

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

Thorneloe Walk, Barbourne, Worcester, Worcestershire WR1 3JY

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 October 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff have high ambitions for every pupil, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school works hard to help pupils to be the best they can be. In a short period of time, new leaders have made many changes that are beginning to make a positive difference. However, the school recognises there is more to do to ensure that the curriculum in all subjects allows pupils to build up their learning over time.

The school values of achieve, believe and care permeate every aspect of St George's. Pupils' well-being and care are at the forefront of everything that happens here. The warm and respectful relationships between adults and pupils are a joy to observe.

Children at this school are a delight. They are courteous, caring and friendly. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They say that everyone is welcome at their school. Pupils are confident that all staff would deal with any issues effectively and quickly.

The school places great emphasis on pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy an extensive range of activities that develop their character and further their interests. The many activities include leadership roles, visitors, trips, residential and after-school clubs. Pupils speak with passion about their roles as council leaders and lunchtime supporters.

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

The school's curriculum is suitably broad and balanced. It provides pupils with learning opportunities in a wide range of subjects. The school has carefully considered the knowledge and skills pupils must learn over time in core subjects. In these subjects, this

is effective and pupils do well. However, in some foundation subjects this is not yet the case. Here, the precise knowledge teachers need to teach and pupils need to learn is not as clear. This means learning does not always build on prior knowledge and this hinders pupils to deepen their learning over time.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They support the delivery of the school's curriculum well. Some subject leaders lack the expertise to effectively design and monitor the effectiveness of their curriculums. This means that the school does not always know what is working well and what might need further improvement.

Pupils receive work that is well matched to their needs and abilities. This includes pupils with SEND. Most teachers quickly spot pupils who are stuck and may need further help. However, at times teachers do not swiftly act on this information and adapt their teaching. This means that sometimes pupils do not get the help they need and move on to new content before they are ready. Conversely, some pupils' learning is not extended effectively when they are ready to move on. This means that learning slows for some pupils.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. The school swiftly identifies any pupils who may need extra help. They receive bespoke support at every level. This includes in lessons and through targeted interventions. All staff know the pupils with SEND and their needs very well. Leaders have ensured that relationships with parents of pupils with SEND are strong and that the support they provide extends to the whole family. As a result, pupils with SEND flourish and do well.

Reading is a priority. The phonics scheme is effective in supporting early readers to increase their reading fluency. Pupils read often and choose from many interesting texts in the library. Staff quickly spot pupils who may need extra help and provide this. Over time, pupils become fluent readers.

Children in Reception settle in very well. Staff work skilfully to get to know children and teach them about the expected behaviours and daily routines. Children begin learning about letters and numbers straight away. They enjoy learning and playtime in the stimulating environments. Children are very well prepared for Year 1.

The school promotes pupils' wider development very well. Pupils have many opportunities to extend their learning beyond the classroom. They go on trips, walks, excursions and residential, which they value and enjoy. There are many extra-curricular opportunities that pupils take part in, such as sporting clubs, a choir and many more.

Senior leaders are dedicated to and passionate about their school. They correctly identify any issues that fall short of their high expectations and address it. All staff are proud to work at the school. They believe that school leaders care about their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in some foundation subjects does not clearly identify the precise knowledge and essential skills that pupils should know. As a result, pupils are not able to build up their learning over time. The school should ensure that knowledge and skills pupils are expected to know are clear to all staff.
- Some subject leaders do not have the expertise needed to effectively monitor their subject areas. This means that information about the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning is not as clear as it could be. The school should ensure that all staff have the expertise and knowledge needed to fulfil their roles.
- Some teachers do not effectively adapt their teaching to support pupils who need extra help or those who are ready to move on to new learning. This means that teachers sometimes move pupils on to new content before they are ready or do not extend the learning of others. This slows pupils' learning. The school should ensure that all staff have the expertise to support pupils' learning effectively.

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 January 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	116924
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10294529
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Battle
Executive Headteacher	Louise Bury
Website	www.st-georgescatholic.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The previous headteacher left the school at the end of the summer term 2023. Since September 2023, the school is led by an interim executive headteacher who works across two primary schools. The interim executive headteacher spends two and a half days per week in this school.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club for its pupils.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.

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 interim executive headteacher, assistant headteachers and other leaders. The inspector held a meeting with the governing body, including the chair. The inspector held telephone meetings with a representative of the diocese and

the local authority. Meetings were held with curriculum leaders, teachers and support staff.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector visited the early years for each of the deep dives.
- The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour and interactions during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes and spoke to many pupils during the inspection.
- 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 responses to the online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. The inspector also reviewed responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Bianka Zemke, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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