

Inspection of a good school: St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Whitefriars, Avenue Road, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7BW

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 September 2023

Outcome

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils arrive happily each morning knowing they will learn plenty and have fun with their friends. They learn the difference between right and wrong at a very early stage. Strong relationships ensure that pupils learn in a calm, nurturing and inclusive environment. Pupils are kind to each other. One Year 6 pupil commented, 'The best thing about this school is the community of people around us because everyone is loving and caring.'

The school has constructed a carefully-sequenced curriculum. Pupils' learning builds over time. They work hard in class and take pride in their work. Pupils play well together outside and show good manners throughout the day. They respect each other and appreciate the views of others from different backgrounds. When things are tricky, pupils know there is always a friend or a member of staff who will help them.

Spirituality is a key element of the school's ethos. Pupils have a daily opportunity to self-reflect on stories which include moral messages. Pupils consider these carefully and think about how they can use them in their daily lives.

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

The school's ambitious staff want all pupils to achieve their best. The curriculum includes the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary pupils need. Teachers deliver lessons in a careful order to help maximise pupils' learning. Most teachers use effective approaches to help pupils to learn well in lessons. However, some teachers need further support to ensure they have strategies to ensure all pupils learn as well as they could in all subjects.

The school ensures pupils become good readers and enjoy what they read. Teachers have thought carefully about the vocabulary in the books they read to their class. These texts enhance pupils' imagination and exposure to new words they can use. The teaching in the early years and Year 1 gives pupils a strong start in reading. Classroom staff know the pupils well and guide them through the school's early reading curriculum systematically. For pupils who are struggling to read, additional support focuses on filling any gaps in

understanding. However, some members of staff do not have the sharpness of professional understanding that is necessary. This means that a few pupils who are struggling to learn to read are not given the precise support they need.

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive appropriate support throughout lessons to ensure they achieve well. Individual plans show what support pupils with SEND need next. Pupils learn well in English and mathematics because they listen carefully to their teachers, who check how well pupils are learning the curriculum effectively. In wider curriculum subjects, such as art, pupils learn important knowledge. Pupils have a real sense of personal pride in the work they produce. However, in some of these wider curriculum subjects, teachers do not routinely check how well pupils have learned the curriculum. As a result, teachers do not always know if the pupils are ready for the next steps in their learning.

Pupils' behaviour in class, around the corridors and outside is very good. They are polite, well mannered and keen to learn. Lessons are very rarely disrupted by pupils who struggle to behave. Staff are aware of the importance of consistency and fairness in the distribution of both rewards and sanctions. All this contributes to a very calm and orderly environment to learn in.

The school provides varied opportunities for pupils to try new experiences or develop their skills further. Pupils get the chance to show their own leadership in many ways, such as being school councillors. This gives pupils a further voice. Pupils take part in a range of clubs, as well as trips and sporting events. All pupils benefit from cultural opportunities, such as art weeks and theatre visits. Pupils develop their musical experiences by performing in the choir or by learning an instrument.

Governors share the staff's determination for all pupils to succeed. As one commented, their aim is to 'unleash the magic talent within each pupil'. They know that by fulfilling their responsibilities they help ensure the pupils get a good education. The community of governors, staff and pupils is strong. Parents recognise this, with one commenting, 'My son is very happy at the school. St Patrick's is a warm, nurturing place where he has had the best start to his education.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The subject and pedagogical content knowledge for some staff could be stronger. As a result, pupils do not always learn the intended curriculum as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that staff have the right expertise to ensure pupils make the best progress they can in all subjects, including reading.

- In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment strategies as well as they could to check what pupils know and remember of the intended curriculum. This means some teachers do not identify misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge fully effectively. The school should continue to refine its approach to assessment in these subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2014.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	116390
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10287902
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gerard Owens
Headteacher	Paula Dix (executive headteacher) Alison Tong (head of school)
Website	www.st-patricks.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In January 2021, the school federated with another local Catholic primary school. At this time, governance was reconstituted, so that one governing body now oversees both schools.
- A section 48 inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School as a Catholic school took place in January 2020.
- The head of school joined in January 2022.
- The school has an on-site nursery with spaces for two-, three- and four-year olds. This provision formally became part of the school in September 2018.
- The school runs its own wraparound childcare, both before and after school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. 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 looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also looked at the geography, music and computing curriculum.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, head of school and other leaders. The inspector also met with three members of the governing board, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records, interviewing staff, and through discussions with pupils.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of local governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspector considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View.
- The views of staff were gathered through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspector gathered pupils' views through the pupil survey and throughout the inspection, including during classroom visits as well as at playtime and lunchtime.

Inspection team

Chris Parker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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