

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

Windrush Close, Solihull, West Midlands B92 8QL

Inspection dates:

30 and 31 January 2024

Outcome

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

The head of school of this school is Lucy Hipkiss. This school is part of Our Lady and All Saints Catholic 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, Peter Davis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Bentley. There is also an executive headteacher, Cieran Flaherty, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Andrew's Catholic Primary School is a calm, purposeful place in which pupils are happy, confident and love to learn. Pupils are safe and well cared for, trusting the adults who work with them to help them if they have any worries. There is a real sense of family and belonging at this school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy welcoming visitors to school and are proud to call it their own.

The behaviour of pupils is a strength. Both in class and in the playground, they treat one another courteously. They are polite, considerate and respectful. They enjoy taking on roles to help other such as becoming playleaders, 'Gift Ambassadors' and Year 6 buddies for younger children.

Pupils, including those in the early years, respond well to the high expectations that teachers have for their achievement. They display positive attitudes to learning, try their best and produce work of good quality. As the school motto states, the children live, love and learn together as 'Witnesses for Christ'.

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

The school is ambitious for what pupils learn across all subjects. It has adopted a curriculum which sets out exactly what pupils learn and the order they learn it. This means pupils connect what they are learning now with what they already knew. Some subjects are at an early stage of implementation. As a result, pupils don't have as much

prior knowledge to draw on in these subjects.

Pupils learn well because of how clearly teachers present information. They provide engaging, purposeful lessons. Pupils always know what they are learning and why they are learning it. There has been considerable changes to teaching staff in recent years, and a high proportion of teachers are at an early point in their careers. However, the school has been very effective in providing training and guidance. This has resulted in there being high levels of consistency in how teachers deliver the curriculum.

Lessons start with a recap of previous learning from last week, last term or even last year. Also, there is an emphasis on pupils having structured learning discussions with their peers. Discussing learning with 'shoulder partners' and 'face partners' has become a natural part of lessons. Pupils are now remembering more of what they have been taught. For example, in history, pupils gain a deeper understanding of concepts such as democracy through debate. In mathematics, starting every lesson by visiting previous learning means pupils are becoming much quicker at recalling and using number facts such as their times tables.

Learning to read is a priority and pupils are keen to do so. There is an effective phonics program in place which ensures pupils gain the skills and knowledge they need to become confident, fluent readers. The school has ensured that all the adults who teach phonics are experts at doing so. They are skilled at spotting when pupils fall behind and offer extra help so that they catch up. There is a culture of loving literature across the school. Pupils benefit from their teachers reading exciting books to them every day. They gain a love of reading and a broad knowledge of books and authors.

Staff are supported well to identify and provide support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has specialist expertise to offer pastoral support in response to other difficulties such as anxiety. This is proving successful, including improving the attendance of pupils.

During changes of staffing and approaches, the school has not been as successful in engaging and communicating with parents as it could have been. This has resulted in some parents feeling dissatisfied with aspects of provision, including the support provided for pupils with SEND.

The trust and those responsible for governance are passionate about securing positive outcomes for all pupils. They share an ambitious vision for the future. They know the school well and what needs to be done to drive and sustain improvement. Staff are well supported and receive effective training as new initiatives are introduced. They are proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in some subjects is not yet fully embedded. This means that in a small number of subjects, pupils don't make the connections in their learning that they could. The school should ensure that the successful work done to embed learning in other subjects is used so that pupils are equally successful across the curriculum.
- Some parents, including some of those of pupils with SEND, do not feel that they are informed about the work of the school as well as they need to be. This has led to some dissatisfaction and confusion. The school should ensure that parents of pupils at the school are kept informed about changes being made and why.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, to be good in September 2016.

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	148086
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10294696
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	232
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Bentley
CEO of the trust	Peter Davis
Headteacher	Cieran Flaherty
Website	www.st-andrews.solihull.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Our Lady and All Saints Multi Academy Company in April 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club.
- As a Catholic faith school, the school is subject to inspections under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The school was inspected in June 2022 and judged as good.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other senior leaders within the school.

- The inspector met with the chief executive officer, the chair of the trust and the director of school improvement. He also met with members of the local governing board.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. The inspector also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes. He spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents and the school's website.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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