

Inspection of St Brigid's Catholic Primary School

Frankley Beeches Road, Northfield, Birmingham, West Midlands B31 5AB

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being at St. Brigid's because they know staff care for them and value them as individuals. Everyone understands the importance of being a kind and respectful person. The school community is rooted in a deep sense of caring for each other. Pupils like spending time with Ted the mentor dog, especially if they are feeling worried or upset.

Pupils understand that leaders want them to behave well, and almost all willingly meet these expectations. They are focused in lessons, where the gentle buzz of noise is usually pupils discussing their learning. From the moment they join Nursery, pupils learn about behaviour and learning expectations that will help them to be successful learners. This means that most pupils achieve well.

There are many opportunities for pupils to get involved with helping their school community. Some are members of the school parliament and visited the Houses of Parliament. Some work as library monitors. Others help to look after the school's prayer garden. There are a range of extra-curricular clubs on offer, but many pupils do not take up these opportunities.

Parents value the care and support their children receive at the school.

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

Leaders want every pupil to fulfil their academic and social potential. To support this ambition, leaders have designed a curriculum that is rich in knowledge and cultural learning. Subject leaders work with colleagues in the Lumen Christi Catholic Multi-Academy Company (MAC) to plan and regularly review the curriculum. Learning is sequenced in a way that helps pupils build their knowledge successfully over time. Nursery and Reception children learn about topics and ideas that will support their learning in subjects when they move into key stage 1. Teachers place a strong emphasis on the development of vocabulary and communication skills.

Teachers use their secure subject knowledge effectively to help pupils make sense of what they are learning. This helps them to deliver engaging lessons where pupils are keen to learn. Teachers typically use different ways to assess how well pupils have understood their learning. However, there are times when teachers do not use these assessment strategies as well as they could. Sometimes this is because teachers are not clear about the key knowledge they want pupils to acquire. At other times, it is because teachers have not checked carefully enough that pupils have understood the key learning before they move on to the next step or task.

Learning to read is a priority from the first day pupils join the school. Leaders organise the school day to give sufficient time for both teaching reading and promoting its enjoyment. Staff deliver the phonics programme well. As a result, the vast majority of pupils learn to read by the end of Year 1 and go on to become fluent and confident readers. There is an effective programme of interventions to

support those pupils who find reading more difficult. Pupils enjoy reading and taking quizzes on the books they read as they get older.

The curriculum is made accessible to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers know the individual needs of these children very well. They carefully choose ways to support their learning, because they have received high-quality training. Leaders identify any potential needs a pupil may have and use expertise in identifying and providing appropriate support.

Pupils learn why good behaviour is important. This is linked to the virtues that underpin the ethos of the school. They behave well. Pupils like how teachers use the 'recognition board' to reward them for demonstrating positive interactions with each other. Through assemblies, lessons and educational visits, pupils learn about and celebrate the diversity of faiths, cultures and different groups that make up modern British society. Pupils know the importance of an active, healthy lifestyle and enjoy the 'Morning Mile' and growing food in their allotment. Pupils learn about social responsibility. They support their local and international causes by independently organising fundraising events.

Leaders are committed to their vision for every pupil to realise their full potential. They provide a commendable level of support to help pupils and families in times of need. However, leaders are sometimes too reliant on their personal knowledge of pupils. Leaders do not make the best use of all the information that they have about pupils to influence decisions about attendance, behaviour and pupils' wider development. Consequently, leaders' actions to address, for example, the barriers disadvantaged pupils face are not as effective as they could be. The MAC is working with the school to improve how they use information systems.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant in keeping pupils safe. They carry out appropriate checks on all adults before they work with children. Staff receive regular, comprehensive training and know the process to follow if they have any concerns about a child. Leaders work well with external agencies to ensure that those children and families receive the support they need.

Pupils learn about how to stay safe in lessons and assemblies. They are knowledgeable about how to stay safe online. Leaders have provided pupils of all ages with a memorable way of identifying their personal network of trusted adults at home and in school. Pupils feel confident about sharing any concerns they have.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, teachers do not use the school's assessment strategies consistently well.

This means that there can be a delay in identifying and addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge, or pupils may not be ready to move on to the next stage of learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment strategies across the curriculum to pick up on when pupils have not understood something.

- Leaders do not analyse sufficiently well the information they hold about pupils' behaviour, punctuality and personal development. This means that leaders do not identify some of the emerging issues and put in place the actions needed to rectify these issues. Leaders should take a more systematic and strategic approach to their use of information to help them spot and resolve any potential weaknesses in the school's 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	141815
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10285043
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	451
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Vince
Principal	Andrew Carry
Website	www.stbrigid.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The principal started at the school in January 2023.
- The school is part of the Lumen Christi Catholic Multi-Academy Company, which comprises eight schools.
- The school's last section 48 diocesan inspection was in April 2019. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The school is not currently using alternative provision.
- An external provider manages before- and after-school care on the school site.

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.

- The inspectors met with the principal and other senior and middle leaders. They met with MAC leaders. They met with governors and spoke to the chair of trustees. They also spoke to a representative from the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, English, art and design and history. For each deep dive, the 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 inspectors listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors checked safeguarding procedures, including the recruitment checks made on staff. They met with the designated safeguarding lead, staff and pupils to discuss wider aspects of safeguarding. They scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. They also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including comments submitted via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Nicola Beech, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Niall Gallagher	Ofsted Inspector
Gareth Morgan	His Majesty's Inspector

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