

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

Church Road, Trench, Telford, Shropshire TF2 7HG

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 December 2023

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

This school does many things well. Pupils are happy, motivated and well behaved. The staff are kind and treat pupils with respect and friendly authority. Pupils are kind to one another. They know that bullying is mean and unacceptable at their school. The school's rules and routines for responding to any poor behaviour work well. This means that pupils feel safe at school and enjoy their time here. Most pupils attend regularly.

Older pupils have jobs to do. These roles teach them about responsibility and give them a voice in decision-making. In lessons, assemblies and through everyday conversations with adults, pupils learn a lot about how to stay safe, look after others and the values that steer school life. Pupils are supported to become responsible young people.

Lessons are calm. Pupils work hard and do well in many aspects of their education. There is a strong sense of community, and pupils are keen to participate in whole-school activities. For instance, they sing very well together, which they enjoy.

The school sets high expectations, and core academic standards are in line with the national picture. Even so, some aspects of learning could be strengthened further.

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

This is a well-regarded school. Staff work hard, and pupils do well in many different ways.

The early years gives children a firm grounding in the school's values and expectations. Staff help children to settle in quickly and to feel secure. Furthermore, the curriculum in different areas of learning has a thoughtful eye on what will follow in key stage 1. In early reading, for example, staff are quick to get going with phonics. The school has a structured programme that continues throughout key stage 1 and into key stage 2 if necessary. Support for pupils who need extra help mostly works well. These pupils receive extra reading sessions during the school day. That said, the school's approach to

supporting reading at home could be better. Currently, pupils who need the most practice do not always get the right books to take home. This slows their learning.

Other subjects are taught regularly. The school provides a broad curriculum, and leaders reflect on how well pupils are learning in different subjects. This evaluative approach has led to improvements over time. For example, a recent focus on boosting fluency with early number is already paying off. Nevertheless, in some subjects, the curriculum is overly complex and does not focus enough on the crucial knowledge that all pupils should know. This also means that assessment is not as efficient and helpful as it could be. Leaders know this but have more work to do to ensure their plans target the right things.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have access to the full curriculum. The school identifies needs accurately, and staff make adjustments in lessons so that pupils can access the same learning as their peers. This is an inclusive school where individuality is valued.

The school's personal development and relationships education programmes support pupils to develop a healthy, respectful outlook on life. Through the school's 'mini vinnies' club, pupils get involved in charitable work. A pupil-led safety committee, the 'hazard heroes', helps to plan assemblies that teach everyone how to stay safe. In addition, there are some extra-curricular clubs and various trips that support classroom learning.

The school's distinctive strengths include the strong sense of community and the values that guide everyday life. A united team approach means that all staff model responsible and thoughtful behaviour. At lunchtimes, for example, catering and supervisory staff take a caring interest in pupils' lives. Throughout the school day, staff follow the school's behaviour policy with consistency. Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong and the value of kind words and deeds. This helps school life and lessons to run smoothly. Disruption is rare.

Staff work hard and are ambitious for pupils. School leaders take account of their workload when making decisions. For instance, some curriculum schemes of work reduce staff workload while also improving pupils' learning. On the other hand, some recent changes have overcomplicated the curriculum and increased staff workload unnecessarily.

Parents appreciate the school's work and refer to the school as a 'lighthouse in the community'. In their responses to the inspection survey, most parents praised the school's caring ethos.

Governors understand their role and are informed about local and national priorities. Together with school leaders, they are receptive to challenge and reflect on the impact of their work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The books that some pupils are given to take home are not closely matched to their stage of learning. This limits pupils' opportunities to practise their reading. Many pupils are not affected adversely by this, but some are because it affects their progress. The school should ensure that the chosen approach to teaching phonics is resourced and implemented in full for all pupils.
- In some foundation subjects, the curriculum does not place sufficient emphasis on the crucial knowledge that all pupils should learn to help them with future learning. Because of this, teachers are not sure what all pupils need to know and remember to make meaningful progress. It also leads to some unnecessary staff workload. Leaders should continue to review and revise the curriculum to ensure that pupils learn and remember the right things in all subjects.

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 school to be good in October 2014.

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	123558
Local authority	Telford & Wrekin
Inspection number	10290558
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pauline Heffernan
Headteacher	Louise Evans
Website	www.stlukesatholicprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Luke's Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic school.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection of its religious character took place in March 2023.
- The school provides before- and after-school childcare on the school site.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, and geography. In these subjects, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and

looked at pupils' work. The inspector also looked at the curriculum in other subjects and observed some pupils reading.

- The inspector looked at published performance data about the school and a range of school documents. These included information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, staff training and school improvement planning. The inspector checked the school's website.
- 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 talked informally with pupils, parents and staff to gather general information about school life. She took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff's, pupils' and parents' views.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class and at other times during the day.
- During the inspection, the inspector had formal meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, governors, school staff and pupils. She had telephone conversations with the school's attached adviser, a local authority officer and a diocesan representative.

Inspection team

Diane Pye, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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