

Inspection of Saint Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Harrison Road, Leicester, Leicestershire LE4 6QN

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 March 2023

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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, parents and staff are proud to be part of this caring and inclusive school. Pupils live up to the school's values. They are 'ready, safe and kind'. They welcome visitors with a smile, showing politeness and respect. Pupils meet leaders' high expectations of behaviour in lessons, listening well and working hard.

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils. Pupils model the 'virtues to live by'. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm. Pupils feel safe. They say that bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that adults will resolve any worries they have.

Staff work very well together to make a positive difference for the pupils. They understand the needs of the pupils. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive support, if needed, and achieve well.

Pupils enjoy the range of opportunities on offer to develop their sporting talents. They are proud of their achievements, which includes their recent dance competition award. There is a range of after-school clubs available. These include multi-sports and a debate club. Pupils develop their leadership skills through their roles as librarians and young leaders.

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

Pupils enjoy learning a broad and balanced curriculum. Leaders ensure that there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their language and vocabulary. This starts in the early years, where children love listening to rhymes, songs and stories.

Leaders have set out the important knowledge they want pupils to learn through the years. In most subjects, leaders have made sure that pupils learn the right things at the right time. In these subjects, pupils build their knowledge to help them achieve well. In a small number of subjects, important knowledge is not as clearly mapped out. Pupils do not build on their learning in order to know and remember more over time.

In lessons, learning activities are usually engaging and appropriate. In many subjects, teachers make regular checks on pupils' understanding. They use these checks to address misconceptions and match learning to pupils' needs. However, in some lessons, teachers' use of assessment is not as effective. Learning is not as precisely matched to pupils' needs. Pupils do not always have the knowledge or support to learn as well as they could.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Staff are well trained to teach phonics, and pupils enjoy plenty of practise to master their sounds. Younger pupils who are at the early stages of reading soon develop the knowledge and skills needed to secure fluency.

Pupils read books that match the sounds they know, which builds their confidence. Reading is celebrated throughout the school. Pupils, including those who may need extra help, love books. No pupil is left behind when it comes to learning to read. Many pupils appreciate the diversity of their reading material. They see themselves in books, as staff ensure that different cultures are well represented.

Personal development is at the heart of this school. Pastoral support is a strength. Pupils' mental well-being is supported through a dedicated nurture team. Pupils say that the team supports them with managing their emotions and friendships.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves fit and healthy. They love to grow their own produce in the 'mealbarrows' and tyre planters. They learn about respecting each other and about healthy relationships. Weekly assemblies and lessons develop pupils' moral understanding of difference and diversity. One pupil, typical of many, said, 'We treat each other equally. We all have different talents.'

Leaders identify and plan support for pupils with SEND so that they can access their learning. They plan a bespoke curriculum for pupils with specific needs. Leaders work with teachers to make adaptations in lessons. Pupils have individual plans, with targets to achieve. For a small number of pupils, these targets are not precise enough. This makes it hard for some pupils to achieve their targets.

Pupils, including children in the early years, enjoy their learning, and they focus during lesson times. The indoor provision in the early years supports children's learning. However, the quality of the outdoor provision does not match that of the indoor provision. It does not support children's learning as effectively.

Trustees and governors lead by example in their tireless commitment to meet the needs of all pupils. Staff feel well supported. They appreciate leaders' efforts to consider their workload and well-being. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Typical views include, 'This is a wonderful school with wonderful staff.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff know pupils and their families well. They are well trained and know the signs of neglect and abuse. There are robust systems in place to report and record safeguarding concerns. Leaders act on concerns with urgency. They ensure that families who need additional support receive the necessary help. Leaders work well with external agencies. The trust carries out regular checks on safeguarding procedures in school.

Leaders make appropriate checks to ensure adults are suitable to work with pupils. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when they are using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, leaders have not completed the mapping out of the precise sequence of knowledge that pupils should learn and remember. Consequently, pupils are not building on previous knowledge that will enable them to know more and remember more over time. Leaders need to make sure that the essential knowledge that pupils need to know and remember in each subject is clear and carefully set out.
- Some teachers do not consistently perform checks on pupils' learning in lessons. At times, teachers attempt to move learning on before pupils are ready. Consequently, teachers do not accurately capture what pupils know and can do in all subjects. Leaders should ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge are checked accurately. Leaders should also ensure that teachers do not move pupils on in their learning too quickly so that pupils' next steps in learning are successfully supported.
- The early years curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Through the indoor provision, children benefit from meaningful learning opportunities in the early years classes. However, the quality of the outdoor environment does not match that of the indoor areas. Outdoor resources do not promote children's learning as well as they might. Leaders should ensure that the early years environment supports the implementation of the curriculum equally well across all areas of the provision.

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	146147
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10254868
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	215
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Noon
Headteacher	Charlotte Lynch
Website	www.st-patricks.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic voluntary academy in the Diocese of Nottingham. Its last section 48 inspection took place in May 2022. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.
- The school does not 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers and a range of staff.

- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. She met with representatives from the trust.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed school policies, procedures, and records. The inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and spoke with staff, governors and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, music and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, spoke with teachers, and spoke with pupils about their learning. The inspectors visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. They considered responses to Ofsted's parent survey, Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspector met with groups of staff and pupils and considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Kirsty Norbury, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Christine Watkins

His Majesty's Inspector

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