

Inspection of St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Tile Barn Close, Cove, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 8LS

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils bubble with excitement when talking about their school. They engage eagerly and confidently in conversations. They know that their views are important and that staff listen to them. Pupils are proud of the rich diversity of the school community, which is celebrated and valued.

Mostly, pupils are polite, respectful and understanding of the needs of others. Pupils move sensibly around the school. They hold doors open and greet people with a cheery 'good morning'. Routines that help the school to be a calm and orderly environment are quickly established in Reception.

Pupils are keen to do well. Most listen to their teachers attentively and share their opinions and knowledge enthusiastically. The school's expectations of learning and behaviour are high, and pupils strive to meet them. Occasionally, however, a few pupils can behave less well.

Pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy. They have strong knowledge about how to stay safe online. A wide range of clubs including choir, Latin and 'young engineers' helps to expand pupils' interests and nurture their talents. Pupils are proud of their contributions to the wider life of the school, taking on roles such as lunchtime monitors, school councillors and house captains. They discharge their responsibilities diligently and thoughtfully.

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

The school has worked in close partnership with the federation and local authority effectively to improve the curriculum. An ambitious, well-ordered curriculum is now in place which meets the needs of all pupils well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has a secure overview of how the curriculum connects and builds, right from the start in early years.

Teachers have had well-targeted training which is helping them to deliver the planned curriculum confidently and effectively. In some subjects, such as English and mathematics, teachers make regular checks on what pupils understand and remember. These checks help teachers to accurately match learning to pupils' needs and ensure that any gaps in pupils' knowledge are quickly identified and closed. The needs of pupils with SEND or those for whom English is an additional language are well supported. Pupils attain well in English and mathematics.

Teachers' approaches to checking what pupils know and remember across the wider curriculum are developing. In some subjects, such as history, regular recap and review of pupils' knowledge helps them to connect and build on their learning. In other subjects however, such as computing, this is not yet consistent across the school. This means pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Learning to read is evidently and rightly a priority. The school has ensured that a systematic approach to the teaching of early reading is in place. Staff quickly spot any pupils who start to fall behind. Effective support from well-trained staff helps these pupils to catch up quickly. Right from the start in Reception, pupils are confident, proficient and engaged readers. Pupils are excited by reading and the high-quality texts that they are introduced to. For example, Year 6 pupils were immersed in studying 'Macbeth'. They used their knowledge to write evocative descriptions of settings in the play. Pupils develop a love of reading through the wide range of stories, poems and texts they are exposed to.

The school has ensured that a clear behaviour policy is in place to help staff manage behaviour. Mostly, this is applied consistently and works well. Occasionally, some staff are less consistent in their application of the policy. When this happens, a few pupils do not always demonstrate the high standards of behaviour that are the norm. The school takes effective action when necessary.

Pupils develop strong links to their community through well-planned enrichment opportunities, trips and visits. For example, children in Reception were delighted when the postman delivered letters they had written, addressed and taken to the local post office themselves. Older pupils exchange letters with local care home residents before inviting them into school.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the professional development they receive and the support they experience. Governors are skilled. They have strong knowledge of the school, which is underpinned by appropriate training. They evaluate a range of information from a range of sources to build a strong picture of what the school is doing well and the next steps that are needed.

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 foundation subjects, teachers do not systematically check what pupils know and remember. This makes it hard to identify gaps and to match learning to pupils' needs. The school should continue to support staff in checking pupils learning so that they can adapt and build on pupils' prior knowledge effectively.
- Occasionally, the behaviour policy is not implemented consistently by staff when pupils' behaviour falls below the school's high expectations. This makes it harder for pupils to understand and meet expectations. The school should continue to provide all staff with the support they need to understand and implement the policy so that high standards of behaviour are consistent across the school.

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	116391
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10296233
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	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ged Owens
Headteacher	Paula Dix (executive headteacher) Peter Lynch (head of school)
Website	http://www.st-bernadettes.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is federated with St Patricks Catholic Primary School. Both schools are under the leadership of an executive headteacher and share a governing body.
- The school has restructured and now has one class in each year group.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The last Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was in June 2023.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, the inspectors met with school leaders. The lead inspector also met with the representatives of the governing body, held a separate meeting with a representative from the local authority and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing, history and art. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils read.
- 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 inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff surveys.
- The inspectors talked to staff to gather their views about the school, including their workload and well-being. The inspectors met with several groups of pupils, as well as speaking to pupils during lessons, playtimes and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Judith O'Hare	Ofsted Inspector
Owen McColgan	Ofsted Inspector

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