

# Inspection of a good school: St Giles Catholic Primary School

Charles Street, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST10 1ED

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Inspection dates:

12 and 13 March 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 be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The executive principal of this school is Gillian Wretham. This school is part of The Painsley Catholic Academy, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Stephen Bell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ken Wilson. There is also a head of school, Claire Wilkin, who is responsible for this school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

There is a culture of high expectations and care at St Giles Catholic Primary School. Pupils flourish. Leaders, staff, and parents and carers share the motto of 'better together'. Pupils excel educationally, personally and socially. One parent's comment, typical of many, was that 'the school encourages my child to be his best self.'

Pupils live up to the staff's high expectations of learning and behaviour. They behave exceptionally well. Underpinning all of this is the school's Catholic values. Pupils believe that these are important and say that 'we need these to live a good life.' They learn about many different cultures and beliefs and are highly tolerant and respectful.

There is a wealth of opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. Pupils working with staff have requested and developed some of these opportunities, including a laser tag and chess club. Individual pupils' talents are also celebrated. The school supports parents well in finding specialist providers, such as the Royal Ballet, to develop these further.

Older pupils value the leadership roles they are given in school. They apply for and are voted for by their peers to be school councillors, house captains and sports leaders. They take these roles seriously.

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

The school's curriculum is well designed. It is highly ambitious, and includes a wide range of subjects for all the pupils to learn. All subjects are taught every week. The school has identified the essential knowledge and skills that pupils should learn in each subject. This learning builds effectively over time. This helps pupils remember important knowledge and use it well. For example, in design and technology, children in reception learn how to join materials using glue. In key stage 1, they learn how to join materials in other ways, such as by using stitching. This is further developed in key stage 2, where they learn different stitching patterns and are taught to apply them carefully.

Teachers help pupils remember their learning in various ways. This is based on the trust's 'Painsley' model. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to practise and apply what they have learned. They use assessment well to ensure that any gaps or misconceptions are addressed. All of this means that pupils learn the knowledge that the school intends very well.

Pupils enjoy a range of well-planned visits that enhance their learning. These visits are planned regularly across the curriculum. Pupils feel that these visits help them to learn. For example, they recall how a visit to a supermarket helped them to understand fair trade in geography.

The school emphasises the importance of all pupils being able to read. Librarians are diligent. They take care of books and read regularly to other pupils at lunchtime. Pupils love to be read to and join in enthusiastically with stories. Older pupils are keen to read aloud to their classmates. Staff teach phonics consistently and well. They ensure that the books pupils read are well matched to the sounds they learn in lessons. This enables pupils to practise the sounds and helps build fluency. Adults carefully check pupils' progress in reading. Extra support is swiftly put in place if needed so that pupils do not fall behind. This enables pupils to become confident and fluent readers quickly.

Staff swiftly identify barriers for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All pupils have their needs met well. For example, some pupils with specific writing difficulties are supported through the use of technology to record their learning. This means pupils with SEND also benefit from the excellent curriculum provided.

The school has constructed a coherently planned personal development programme. This is woven through all aspects of school life. This programme enables pupils to learn about other cultures and beliefs and how their community is different from others. Pupils learn how to be creative and resilient and have positive attitudes. There is a focus on developing these attributes during playtimes and lunchtimes. Staff are very well trained in supporting this.

Governors and directors use their skills and expertise to improve the school continually. They know what the school does well, and they work with leaders and pupils to consider how to make things even better. Leaders value the staff and are proactive in promoting their well-being. Staff recognise and appreciate this. There is a strong, shared vision and teamwork among all the adults in the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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 school to be good in April 2014.

## 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>	138724
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10322838
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of directors
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Ken Wilson
<b>Executive Principal</b>	Gillian Wretham
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-giles.staffs.sch.uk">www.st-giles.staffs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school operates a before- and after-school provision.
- The school is part of The Painsley Catholic Academy, which consists of 16 schools.
- The school is within the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2022. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place within five years of its last inspection.
- The inspector was aware during this inspection of a serious incident involving a child who used to attend this setting that had occurred since the previous inspection. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the incident were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform the inspector's judgements.

## 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 his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the executive principal and the head of school. He also met three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He met two directors, including the chair of the trust. The inspector also held meetings with the CEO of the trust.
- 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 carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and design and technology. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and viewed examples of pupils' work. The inspector also examined pupils' work in science, history and geography.
- The inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 read to a trusted adult.
- The inspector spoke with members of staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspector considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. He also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys. The inspector spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school improvement priorities, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, behaviour records, attendance records and minutes of meetings held by the governing body and trust.

## Inspection team

Barry Yeadsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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