

Inspection of St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

Melrose Road, Pinner HA5 5RA

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 December 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected.

The headteacher of this school is Nina Pignatiello. This school is part of the Blessed Holy Family Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by chief executive officer, Geraldine Higgins, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by James Coyle.

Ofsted has not previously inspected St John Fisher Catholic Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Ofsted previously judged the predecessor school, also called St John Fisher Catholic Primary School, to be outstanding before it converted to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish here. They are happy and kept safe. This is because there are always adults who are there to help them should they need it. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is exemplary. Pupils understand and demonstrate what is expected of them. This is because they are taught how to develop self-control and resilience throughout their time at school. Consequently, learning is focused, and disruption to lessons is rare. Pupils appreciate the calm, friendly and respectful atmosphere they experience at the school.

The curriculum is broad and ambitious and helps all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Pupils are enthusiastic, independent and resilient. They produce work of high quality across different subjects and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils are given opportunities to have a say in their school. There is a wide range of responsibilities available, including Catholic life ambassadors, 'play champs', the pupil parliament and eco-warriors. Electing those who perform these roles provides pupils with an understanding of democracy and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

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

Reading is given high priority. A love of reading is evident across the school. All staff are well trained and deliver the agreed phonics programme with precision. This is checked closely by leaders to make sure provision for pupils' early reading is of a consistently high standard. Children begin to learn letter sounds as soon as they start school. Regular practise, using books that are carefully matched to the sounds they know, helps all pupils, including those with SEND, to become fluent readers quickly. Appropriate support is provided for those at risk of falling behind. Carefully designed interventions ensure that all pupils can keep up and learn to read.

From the Reception Year onwards, there is a relentless focus on developing pupils' oracy. All staff understand that this is vital to enable pupils to access the rest of the curriculum and future learning. Pupils are taught important subject vocabulary, as well as how to respond when answering questions and talking with each other. As a result, pupils communicate effectively and with maturity. This has a positive effect on behaviour. Pupils are kind and considerate, and they listen to their friends, showing high levels of respect towards each other.

The curriculum is ambitious and sets out the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils need to know. Essential content to be learned has been identified, starting from early years. Careful thought has been given to how this is sequenced to help pupils build on previous learning and know and remember more over time. For example, in mathematics, children in Reception learn to recognise and count different amounts. This supports children's early understanding of numbers to 10, which lays the foundations for

adding and subtracting larger numbers later. Similarly, in music, younger pupils use rhythm sticks to learn about tempo and volume. Older pupils use this knowledge to successfully play a piece of music later.

Oversight of the curriculum is robust. Staff have secure subject knowledge because of regular training and support. This helps them to check that pupils have learned the important knowledge they need and to address any errors or misconceptions that may arise. Teachers make sufficient time for pupils to revisit, practise and embed the knowledge they need. This is particularly beneficial for pupils with SEND, as it enables them to access the same learning as their peers. Pupils develop a real depth of understanding in different subjects over time. This is reflected in the strong outcomes pupils achieve at the end of key stages 1 and 2.

Provision for pupils' personal development is exceptional. A wide variety of enrichment activities are available, such as football, street dance, Irish dancing and mindfulness. The curriculum has been designed to help pupils learn about important topics to prepare them for their future lives. High importance is placed on respecting diversity and equality of opportunity. During physical education (PE), for example, all pupils are given the opportunity to attend sporting tournaments. Those chosen are carefully considered each time to ensure fairness and inclusivity. All pupils benefit from this offer.

Leaders have created an ambitious culture that puts pupils' learning at the centre of everything they do. Leaders at all levels, including those responsible for governance, share a real commitment to ongoing school improvement. They have a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's many strengths and the areas they want to improve even further. Effective systems are in place for ensuring that pupils attend school regularly. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about leaders' support for their workload and well-being. They say they feel listened to and valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	146178
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	10242313
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	631
Appropriate authority	The Board of trustees
Chair of trust	James Coyle
Headteacher	Nina Pignatiello
Website	http://www.stjohnfisherschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Westminster. The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in June 2019.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club. It also offers a holiday club.
- The school does not currently use any 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. The 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 headteacher, deputy and assistant headteachers and members of staff. They spoke with a representative of the diocese. Discussions were also held with the chief executive officer of the Blessed Holy Family Catholic Academy Trust, and seven members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, PE, music and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- 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.
- The lead inspector looked at a range of documents, including leaders' priorities for improvement.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were gathered through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Samantha Ingram, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Ruth Harding	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Martin	Ofsted Inspector
David Bryant	Ofsted Inspector

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