

# Inspection of an outstanding school: St Kentigern's RC Primary School, a Voluntary Academy

Bethnall Drive, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 7ED

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Inspection dates:

12 and 13 March 2024

## Outcome

St Kentigern's RC Primary School, a Voluntary Academy, continues to be an outstanding school.

The headteacher of this school is Madeline Muldoon. This school is part of the Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Daniel Copley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Catherine Anderson.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Kentigern's epitomise the school's aims and values. They are happy, confident, caring, knowledgeable and resilient. Pupils take great delight in welcoming visitors into school. Pupils' behaviour is exceptional in lessons and around school. They are proud of their accomplishments and enjoy talking about their learning.

Staff expect pupils to achieve highly. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and children in the early years, respond exceptionally well to staff's aspirations. Pupils, across the school, excel across the curriculum.

Pupils have an in-depth understanding of fundamental British values. They celebrate the differences between people. For example, they understand that people should not be treated unfairly because of their beliefs, gender or family background. Pupils are active citizens who raise funds for local, national and international worthy causes.

Pupils regularly compete in sporting tournaments. They benefit from specialist tutoring which helps to develop their artistic and acting talents. Pupils visit many different places of interest including art galleries and museums. They are especially keen on outdoor activities, including walking, orienteering and rock climbing.

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

The school offers a broad, balanced and highly ambitious curriculum, which is enriched with memorable experiences. The curriculum is very well ordered so that pupils' knowledge and skills build securely and highly effectively over time. This begins in the Reception class where children positively flourish. Children are highly communicative and show high levels of concentration, curiosity and enjoyment.

The school is familiar with up-to-date curriculum research and practice, which underpins its thinking. The curriculum is delivered confidently by well-trained and ambitious teachers. They frequently review pupils' understanding and swiftly provide help to the small minority of pupils who need extra support to keep up with their peers.

Reading is front and centre of the school's curriculum. Many staff are reading and phonics experts, who enjoy sharing their favourite novels and poems with pupils. Children in the Nursery class enjoy singing nursery rhymes and learning new sounds and words. The school makes sure that staff get the training that they need to teach the phonics and early reading curriculum with expert knowledge and confidence. Staff are careful to make certain that the books that pupils read closely match the letters and sounds that they know. Those who need additional help are supported well. This allows these pupils to develop their reading and comprehension skills quickly.

Pupils across the school love to spend time in class reading areas where they enjoy sharing and reading books together. Pupils are familiar with the work of a wide range of authors. They enjoy exploring the many books available to them in the new school library. Pupils become fluent readers over time and read with excellent expression.

Well-established procedures are in place to identify pupils' individual learning needs early. Staff work closely with parents and carers, and a broad range of specialists, to make sure that pupils with SEND get the help that they need swiftly and effectively. Staff adapt the delivery of the curriculum effectively so that pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Throughout the school, pupils with SEND make strong progress across the curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour is praiseworthy. The school is a calm and purposeful place of learning. Pupils are highly attentive in class. Children in the early years are especially responsive to staff. Children perform actions to songs and sing along enthusiastically to refrains during story time.

The school enhances pupils' personal and social development exceedingly well. Pupils thrive in the many opportunities that the school provides to make a strong contribution to school life and the wider world. For example, they take on leadership roles such as reading buddies and school librarians. Eco-council members are committed to conserving the environment. They lead on paper and battery recycling initiatives.

Pupils have an exceptional understanding of mental health issues. They have access to sensory spaces in classes and in the 'Oasis', where they can gather their thoughts and reflect on their feelings. Pupils eat healthily and exercise regularly. They pursue their

interests through a wide range of different clubs such as sporting, drama, music, choir, coding and art clubs.

Governors and members of the trust have an in-depth understanding of what the school does well. They help the school to continually improve. Staff feel valued. They benefit from a wide range of training and professional development from specialists within the trust. The school ensures that staff's workload and well-being are prioritised. For example, the school makes sure that staff workload is considered before curriculum changes are introduced.

Parents regularly participate in phonics and mathematics workshops. Typically, they are of the view that their children are content and safe and that they achieve well.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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, of the same name, to be outstanding in September 2017.

## **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>	149453
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10290398
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	455
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Catherine Anderson
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Daniel Copley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Madeline Muldoon
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-kentigerns.manchester.sch.uk">www.st-kentigerns.manchester.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Kentigern's RC Primary School converted to become an academy in December 2022. When the predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted in September 2017, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- This school is part of the Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary controlled Roman Catholic school. The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character was conducted in March 2024. The next section 48 inspection is scheduled to take place before March 2029.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. He also held meetings with other staff, including those responsible for SEND, attendance and pupils' behaviour, welfare and personal development.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body. He also met with the CEO and the chair and vice-chair of the trust, as well as the director of primary education and the senior executive leader for primary schools.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, he discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.
- The inspector met with pupils to discuss their learning in some other subjects. He spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector met with parents and reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- 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.

## Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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