

Inspection of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Knoll Drive, Styvechale, Coventry, West Midlands CV3 5DE

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
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 Sarah Collins. This school is part of the Holy Cross Catholic Multi-Academy Company (MAC), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the Catholic senior executive leader, Marina Kelly, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Teahan.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is a welcoming and inclusive school that puts children at the heart of all that it does. Relationships between pupils and staff across the school are warm and positive. Leaders value every member of the community as an individual. Pupils know whom to talk to if they are worried. As a result, pupils feel happy and safe.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Pupils and adults alike understand the expectations for behaviour. Pupils are respectful and polite as they move around the school. They say they are proud to attend St Thomas More. They have a positive attitude to the work they produce and are keen to share what has been learned.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The curriculum is ambitious for all, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are well supported by skilled staff who know them. This means that most pupils achieve well.

The school provides a variety of clubs each term, including sports, choir and 'Rock Steady'. Pupils also run their own clubs, for example 'Rubik's Cube' and a language club. This means that pupils can share and learn languages spoken by other pupils.

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

The school has created a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. It enables most pupils to learn essential knowledge successfully. Pupils begin to build up their knowledge as soon as they start in the Nursery class. For example, in mathematics, children in the early years practise counting numbers.

In most subjects, teachers know what pupils have learned and remembered. Teachers explain key information clearly, and pupils have opportunities to go over what they have learned before. This helps pupils to remember important knowledge and to make the progress leaders plan for. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is quite new, and teachers are not yet skilled in implementing it. In some cases, they do not always implement learning in a way that helps pupils to remember more. Consequently, pupils find it difficult to recall key information.

The school has made reading a priority throughout the school. There is a sharp focus on the teaching of phonics for pupils at the early stages of learning to read. Well-trained staff follow a consistent approach to teaching phonics. This helps most pupils to gain the knowledge and skills they need to become confident and fluent readers. Leaders check pupils' progress in reading at regular intervals. If pupils fall behind in reading, staff provide support. For example, adults use 'pinny time' to help pupils to practise reading the sounds taught so far. This means most pupils catch up quickly. Pupils read for pleasure, both at school and at home.

Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum whenever possible. Leaders use advice from professionals to support pupils with SEND well. Adults provide adaptations and resources, for example the use of talk partners, to help pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers. As a result, most pupils with SEND make good progress.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Right from the start in early years, staff have established routines that pupils know and follow. For example, this may range from a 'good morning' smile to being noted on the class recognition board. Pupils get on well with each other. Respect is important to pupils. It is seen in their relationships with each other and with adults in school. Pupils are courteous and well-mannered across the school day.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities to enhance pupils' broader development. Pupils are proud to take on responsibilities, such as becoming a school councillor. They enjoy contributing to school life. Pupils take part in a social action week, which encourages them to consider the needs of others. During this week, pupils focus on what they can do to make a difference and act accordingly. For example, pupils raised money for homeless children. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep safe when working or playing online.

Leaders from the MAC and those within school make a cohesive team. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their well-being and workload when new initiatives are introduced. For example, staff feel that the newly developed assessment systems contribute positively to staff's work-life balance.

Governors know the school's strengths and areas that need further development. As a group, they challenge and hold leaders to account. This is overseen by MAC directors, who have a full and accurate view of what is happening.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is relatively new, and teachers are not yet skilled at implementing it in a way that helps pupils learn and remember more key information. This means that, in some cases, pupils cannot demonstrate and recall previous learning when needed. The school should continue to ensure that all teachers are able to accurately implement the new curriculum in a way that helps pupils to embed new learning into their long-term memory across all subjects.

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	147344
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10294667
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	319
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Teahan
Headteacher	Sarah Collins
Website	www.stm.hccmac.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Holy Cross Catholic Multi-Academy Company.
- The school is a Roman Catholic school. The most recent section 48 inspection, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in November 2021.
- The school runs its own breakfast club and after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- St Thomas More Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy in September 2019. When its predecessor school, St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

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 headteacher, the Catholic senior executive leader and school senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the school governing body and the MAC. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority and held a telephone call with a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, computing and history. For each deep dive, the 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 also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. They spoke to pupils about their opinions of behaviour at the school.
- 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 considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. The inspectors also took account of responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Karen O'Keefe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Hughes	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Gilbert	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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