

Inspection of a good school: Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School

Hurst Lane, Shard End, Birmingham, West Midlands B34 7HN

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 February 2024

Outcome

Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

The executive headteacher of this school is Helen Milligan. 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.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a haven of calm at the heart of its local community. Leaders have created a friendly and welcoming place for pupils to live out the school's ethos. Pupils feel safe and are highly positive about their experiences. They enjoy working with their teachers, learning new things and they achieve well. Pupils actively care for each other and work together well in lessons. They contribute greatly to making the school a unique place to learn.

Wider opportunities for pupils in the school and beyond are plentiful. This includes a variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs, as well as representing the school in a range of sporting activities. Pupils enjoy taking up leadership roles, such as house captain or being part of the school council. Many of them contribute in meaningful and active ways to the life of the school and wider community.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them. They are given opportunities to learn this and how to have positive relationships with others. Pupils are mature and courteous, including when moving around the school and at breaktime. Pupils learn the expected routines well from the start of their time at Guardian Angels. They talk politely to each other and play well together.

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

High ambition for all, particularly pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is a golden thread through the curriculum. Teachers benefit from the centrally planned curriculum in all subjects. They have detailed subject knowledge and appreciate the support they get to develop as teachers and leaders. The knowledge to be gained by

pupils has been carefully sequenced and is actively shared with them. There is a precise progression from what the children learn in Reception and how that helps them in the future.

All pupils experience an effective curriculum. This helps them to know and remember more. Staff give pupils opportunities to regularly reflect on their work. Teachers present information clearly for all pupils. However, on some occasions, teachers move pupils on to new learning before their knowledge has been checked. This leads to gaps in pupils' understanding. So, some pupils struggle to express their learning securely over time.

The school is determined that every pupil will learn to read, regardless of their background, needs or abilities. Pupils engage very well in phonics activities. Leaders have implemented a highly consistent approach to teaching phonics. Children in Reception learn the sounds that letters make from the very start of their time in school. Pupils use the phonics strategies they know to break down unfamiliar words into their individual sounds. They learn to read with increasing fluency and accuracy. Older pupils receive bespoke support as they need it to develop their reading ability further. All this helps pupils to develop into confident and fluent readers.

Pupils are keen to do well in all aspects of school life. They are calm in classrooms and are considerate in their conversations with each other. Pupils benefit from the opportunities they have to discuss ideas. They enjoy talking about what they are learning in lessons. Staff manage pupils' concentration well and reward positive behaviour through house points. Pupils consistently meet the high expectations of the school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well considered. They benefit from the 'All Saints Children's Charter' to enhance their life experiences, which includes targeted support for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils learn how to keep safe and in detail about healthy relationships. The school takes every opportunity to develop pupils' understanding of the world through a carefully planned curriculum. Educational visits and experiences beyond the classroom enhance pupils' learning well.

Leaders at all levels are aware of what the school needs to improve. They are relentless and reflective in their drive for improvement. Staff enjoy working in the close-knit team and know their workload and well-being is always considered by leaders. The school engages very well with the local community. The school contributes across the trust and works well with external agencies.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' understanding is not always checked well enough before moving on to the next part of the curriculum. As a result, pupils have some gaps in their knowledge. The

school should ensure that teachers check pupils' understanding consistently well. This will enable pupils to build knowledge more effectively over time.

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 the predecessor school, Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School, to be good in November 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 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	148081
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10294692
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of directors	Paul Bentley
Executive Headteacher	Helen Milligan
Website	www.grdangel.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy in April 2021. When its predecessor school, Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the of Our Lady and All Saints Catholic Multi-Academy Company.
- The school's last Section 48 inspection was in February 2019.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school, governors, directors, a representative from the diocese, senior leaders, subject leaders,

teachers and pupils. They also talked informally to pupils, parents and staff to gather general information about school life.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. 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.
- 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 reviewed the personal, social, health and economic education curriculum plan, spoke with leaders and visited breakfast club.
- The inspector looked at records and spoke to staff in relation to attendance, behaviour and bullying.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including leaders' plans to improve the school and their self-evaluation of the school's work.
- The inspector took account of responses to the pupil and staff surveys, as well as Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Richard Wakefield, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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