

Inspection of St Robert Southwell Catholic Primary School, Horsham

Lambs Farm Road, Roffey, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 4LP

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. There is a calm and orderly environment across the school. Pupils behave well. The school's culture is one of kindness and caring, which reflects the school's motto. Pupils are polite and respectful, and show consideration towards everyone in the school. Children in Reception settle quickly and make a positive start.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Staff are determined to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and for them to make a positive contribution to society. The curriculum extends well beyond the academic. Pupils are well supported to become resilient and independent learners. They learn about British values and how these complement the school's values within their weekly assemblies and follow-on class work.

Pupils feel safe here. The school is inclusive. Pupils genuinely care and look after each other. They are encouraged to attend extra-curricular activities which include sport, choir, drama and art. Pupils are keen to talk about the sports club they attend. They are very proud of their gardening club and how they tend and care for the 'reflection' garden.

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

The school is well led. Leaders have developed a broad and interesting curriculum that is ambitious, including for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This means that all pupils learn the intended curriculum.

Leaders have ensured that curriculum planning starts with Reception and is carefully sequenced as pupils move into key stage 1 and beyond. Pupils learn well in mathematics and English. However, in some subjects, teachers are not clear enough about the key knowledge pupils will learn. Additionally, sometimes, they move on without checking that pupils have a secure understanding of what is being taught.

Reading is prioritised by leaders across the school. Pupils start learning phonics as soon as they start Reception. They quickly become confident in their reading and love books due to the strength of provision in early years. All staff have received training to enable them to model and teach the adopted phonics programme effectively. Pupils enjoy reading and achieve well. The school's focus on early reading sets a solid foundation for pupils on which they build in later years.

Pupils are confident mathematicians. Children in Reception enjoy learning about number. They practise their addition skills during child-led activities and praise each other excitedly when they are successful. The extensive provision for early years children enables them to learn well through both child-led and adult-led activities. The most-able mathematicians are challenged well in upper key stage 2 and

admitted to an inspector that 'maths can be hard'. Skilled teaching assistants are used well to support pupils who are in danger of falling behind.

Teachers assess pupils' learning through questioning, formal quizzes and tests. This helps them to quickly identify any gaps in learning and ensure that these are filled. Despite this, opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their writing in some subjects are limited. The quality of pupils' writing across the wider curriculum is often not as strong as the consistently high-quality work seen in English and mathematics.

The school's work on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extensive. Leaders have taken deliberate action to ensure pupils' personal development is a real focus. Pupils' voices are valued within the school. The school council was instrumental in the establishment of the sensory bus, which supports numerous pupils at break time. Leaders have ensured that pupils learn about a variety of beliefs to increase their understanding and tolerance. The school's relationships and sex education programme supports pupils in understanding other peoples' views and opinions. Pupils are encouraged to show respect for everyone and know that discrimination in any form is unacceptable. They also benefit from a wide range of additional opportunities, such as clubs, music lessons and residential trips. These enable pupils to develop many skills and talents. Staff make sure that all pupils can participate equally, regardless of ability or background.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is recognised as very important for all staff. Everyone attends annual safeguarding training and this is reinforced with additional training and briefing updates throughout the year. The safeguarding leads all complete a refresher course each year.

All staff know what to do with any safeguarding concerns. The safeguarding team follows up all referrals with tenacity and determination. Concerns and safeguarding records are well documented with details of actions taken and their impact. Leaders work well with external agencies and respond swiftly to any recommendations received.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, such as physical education and geography, some teachers are not clear about the precise knowledge that they want pupils to retain. Additionally, sometimes, they do not check that pupils understand what they have learned before moving on. As a result, pupils do not make the progress they could, due to gaps in their knowledge. Leaders and governors need to

ensure that those less-developed subjects are as precisely mapped and assessed as the core subjects.

- In some subjects, pupils' writing is very brief, poorly presented and does not use correct grammar or punctuation. It is not as strong as in mathematics and English. Teachers' expectations are not high enough. As a result, opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their writing are limited. Leaders need to ensure that staff challenge pupils to improve their writing in a consistent manner across all subjects.

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	126053
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10256366
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Malcolm Peppiatt
Headteacher	Ursula Hargrave
Website	www.strobertsouthwellhorsham.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided Catholic primary school under the Roman Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. As a school of religious character, the school was last inspected under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in October 2021.
- The school does not currently 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the inclusion leader. The lead inspector also met with governors, a representative of the diocese and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and physical education. 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.

- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school by speaking with the designated safeguarding lead and members of the safeguarding team about their work. They also spoke to staff and pupils. Inspectors also sampled case studies and documentation, including the single central record.
- Inspectors considered the views of the staff through the confidential online staff survey.
- Inspectors met with pupils formally and informally around the school, in lessons and at playtime.
- Inspectors met with some parents and carers at the start of the school day and took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey.

Inspection team

Debbie Bennett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Linda Appleby

Ofsted Inspector

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