

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary Academy

Nova Lane, Birstall, Batley, West Yorkshire WF17 9LQ

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Clare Moulding. This school is part of Blessed Peter Snow 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, Richard Williams, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Antonia Dorsey.

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Patrick's Catholic Primary Academy as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's religious character is at the heart of all aspects of the curriculum. Staff encourage pupils to be 'the best version of themselves'. This helps pupils remember not to leave anyone out when socialising at breaktimes. The pupil 'smile squad' helps any pupil who needs friendship. Pupils are rewarded when they show virtues in their behaviour. All pupils strive to be virtuous, treating others with kindness and respect. This helps everyone to feel happy and safe in school.

Leaders have equally high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils rise to this challenge, achieving well in English and mathematics in all key stages. The school appreciates the strong support that parents and carers provide. Curriculum events in school and in the community are always very well attended by parents. Parents also ensure that pupils' attendance is much higher than average, so pupils do not miss out on rich learning opportunities.

Pupils have good social skills. They are polite to visitors and to other pupils. Pupils respect others and behave well in lessons. Pupils are worthy recipients of their 'Beatitudes' certificates at the end of Year 6. They are reminded to 'Be gentle - and let others be themselves.'

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

Across St Patrick's, pupils read at least as well as expected for their age. Many pupils exceed these expectations. Those in the earliest stages of learning to read have effective phonics lessons. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy their leadership responsibilities as 'reading ambassadors'. They lead 'book gossip' sessions, reading extracts of books they have chosen to recommend to younger readers. This extends pupils' exposure to different authors and genres. There is a good balance on offer between traditional classics and modern texts. This helps staff to develop pupils' love of reading.

Children feel safe and nurtured in the early years. This helps them to settle happily when they start school. Once children have relaxed into the curriculum fully, the school skilfully assesses each child's individual learning needs. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly, so there is no delay in getting them the extra help that they need.

The school has trained all early years and key stage 1 staff to use Makaton to help pupils with SEND improve their communication and interaction skills. This has reduced the frustration that some pupils feel when they cannot communicate their needs independently.

The school and the parents' and friends' association recently provided funding to improve the outdoor learning environment in the early years. The new climbing equipment is helping to improve children's strength, balance and coordination when

they are playing. Children are making good progress in all prime areas of the early years curriculum.

The curriculum for pupils' physical education (PE) is a strength of the school. Pupils' PE knowledge and skills are developed sequentially as they move through the school. For example, in gymnastics, pupils move from stretching and curling in key stage 1 to partner and symmetrical balances in lower key stage 2, moving on to counter tension balances in Year 5. The school has been awarded platinum status in the school sports partnership for its exceptional competitive participation rates. This status recognises teamwork, behaviour and sportsmanship, as well as athletic prowess. This balances pupils' competitive streak with the lesson that there are other character-building aspects to develop in competitive sports.

In a few foundation curriculum subjects, the curriculum designs do not always match the standard of the PE curriculum overview. The school is identifying the details of the progression of knowledge and skills in these subjects.

The curriculum for pupils' moral education is effective. Pupil 'Mini-Vinnies' follow the example of St Vincent de Paul by thinking carefully about how they can serve others. Pupils collect Christmas presents to donate to children in other parts of the world as part of their charity fundraising. They are looking forward to helping at the local church lunch club this term. Pupils are learning to be caring citizens.

Improving curriculum plans in a few curriculum subjects is the first priority on the school improvement plan. The trust is exploring ways in which its subject leader networks can support staff to reduce their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have accurately identified the need to improve a few wider curriculum plans to ensure that the sequence and progression of pupils' knowledge and skills are set out in precise detail. Pupils are not achieving as well as they could in these subjects. The trust should provide training and support to improve curriculum plans with greater urgency, taking account of teacher workload.

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	148863
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10255630
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	245
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Antonia Dorsey
Headteacher	Clare Moulding
Website	www.stpatricksbirstall.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust.
- This is a Roman Catholic school with a Christian character. The Diocese of Leeds completed a section 48 inspection in 2018. Section 48 re-inspection dates have been delayed following COVID-19 restrictions. The school is scheduled for a section 48 inspection in 2024.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

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 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 met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leader.
- Inspectors met with members of the local governing body, trustees, and the trust's area director of education, who represented the chief executive.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading and phonics, design and technology, mathematics, PE and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with senior staff who lead the wider curriculum. Inspectors also discussed this with several groups of pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety were evaluated in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtime. Inspectors also discussed this with pupils in single-sex groups.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View and spoke to several parents before the start of the school day. Inspectors considered responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Tracey Ralph, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Chris Carr	His Majesty's Inspector
Ginny Robinson	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023