

Inspection of St Peter's Catholic Comprehensive School

St Catherine's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH6 4AH

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 September 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The headteacher of this school is Benedict Doyle. This school is part of St Peter's Catholic Voluntary Academy Trust. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Benedict Doyle. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nicole Sharp.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is proud of its Catholic ethos. Strong relationships are at its heart and pupils feel part of the school's tight community. Younger pupils learn in a nurturing environment where adults know them well. They feel happy and safe and say that bullying is very rare.

Most pupils behave very well. Pastoral care is strong. The school takes bullying seriously, so when it does happen, pupils feel confident that adults will help to resolve it. Pupils understand the high expectations that leaders have of them. Sixth form students complete demanding work. They work well independently.

Pupils in all phases achieve well. In the primary phase, pupils enjoy an engaging curriculum. The youngest children get off to a strong start when they join Reception. They settle quickly into school life. In the secondary phase, including in the sixth form, pupils are well prepared for their next steps. They enjoy learning from an ambitious curriculum.

All pupils have access to a wide range of opportunities to enrich their learning. The extra-curricular offer is a strength of the school. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and respect one another.

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

Children in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) quickly settle into routines. They learn from a carefully planned curriculum. Children enjoy a range of purposeful activities. Adults interact with children in a way that supports the development of their language. Children speak kindly to one another and are attentive for extended periods.

In most subjects across the primary and secondary phases, the curriculum is well planned. Pupils in the secondary phase learn sequentially. Their learning builds effectively on prior knowledge. New content is taught through meaningful activities. Teachers check for understanding, so they know when pupils are ready to move on. As a result, outcomes are strong.

This is less consistent in the primary phase. In the humanities subjects the curriculum is not well understood by all teachers. Some pupils remember much of what they have learned, and others do not. There is a strong focus on writing skills in the primary phase. This ensures that most pupils improve over time and pupils write at length. In the secondary phase, while pupils talk confidently about what they learn, this is not always reflected in their written work. Subject experts from the secondary phase support the delivery of some subjects in the primary phase. This works well in design and technology, for example.

The school has taken some action to ensure more pupils learn the full range of subjects within the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) at GCSE. However, the number of pupils who take all EBacc subjects is still below average.

In the sixth form, students work with purpose and enthusiasm. Vocational and A-level subjects are taught expertly. Teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve. Students respond well to this. They read widely and work effectively during independent study time.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and supported by staff. Information about these pupils is shared appropriately with adults in the school, so they can meet pupils' needs. A small minority of parents of pupils with SEND have expressed concerns. The school, including those responsible for governance, are taking action to improve communication.

Pupils in the EYFS begin learning to read straight away. Pupils who struggle to keep up are supported to do so with expert adults. In the secondary phase, struggling readers are identified early. Older pupils who have fallen behind get the help they need. The school encourages a love of reading in both phases.

The relationships between pupils and teachers, in both phases of the school, are positive. Low-level disruption is very rare. Pupils behave well during social times. In the secondary phase, the school has introduced a new policy, following a challenging period. This has had a positive impact.

The school provides many and varied opportunities for pupils of all ages to take part in extra-curricular activities. Younger pupils have access to forest school. The school is proud of its reputation for performing arts. In the secondary phase, activities include clubs for science, technology, engineering and mathematics, debating, and a variety of sports. Students in the sixth form take on positions of responsibility, including acting as reading buddies to younger pupils and being prefects.

The school's Catholic ethos underpins much of its work. The chaplaincy effectively supports the pastoral care pupils receive. Pupils of all ages understand the importance of tolerance and respect. They learn about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe and healthy.

The school provides comprehensive careers information, advice and guidance to all pupils in the secondary phase. This is particularly strong in the sixth form. The school uses events well to build enterprise opportunities, including for primary pupils.

The school is ambitious for pupils. Those responsible for governance provide challenge and support and there is a strong sense of community. However, monitoring and evaluation of some areas of the school's work are not precise and targeted. Although this is an all-through school, there is sometimes a lack of cohesion between and within phases.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The quality of curriculum planning and implementation is not consistently strong across the key stages. For example, subject-specific content has not been precisely planned in the humanities subjects in the primary phase. This means pupils are not always learning from a well-sequenced curriculum in key stages one and two. Leaders must prioritise curriculum development so that pupils learn from a well-sequenced curriculum from EYFS to key stage 5.
- There is a lack of rigour in the way the school organises the evaluation of some key aspects of its work. This means that it does not always know what works well. As a result, subsequent actions lack precision. The school should ensure that evaluation of the school's work is precise so that it has greater impact.

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	137349
Local authority	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
Inspection number	10268545
Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,918
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	312
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nicole Sharp
CEO of the trust	Benedict Doyle
Headteacher	Benedict Doyle
Website	www.st-peters.bournemouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average Catholic all-through school.
- The school is under the joint trusteeship of the De La Salle Order and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth.
- The school has two sites: one for the EYFS and primary phase, and another for the secondary phase.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers and two unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 11 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics and geography, across both phases of the school. Inspectors also carried out a deep dive in modern foreign languages in the secondary phase, and art in the primary phase of the school. For each deep dive inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed writing and history in the primary phase.
- The lead inspector analysed 381 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors also considered the views of pupils and staff in Ofsted's online surveys.
- Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils across both sites, as well as talking to them in lessons and during social times.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- An inspector also met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and discussed how pupils with SEND are identified and supported.
- Inspectors met with staff who oversee the curriculum, personal development and behaviour.
- The lead inspector met with members of the board of trustees and spoke with the director for education from the Catholic Academies and Schools Office.
- The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Victoria Griffin, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Kathy Maddocks	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Walker	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Schlick	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Collins	Ofsted Inspector

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