

# Inspection of St John Rigby Catholic Primary School

Polhill Avenue, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK41 9DQ

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Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Michele McGettigan. This school is part of Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academies Trust (OLICAT), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the strategic executive lead, Tony Bishop, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christopher Donellan.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

St John Rigby is a happy school. Pupils enjoy warm, trusting relationships with their peers and with staff. Parents recognise how these relationships help their children to thrive. The school is a nurturing place to learn, which parents value.

Pupils understand and follow the school's rules 'Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be safe'. They learn how to be good friends and show kindness to others. Pupils would tell a trusted adult if they had worries.

Pupils enjoy learning. Pupils have a love of reading. This is because 'when I read it takes me to another world'. Pupils are proud of their peer's successes and celebrate their achievements. Pupils achieve well in a range of subjects.

Pupils usually behave well in lessons. Sometimes where there is low-level disruption it is not addressed quickly. Pupils can be talkative, but they are not unkind to others. Pupils behave well around school, including at playtimes and at lunchtimes. They show respect to visitors to the school and are happy to engage with them.

Pupils enjoy the variety of clubs they can attend at school that let them try new things or develop their interests. These include sports, music, mindfulness and art clubs.

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

Reading is a priority at the school. This is because staff want every pupil to be a confident, fluent reader. This includes those who have fallen behind and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has ensured that there is a clear curriculum in place for reading. Pupils build their reading knowledge in a structured, sequential way. Pupils progress from mastering initial letter sounds in early years to developing inference skills in Year 6. Teachers regularly assess how well pupils read and provide appropriate support if this is needed.

In most subjects, subject leaders carefully consider what pupils should learn in each year. Pupils have opportunities to revisit and build upon previous learning. This helps pupils to develop age-appropriate skills and knowledge. In these subjects, teachers make good use of assessments to check pupils' understanding. Pupils who are struggling receive extra help so that they can keep up with their peers.

Consequently, pupils make strong progress. In a minority of subjects, staff have not identified exactly what pupils should learn or when. In these subjects, teachers are not clear about what they should teach or how they build up the learning over time. This means pupils' understanding is less secure, which slows their progress.

The early years curriculum is well thought out and captures children's interest. Staff consider children's different starting points. Children quickly settle into the school routines. They play and learn nicely with each other. Children use the wide range of

resources available to develop age-appropriate skills and knowledge. Children in early years are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. The school ensures that the curriculum is adapted to meet the specific needs of pupils with SEND. This includes using individualised timetables and ways of teaching and communicating for some pupils. Staff check and adapt the provision for pupils with SEND to ensure that it is effective.

Staff have high expectations of behaviour. Many pupils behave well and focus on their learning. There is a positive and respectful culture towards adults and each other. In a few cases, teachers do not consistently follow routines or reinforce the school's high expectations for all pupils. In these cases, a few pupils sometimes disrupt learning and time is wasted.

Staff ensure activities enrich the curriculum and support pupils' wider understanding of how they keep themselves safe. These range from cycling proficiency sessions to events linked to e-safety. The school also emphasises the importance of pupils' mental well-being. Weekly class assemblies explore pupils' understanding of emotions and mental health. All classes have systems in place so that pupils can say how they are feeling.

Governance is strong. The local academy council knows the school well. It challenges and supports the school to ensure it develops and improves further. They have made mental health and staff well-being a priority. Trust directors are also ambitious for the school. They understand the school, not only at a strategic level but also at a day-to-day level through visits and rigorous monitoring systems. Trust leaders are ambitious and know what they need to do next. The trust is determined to keep improving the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In a small minority of foundation subjects, subject leaders are not clear on how the different components of learning fit together to sequence the curriculum. Therefore, teachers are not clear about what they should teach and when, or how it links to prior learning. The school must clarify exactly what it wants pupils to learn at each stage in every foundation subject.
- Occasionally, some pupils disrupt learning in lessons. This low-level disruption takes place because teachers sometimes do not reinforce the school's high expectations of pupil behaviour or its effective learning routines. The school

needs to ensure that all staff understand the high expectations of pupils' behaviour and how to achieve them so that all pupils maintain focus in lessons.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139515
<b>Local authority</b>	Bedford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288521
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	308
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Christopher Donellan
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Tony Bishop
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michele McGettigan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjohnrigby.org">www.stjohnrigby.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 December 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There is a breakfast club and after-school club for pupils attending the school. It is run by school staff and managed by school leaders.
- Currently, leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school's most recent inspection of its religious character under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 took place in May 2023. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within five years of this date.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the

school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders, other members of staff and members of the local academy council, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also spoke with representatives from the multi-academy trust, including the chair of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke with teachers. The lead inspector also listened to pupils reading with a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects, notably music and art.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils during breaktime and lunchtime. They observed their behaviour during these times. There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils.
- Inspectors had informal conversations with parents at the end of the school day. Inspectors also took account of the 67 responses and 42 free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors analysed the 15 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff. They also held discussions with several staff during the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

James Adkins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lucille Pollard	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Winwood	Ofsted Inspector

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