

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

Whitefields Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 3NZ

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 October 2023

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Julie Foley. This school is part of Our Lady and All Saints Catholic Multi Academy Company, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the Catholic senior executive leader, Peter Davis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Bentley.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a real sense of belonging to a caring community at St Augustine's. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They trust staff to look after them and resolve any concerns they may have. Parents and carers appreciate the rounded academic education their children receive.

Pupils understand and respect the school's high expectations of behaviour. They want the school to be a welcoming and friendly place for everyone. Pupils from different year groups choose to play together at breaktime. They are kind and helpful to each other. Their behaviour is also excellent in lessons. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy the many opportunities to discuss their learning with their 'talk partners'. They take pride in the work they produce and achieve good outcomes.

Whether bringing in food for the harvest collection, talking to a visiting author or attending mass, everyday life in school is varied and interesting for pupils. They appreciate the many ways learning is brought to life through opportunities to meet with visiting experts. For example, they remember lots of important information that they learned when they video-called fictitious Vikings or handled artefacts from the Second World War.

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

The curriculum has been carefully thought out. It builds learning effectively from early years to the end of Year 6. In some subjects, the school has made appropriate use of commercial curriculum resources. These help to ensure that small steps in learning are clearly identified and that staff are supported well in knowing how to address pupils'

misconceptions, should they occur. The curriculum in some subjects, including history, has been improved to ensure that pupils benefit from a deeper learning experience. The school ensures that teachers feel confident in their subject knowledge through a broad programme of professional development. Pupils achieve impressive outcomes in national tests at the end of Year 6. These reflect the strong progress pupils make during their time at the school.

Teachers design lesson activities that help pupils to know more and remember more. Pupils usually remember key learning. The school has identified the important skills and knowledge in each subject that pupils are expected to learn. However, sometimes, teachers do not make the intended skills clear to pupils, so pupils have less experience in applying these to their learning. This affects how well teachers can check what pupils can do successfully. Consequently, teachers cannot be sure if pupils are getting better and becoming more skilful, for example, as historians.

There is strong work taking place to ensure that children make the best start to their learning journey in the early years. There is a consistent emphasis on children's language and social development. Staff's knowledge of each child as an individual is notable. This means that each child's learning is carefully tailored to help them progress well. The 'wow' slips help parents to know about and celebrate moments of success achieved by their child.

There is a positive culture around reading. From Nursery onwards, children are surrounded by books and encouraged to develop a love of reading and all it has to offer. Teachers' effective delivery of the phonics scheme enables children to learn to read well. There are timely interventions for any who start to fall behind with their reading. The school is in the early stages of adopting a new approach to teaching reading to older pupils. This is starting to strengthen pupils' reading skills, ensuring everyone becomes a confident reader.

The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are appropriately supported. Their needs are identified carefully, and meaningful learning targets are set. Staff carefully review these and adapt learning activities accordingly to meet needs. Pupils with SEND make good progress. Many flourish because of the support they receive.

The school has made sure that all pupils benefit from a rich set of experiences. These include activities and trips that enhance their all-round development as well as deepening academic learning. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their sense of responsibility to others, for example presenting in assemblies as 'family leaders' or helping the wider community as 'Mini Vinnies'. Pupils have a deep understanding of the many faiths, cultures and groups that make up modern Britain. The positive culture around respect and behaviour means that staff rarely have to make use of the more serious behaviour consequences.

Trustees and local governors are systematic in checking that the school is meeting its responsibilities. They offer appropriate challenge to leaders to ensure that the school

continues to become even better than it already is. Staff know that leaders are doing all they can to reduce the workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers are sometimes not as explicit as they could be in ensuring that pupils are clear about the key skills that they are learning. This affects their ability to assess what pupils can do successfully. The school should ensure that the delivery of the curriculum is implemented in a way that enables pupils to develop strong subject-specific skills to enhance their knowledge and understanding.
- Not all staff have the same level of expertise in implementing the school's new approach to the teaching of reading. This leads to some inconsistencies in the effective delivery of the reading curriculum. The school should ensure that all staff receive appropriate professional development to further strengthen the school's teaching of reading, particularly for older pupils.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, to be good in March 2019.

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	148087
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10294697
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	233
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Bentley
CEO of the trust	Peter Davis
Headteacher	Julie Foley
Website	www.st-augustines.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in April 2021. The school is part of Our Lady and All Saints Catholic Multi Academy Company, which comprises 13 academies.
- This is a Roman Catholic school. The school's last section 48 diocesan inspection was in March 2020. 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 offers before- and after-school care on the school site.
- The school has a nursery currently offering full-time provision for 15 children.

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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other school leaders, trust leaders, the chair of the board of trustees and local governors. The inspector also spoke with a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. 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 listened to pupils read to a familiar adult and visited other lessons, including those in early years.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including comments submitted via the free-text facility. The inspector also spoke to some parents in person.

Inspection team

Nicola Beech, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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