the importance of turn-taking, which helps them play happily together. The school's community ethos can be clearly seen in these pupil interactions.

Pupils are sensible in lessons and focus on their work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included in all lessons. Their independence is sensitively balanced with the helpful adult support they receive. Teachers know pupils well and relationships are strong. Pupils are very clear that they trust their teachers to look after them.

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

Leaders foster a strong sense of community across the school. This helps pupils to feel confident, happy and keen to learn. Pupils' behaviour is calm and considerate. Leaders teach pupils about why it is important to be respectful. Pupils talk about 'everyone being equally special' and they treat each other accordingly. They can recognise and describe both positive and negative relationships. Pupils attend a wide variety of school clubs such as self-defence, Lego and tennis. The 'merit assembly' is popular, and pupils enjoy celebrating each other's success. This contributes to the positive atmosphere.

In subjects such as reading and mathematics, what pupils will learn and achieve by the end of Year 4 has been carefully considered and organised. Pupils are taught key mathematical knowledge, which they practise and apply. They can confidently use their knowledge of number to explore mathematical ideas and problems.

Reading is prioritised for all pupils. Pupils enjoy exploring books as a whole class during 'book talk'. Teachers and pupils talk about books every day. Focused, small-group discussions help pupils reach a better understanding of the book that are reading. All teachers and teaching assistants have had training to ensure they can confidently teach phonics. Consequently, pupils get the right support to become confident and fluent readers. Year 4 'reading leaders' are passionate about helping other pupils to love books. They write book reviews which are published to parents to help them choose books for their children.

In many other subjects, the curriculum has been thoughtfully constructed to help pupils develop their knowledge across key stage 1 and early key stage 2. However, in a small number of subjects, the curriculum does not always support pupils in building knowledge over time. This means that pupils find it difficult to link topics together. Also, teachers do not regularly track how much pupils have learned and what they can remember. This means that pupils do not always learn as much as they could.

Planning for pupils with SEND is thorough. Teaching assistants are well trained. They make sure that pupils with SEND gain independence while still feeling supported in class. Leaders make sure that parents are involved at every stage and understand how best to help their children. Monitoring of progress towards clear targets means that, where precise curriculums are in place, teaching is appropriately adapted. In subjects without precise curriculum aims adaption is less developed.

The early years staff know children very well. Children explore their learning both indoors and outside. Their activities are carefully planned to help pupils develop the skills and knowledge needed to be academically and socially successful. Teachers prioritise developing children's language and communication. The vocabulary children can use is increased through careful questioning and descriptions. This helps children interact well together and with the adults who help them. Like older pupils, children in early years are confident to talk about their learning.

Leaders know that precise curriculum sequencing leads to pupils knowing more and remembering more. However, they do not always assure themselves that subject leaders have the support and guidance needed to oversee and plan the curriculum. Consequently, this can affect the workload of staff. Leaders are aware of this, and, along with a new governing body, are keen to provide staff with any support needed.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know pupils well. This means they can quickly spot any concerns about a pupil's safety or well-being. Staff are regularly trained and know what signs to look out for. Record-keeping is thorough and regularly updated. Several members of staff are qualified as designated safeguarding leads to ensure that there is always someone available. Leaders are persistent in securing help from agencies where necessary. Governors fulfil their statutory duties around safeguarding.

Pupils say that they trust that their teachers would act quickly if they had a concern. They understand about the importance of healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe online.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the precise knowledge and skills which pupils need have not been carefully mapped out. Teachers are therefore not able to quickly identify where pupils have gaps in their understanding. Leaders should ensure all subjects have complete and sequenced curriculums to allow teachers to check pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Subject leaders have not always had the support and monitoring required as they implement the curriculum. This means that curriculum planning in a small number of subjects is not as secure as it is in others. Leaders should ensure effective use of monitoring processes to ensure the full curriculum is put in place.

## 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>	110031
<b>Local authority</b>	Windsor and Maidenhead
<b>Inspection number</b>	10242326
<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	288
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sharon Blows
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Matthews
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stedwardscatholicfirstschool.co.uk">www.stedwardscatholicfirstschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 February 2009

## Information about this school

- All of the current school leadership team are new in post since the previous inspection.
- The governing body is new, with most governors appointed over the last year.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Portsmouth. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school took place in December 2019, when the school was judged good.
- The school runs both before and after-school provision for pupils.
- The school currently uses no 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.

- The inspection team held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector met with the members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, art and design and history. 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. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to adults they knew.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors held meetings with safeguarding leaders, governors, teachers and pupils. They scrutinised the single central record and checked safeguarding records.
- The inspection team also took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and governor minutes. They also considered external reports of the school from the local authority and diocese. The team also spoke with pupils about their experience of the school. They took account of parent and staff views through conversations and responses to Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Ed Mather, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Therese Winthe

Ofsted Inspector

Lorraine Greco

Ofsted Inspector

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