

# Inspection of a good school: St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Bloxwich

Lichfield Road, Bloxwich, Walsall, West Midlands WS3 3LY

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Inspection dates:

27 and 28 February 2024

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and valued at St Peter's Catholic Primary School. One pupil, reflecting the views of many, commented, 'Teachers have a smile on their face when we come into school each morning.' Pupils speak highly about the school, the leadership of the headteacher and the adults that work with them.

Leaders and staff want the best for pupils. They are working hard to continue improving outcomes in reading and mathematics. Further work is required to help pupils reach higher standards in writing.

Pupils behave well in lessons and learn collaboratively. Breaktimes are well organised and fun. Pupils play ball games, dance and use a range of equipment. Pupils are not concerned about bullying because it does not happen often. When it does, teachers deal with incidents quickly. A few pupils sometimes find it difficult to follow the school rules. They are well supported by staff and are helped to make the right choices.

Pupils learn to be responsible citizens. They contribute to the local community by raising funds for charities and supporting local food banks. Pupils benefit from a range of clubs, for example Zumba, rugby and multi-sports. They can also participate in musical instrument tuition and perform in school concerts.

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

New leaders have focused on strengthening different aspects of the school's work. Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and priorities for improvement. They have actively sought external scrutiny and support to help them make the necessary changes. The school is moving forward in the right direction.

The school's approach to teaching phonics helps pupils to become confident readers. Children start to learn about the sounds that letters make as soon as they join the school. Struggling pupils catch up quickly. This is because adults provide them with extra help and listen to pupils read regularly. Pupils' achievements in reading are celebrated weekly. Pupils who receive a reading certificate look forward to the chance of winning a reading book that they can keep.

The mathematics curriculum is carefully sequenced. Children make a strong start in the early years by learning about numbers. On 'Welly Wednesdays', teachers plan practical outdoor maths activities to support children's understanding. For example, children search for different branches and then arrange them from shortest to longest. Pupils of all ages enjoy mathematics. Older pupils learn to solve problems and explain how they arrived at an answer. Teachers meet the needs of different pupils well by adjusting mathematics lessons.

Pupils' achievement in writing is not as high as in reading and mathematics. The teaching of writing varies. Where writing is taught well, pupils learn to write for different audiences and to pay attention to grammar, punctuation and spelling. Some pupils' handwriting is variable. This affects the quality and presentation of pupils' written work in books.

Together with staff, leaders have implemented a revised curriculum in the wider subjects. This curriculum is well planned. It reflects the school's high ambition for all pupils. However, pupils have some gaps in knowledge and skills because the curriculum has not been in place long enough to enable them to cover the knowledge set out from one year to the next.

Teachers use assessments well to check what pupils know and to identify any gaps in learning. They adapt lessons and support pupils well by providing additional prompts. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has recently improved, and at pace. Leaders now make sure that pupils' needs are identified, and pupils receive the help they need to achieve well.

Attendance is improving steadily. Staff keep a close check on absences. They support families and put in place appropriate procedures to address poor attendance.

The personal development curriculum helps pupils to learn how to keep safe, including online. Pupils understand the importance of equality. This is evident in the way pupils treat each other and adults with respect.

Many parents are positive about the work of the school. They are grateful for the time leaders and staff take to listen to them. They also value the parent workshops. A small number of parents have a negative view of the school. Leaders are aware of this and are keen to engage even more effectively with the school community.

Most staff have embraced the much-needed changes at the school. They appreciate the ongoing actions leaders are taking to support their workload and well-being. Schemes of work, for example, have reduced planning time.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not enough pupils reach the expected standard in writing. This is because some pupils have not yet developed the skills to write for different audiences, to use punctuation and grammar skills correctly, or write neatly. The school should ensure that the teaching of writing helps pupils to build up these skills.
- The changes to the wider curriculum planning are recent. As a result, pupils have historical gaps in their learning. The school should continue to embed the curriculum plans so that pupils' knowledge and skills develop securely year on year.
- Some parents have mixed views of the school's work. They commented that communication from the school is not as effective as it could be. The school should strengthen its communication with parents so that parents feel fully informed about the actions leaders are taking in response to any concerns and the improvements leaders are making.

## 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 St Peter's Catholic school to be good in October 2013.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104234
<b>Local authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294511
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	221
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Katherine Yardley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heather Taylor
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-peters.walsall.sch.uk/">www.st-peters.walsall.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in January 2023. The deputy headteacher and the special educational needs and/or coordinator (SENDCo) took up their roles in January 2024.
- There is a before-and-after school club run by the school on site.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was in February 2023.

## 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 have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the school's SENDCo and other leaders.

- The inspector met with governors and had a telephone conversation with a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. Inspection activities in these deep dives included looking at samples of pupils' work, lesson visits, meetings with subject leaders, and discussions with staff and pupils. The inspector also observed pupils reading and discussed the curriculum in some other subjects, including writing.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at breaktimes. Pupils were asked about their views of the school, their learning, behaviour and safety.
- 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 the responses to the Ofsted Parent View online survey. The inspector also considered the responses to the survey for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Usha Devi, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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