

Inspection of Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

St Faith's Road, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 6AG

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

The principal of this school is Martin Breslin. This school is part of Our Lady of the Magnificat Multi-Academy Company, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Tom Leverage, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Yvonne Brennan. There is also an executive headteacher, Jane McNally, who is responsible for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

'Everyone's kind at our school,' a pupil told an inspector. This sums up the welcoming, caring and happy place it is. The school is calm. Staff mostly guide pupils to behave well in lessons and around school. Pupils form strong friendships and enjoy opportunities to work and play together. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but when it happens, staff quickly sort things out for them. Pupils feel safe because of the care staff show them.

Pupils value the wide range of extra-curricular activities the school provides. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the different clubs they can take part in. Parents and carers also appreciate this and the way clubs extend their children's wider interests.

Leaders want pupils to reach high standards in their work. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in some subjects. This is because the curriculum needs to improve in places. The way teachers deliver the curriculum is not always successful. Leaders recognise this and have plans to improve the school's work in these areas.

Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not always well supported to learn the curriculum. Most pupils with SEND do not achieve well.

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

The executive headteacher and the recently appointed principal have formed a strong partnership and improved aspects of the school. However, there is still much to do.

Some areas of the curriculum are well planned and well sequenced. In these subjects, the school has identified the key knowledge they want pupils to learn. In these subjects, pupils are able to recall important information and answer questions with a secure understanding. Pupils know more and remember more. However, this is not consistent across all areas of the curriculum, particularly in mathematics and writing. Furthermore, teachers' delivery of the curriculum in these areas is inconsistent. Explanations are not always clear. Sometimes teachers' expectations of pupils' work are too low. As a result, pupils do not build well on their learning over time across the curriculum.

Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not achieve well. The work and tasks given to pupils are not always well matched to their individual needs. This slows these pupils' learning. In addition, staff do not consistently promote pupils' independence well.

The school places an importance on reading. As part of the school's work, pupils enjoy selecting books to read from the library. In addition, teachers read well-chosen books to pupils as part of the reading curriculum. These books capture pupils' interest. Children learn phonics from the start in Reception. The school makes

regular checks on pupils' progress to make sure pupils reach the expectations of the reading curriculum. Pupils who struggle are identified and well supported to catch up quickly.

The changes the school has made have improved children's learning in the early years. Children in the Reception Year experience a broad curriculum. The school has also developed a close partnership with parents, which helps to support children's development. Children's progress is regularly reviewed. Activities match the needs of pupils. All of this means that children are well prepared for the start of Year 1.

The school has successfully improved pupils' attendance. A strong emphasis has been placed on attending well. The school works closely with families and offers appropriate support.

Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils have a strong understanding of fundamental British values. They understand how to live healthily and keep safe online.

Leaders, at the trust and school, are working closely together. They have had to manage many recent staffing changes. The trust has provided lots of training and support. However, leaders have not yet ensured that the curriculum and its implementation is successful. Subject leaders are not making effective checks to identify the things that need to improve.

Staff feel well supported. They speak of a strong team ethos and the positive direction set by the new principal. Staff describe how leaders have made their workload manageable. Staff say that leaders take staff's well-being into account.

Directors and governors are clear about their roles. Local governors meet regularly and are developing a clearer understanding of what the school needs to do to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum does not clearly identify the key knowledge pupils will learn. As a result, pupils do not build a secure understanding over time. The school should revise the curriculum and identify the key knowledge pupils need to know at each stage of their learning.
- The mathematics and writing curriculums are not well implemented. Explanations are not always clear and expectations of pupils' work are too low. Leaders should

support teachers to improve the implementation of these subjects so that pupils achieve well in mathematics and writing.

- Tasks and support given to pupils with SEND are not always well matched to pupils' needs. As a result, these pupils do not achieve well. The school should provide appropriate support for pupils with SEND to achieve well and prepare them fully for the next stage in their education.
- The school does not accurately check and evaluate the implementation of the curriculum. As a result, inconsistencies develop and this slows the school's improvement. The school should support subject leaders with the skills and knowledge to develop and accurately evaluate their subject areas.

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	143632
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10290631
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	96
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Yvonne Brennan
Principal	Martin Breslin
Website	www.ourladyscatholicalcester.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Our Lady of the Magnificat Multi-Academy Company.
- A new principal joined the school in September 2023.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.
- This is a Catholic school which is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in December 2018.

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 the school's 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 met with the chief executive office, members of the company’s school improvement team, the executive headteacher and the principal. An inspector met with a director of the company and two members of the school improvement board who have responsibility for governance of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to a representative of the local authority and a representative of the local diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, history and music. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents, including leaders’ evaluations of the school, plans for improvement and minutes from meetings of the school improvement board.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and also considered their responses to Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also took account of the views of staff.
- An inspector spoke to a representative from the unregistered provider the school uses.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and parents; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.

Inspection team

Jonathan Moore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Potter	Ofsted Inspector

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