

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

Back Duke of York Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 3PF

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Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

## Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is John Molyneux. This school is part of The Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Lesley Fitton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Helen Utting.

## What is it like to attend this school?

St Austin's is a friendly and welcoming school. Staff care for pupils and make sure that they feel safe. Pupils have a trusted adult to talk to if they have any concerns. The school celebrates the diversity of the pupils it serves. Pupils learn about the importance of tolerance and respect for all. The school provides pupils with an ambitious curriculum that enables them to learn well.

Pupils attend school regularly and are motivated to do well. In classrooms, there is no low-level disruption. The school's 'behaviour ladder' is understood by pupils. Staff have high expectations of pupils' conduct. There is effective pastoral support in place. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well understood by staff. As a result, pupils with SEND access the full curriculum, with appropriate adaptations if needed.

The school ensures that pupils have the opportunity to take part in trips and visits to broaden their horizons. Countryside days are very popular with pupils. Pupils can become leaders in school and take on positions of responsibility. Voting for members of the school council helps to teach pupils about democracy. Many pupils attend clubs after school, including book club and sports activities.

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

Leaders have recently reviewed the curriculum. As a result, subjects such as mathematics and geography are well sequenced. Staff have focused on ensuring that pupils are ready for the next stage of their education by identifying the important knowledge that pupils need to know at the end of each year. For example, in geography, an understanding of

location develops through the curriculum. This starts with the immediate location of the school and goes on to develop a sense of place in the wider world. The youngest children in Reception Year colour-code aerial maps of the school grounds to show their understanding of different locations.

Teachers assess pupils effectively in mathematics and reading. In these subjects, teachers use a range of assessment strategies that give them precise information about what pupils know. In other areas of the curriculum, this is not as well developed. In foundation subjects, teachers use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding. However, this alone does not give sufficient information to teachers about pupils' learning across the breadth of these subjects.

Pupils with SEND are supported to access the same curriculum as their peers. When necessary, teachers adapt tasks to meet pupils' needs. For example, teachers may work one to one with a pupil to help them to secure their knowledge. In mathematics, pupils with SEND may have resources such as number frames or counters to support their learning. Pupils needing additional help are identified early. Once a need has been identified, staff put appropriate plans in place to ensure that all pupils have access to the curriculum.

The approach to reading is well organised. The school introduced a new phonics programme last year. Leaders are further developing this programme as it moves into its second year. Staff have precise knowledge of pupils' reading ability. They ensure that pupils get the right phonics teaching that they need. Teachers check the phonics knowledge pupils remember and use this information to identify the pupils who need extra, daily phonics teaching. Pupils are engaged in their reading lessons and enjoy saying their newly learned sounds with enthusiasm.

Pupils behave well in school. They are calm and orderly and follow routines well. The school has 'virtues to live by'. Each virtue, such as kindness, is focused on for three weeks at a time. Children who demonstrate their living out the virtue are rewarded with a certificate at the weekly celebration assembly. This motivates them to behave well in school. In celebration assemblies, pupils look forward to gaining their awards and spinning the rewards wheel if their class has the highest attendance.

The relationships and sex education and health education curriculums are well planned, taking the context of the pupils into account. The curriculums revisit topics at an age-appropriate level. Pupils learn about the protected characteristics. They are supported to understand the importance of maintaining good physical and mental health. Pupils can contribute to the life of the school by becoming eco-champions or play leaders to support younger pupils.

Trustees and governors scrutinise the work of school leaders. The trust offers support where appropriate. Staff are part of trust subject networks and they find this support helpful when devising their curriculums. Leaders are mindful of the workload and well-being of staff.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school does not use assessment strategies in the foundation subjects well enough to give a sufficiently clear picture of what pupils have learned. As a result, gaps in learning are not consistently identified. Leaders should ensure that assessment is used more effectively in foundation subjects to check that pupils are learning the intended curriculum.

## 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 predecessor school, also called St Austin's Catholic Primary School, to be good in November 2010.

## 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>	142155
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10290291
<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>	309
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Helen Utting
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Lesley Fitton
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Molyneux
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sa.bkcat.co.uk">www.sa.bkcat.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of The Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is a Catholic school. Its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in July 2022.
- St Austin's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy school in July 2015. When its predecessor school, also called St Austin's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

## 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 had 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 her evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, subject leaders and other staff, including the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust and the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative of the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, spoke with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning. She visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- 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 met with the designated safeguarding lead. The inspector also spoke with staff, governors and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspector met with staff and considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey and its pupil survey.

## **Inspection team**

Jessica McKay, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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