

Inspection of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School

Winchfield Drive, Harborne, Birmingham, West Midlands B17 8TR

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is David Simmons. This school is part of Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the catholic senior executive leader, Suzanne Horan, and overseen by a board of directors, chaired by Joanna Griffin.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School 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?

Pupils attend this warm and nurturing school happily and regularly. They are proud of their school and describe it as a nice place to be. Positive relationships ensure that pupils settle quickly and apply themselves well in lessons. This starts in Reception, where children settle very quickly into school life.

Pupils behave well at all points of the school day. Playtimes are calm, with activities provided for pupils to enjoy. Pupils say there is always a 'trusted adult' they can speak to if they have any worries or concerns. This helps them feel safe in school. Well-established expectations and routines support pupils to move safely and sensibly from the playground back to lessons.

The school places a high priority on ensuring pupils perform well in reading, writing and mathematics. The ambition the school has for these subjects is realised. This is also true for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, too much emphasis is placed on these subjects at the expense of other curriculum areas, such as geography, history, art and design, and design and technology. Pupils express frustration at not being able to learn these subjects as regularly as they would like.

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

The school recognises the importance of all pupils learning to read. Regular assessments in phonics ensure pupils receive lessons tailored to their different abilities. This is supported with reading books that are matched to the sounds they know, which helps pupils to become fluent readers. Most pupils can read well. For pupils who need extra support to keep up with their peers, staff provide extra sessions, using a range of different approaches to address gaps in their learning. Children in the early years are given many opportunities to apply their phonics knowledge to writing.

Mathematics is a strength in the school. Strong subject leadership, and a well-thought-out curriculum, ensures pupils revisit prior learning regularly. Teachers identify gaps in understanding and address misconceptions well. Pupils with SEND are supported effectively to enable them to make the progress they are capable of. This also starts in the early years. Children show very good levels of interest and concentration. They persevere with activities impressively. This leads to pupils making good progress and achieving very well in this subject.

However, too many areas of the curriculum are not developed to this high standard. Careful consideration has not been given to what will be taught, when or why. The precise knowledge pupils need to know and remember has not yet been identified in all subjects. This limits pupils' ability to build on prior learning and make links across topics. It also means that checks on how well pupils have learned the intended curriculum are not as well developed in all subject areas. The school does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to learn all subjects in sufficient depth. This

leads to a curriculum that lacks the balance and breadth needed for pupils to be equally as successful in all areas. Staff do not ensure pupils present their work consistently well. This affects the quality of work in too many areas.

Pupils behave beautifully. They have wonderful manners and are very polite. They understand the school rules. They have assisted in creating the 'School Charter' and helped shape the expectations placed on them. They rise to these expectations consistently. Pupils do not stop others from learning in lessons. This makes for a calm learning environment.

Respect is commonplace. Pupils recognise and accept differences. They learn about different religions. This is supported by visits to a variety of places of worship or through visitors to school. They understand that it is never acceptable to treat people differently because of how they look or what they believe. Pupils send cards to lonely people in the parish and send flowers to people in the local area if they know they feel lonely or isolated. They look after the environment by picking litter. Pupils are taught about the importance of keeping themselves safe online and in the real world. The school recognises the importance of pupils' mental health and has adopted many approaches to support this important issue.

Leaders have had to prioritise certain aspects of the school's work as a result of the many staffing changes. Some of these have been at the expense of the curriculum. The trust delegates the responsibility of curriculum design and planning to the school. The local governing body rightly identifies the strengths in the core subjects but has not put enough focus on the wider curriculum areas. However, parents are highly appreciative and positive about the quality of care and nurture the school provides for their children. This is a strength.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn the wider curriculum, including in the early years. This means that pupils do not develop their knowledge and skills in some of the foundation subjects well enough. The school should ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn all areas of the curriculum in sufficient depth.
- The school has not identified the key knowledge it wants pupils to know in all subject areas. This means pupils sometimes learn isolated facts that do not allow for knowledge to build sequentially or cumulatively. Leaders should identify the key knowledge and skills in every curriculum area. They should give greater thought to what pupils will learn, and when, to enable them to deepen their understanding.

- The school has not identified an effective approach to the use of assessment in all foundation subjects. This means teachers cannot assure themselves of how well pupils are progressing in some of these subjects. Leaders should introduce assessment systems to enable teachers to check how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum.
- The school does not place a high enough priority on how work is presented in books. This affects the quality of work that pupils produce. The school should ensure that there is a consistent and ambitious expectation on how pupils present their work, using neat and legible handwriting.

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	141484
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10267937
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joanna Griffin
Principal	David Simmons
Website	www.olfatima.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is part of Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company.
- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- This school has recently undergone a staffing restructure. Many subject leaders are new to role.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school wraparound care.
- The school does not make use of 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, the vice-principal and subject leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work in a range of subjects including English, history, geography and design and technology.
- The lead inspector spoke with three members of the local governing body, two members of the trust, including the chair of the board, and the catholic senior executive leader of the trust.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative from the diocese.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead 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 lead inspector reviewed a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors talked informally with pupils and staff to gather general information about school life. In addition, they took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's survey of staff's views, and parents' views. Pupil surveys were not distributed by the school so could not be considered.

Inspection team

Keri Baylis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Anna Smith

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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