

Inspection of St Aidan's Catholic Primary School

Rackhouse Road, Northern Moor, Manchester M23 0BW

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils, including children in the early years, enjoy coming to school. They are ready to learn. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and welcoming.

For the most part, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), behave well in lessons. Children in the early years settle in quickly. They follow clear routines, and they rise to staff's expectations. Most pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. However, some pupils said that, on occasion, the school does not deal with bullying as quickly and effectively as it should.

The school expects pupils to succeed academically. It has ensured that the curriculum is suitably ambitious and well organised from the Nursery Year to Year 6. However, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because, in some subjects, there are weaknesses in how well the curriculum is delivered.

Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy being members of the school council and eco-council. They are proud to contribute to their community through, for example, fundraising events. Pupils appreciate the range of extra-curricular clubs on offer. These include opportunities to take part in music, netball and football. However, some pupils do not understand the importance of valuing the differences between people.

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

Children in the early years benefit from an ambitious and well-designed curriculum that meets their needs. Staff design learning that supports children to acquire the knowledge that they need in readiness for Year 1. However, this is not replicated well enough in key stages 1 and 2. This is because, despite strengthening subject curriculums, the school has not ensured that staff are equipped to deliver learning with confidence and expertise.

In some subjects, teachers are not clear enough about how to check that pupils have understood and remembered earlier learning. Some pupils develop misconceptions and gaps in their knowledge. This prevents them from building securely on what they know already. This means that some pupils do not learn as deeply as they could, nor are they fully prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school has systems in place to ensure that the additional needs of pupils with SEND are identified swiftly. However, the school has not ensured that staff are suitably skilled to adapt how they deliver the curriculum to meet the needs of some of these pupils. This means that some pupils with SEND are hindered in their learning.

The school has prioritised the teaching of reading. Older pupils read with enthusiasm. They told inspectors about their favourite authors and how they enjoy listening to their teachers read to them.

Most staff are trained to deliver the early reading programme skilfully. In the early years, there is a strong focus on developing children's communication and language skills. This starts in the Nursery class, where children are well prepared to begin the phonics programme when they join the Reception Year. In the main, staff ensure that the books that pupils read match the sounds that they have learned. Staff support pupils who may be struggling with their reading to catch up quickly.

Overall, pupils display positive attitudes to learning. They understand the importance of attending school regularly and, as such, their rates of attendance are improving. Most pupils behave calmly in lessons. However, pupils explained that a minority of their peers sometimes use inappropriate and derogatory language outside of lessons. This makes some pupils feel uncomfortable during social times. At times, it makes them feel anxious, and it spoils their enjoyment of school.

Pupils benefit from carefully selected opportunities to enhance their personal development. For example, they learn the importance of keeping fit and eating healthy foods. However, some pupils show little awareness of fundamental British values, such as showing respect and tolerance towards others. This means that these pupils are not as prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be.

The school is considerate of staff's workload and well-being when introducing new initiatives. Staff are positive about working at the school and the support that leaders provide.

Governors know the school well and are supportive of leaders. When appropriate information is reported to governors, their challenge is effective.

The school engages well with parents and carers. For example, parents spoke positively about opportunities to attend curriculum mornings, assemblies and to support pupils in fundraising for the community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not successfully adapt their delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not learn all that they should. The school should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills that they need to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve well.

- In some subjects, teachers do not check sufficiently well that pupils have learned and understood curriculum content. This means that some pupils develop gaps or misconceptions in their learning. The school should ensure that staff are equipped to check pupils' understanding so that they can remedy any gaps in pupils' knowledge.
- Some incidents of bullying and discriminatory behaviour are not dealt with sufficiently well. This causes some pupils to feel anxious and upset. The school should ensure that it develops a culture where discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated and where staff are fully equipped to respond to pupils' concerns appropriately.
- Some pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be. These pupils do not have a deep understanding of fundamental British values, such as tolerance and respect for others. The school should ensure that these pupils learn about the importance of celebrating diversity and treating people equally.

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	105519
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10289888
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Owen Gallagher
Headteacher	Sarah Yates
Website	www.staidans.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Roman Catholic primary school. It is part of the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The school's previous section 48 inspection took place in May 2022. The next section 48 inspection is due in 2025.
- The school does not currently make use of alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspector 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 spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and staff in school. They spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. Inspectors spoke with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. They spoke with the curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the documentation provided by leaders, including leaders' improvement plan and self-evaluation. They also reviewed minutes from meetings of the governing body and a range of documentation relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors also spoke with leaders from other areas of the curriculum. They looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils.
- An inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed children's and pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school.
- 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.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Clare Baron, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Collette Mather	Ofsted Inspector
Amy Burkes	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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