

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary Academy

Graiseley Lane, Wednesfield, Graiseley Lane, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, West
Midlands WV11 1PG

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Sophia Mulrooney. This school is part of St Francis and St Clare multi academy company (MAC), which means other people in the MAC also have responsibility for running the school. The responsible member for the MAC is Christopher Walker, who is the chair of the board of directors.

What is it like to attend this school?

The dedication shown by all at St Patrick's to improve this school has ensured that pupils now receive a high-quality education. All members of the community are united in their belief that this is a 'great school to attend' and feel lucky to be part of this 'family'.

Pupils are safe and happy because of the kind and caring relationships they form with each other and adults. Pupils do well in their learning because their social and emotional needs are so well met. Disadvantaged pupils do particularly well in their learning. This is an inclusive school where pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) take part in all activities on offer.

Classrooms are calm places to learn. Pupils show increasing independence and excitement when learning new things. They listen attentively and provide thoughtful answers when asked challenging questions. Pupils greet visitors with a smile and demonstrate a willingness to discuss the many opportunities they are provided and their views of the school.

Pupils enjoy being given the opportunity to decide what clubs they are offered with dodgeball, wheelchair basketball and art club being their favourites. Receiving a 'golden ticket' provides extra motivation to try new activities, all designed to develop confidence and physical well-being.

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

A strong and highly effective partnership between school and trust leaders has enabled sustained and considerable improvement to the quality of education on offer to be made. There is a 'can-do' culture at this school and expectations of what can be achieved are 'without limits'. A key feature of the school's success has been how they have trained all staff with the skills needed to deliver the curriculum effectively. Staff know that their contributions make a difference and feel that, despite significant changes, their workload and well-being really matter to school leaders and the trust.

There is a completely new curriculum in place, with learning sequences designed to include knowledge that is linked to the local area and needs of the pupils. There are clear knowledge endpoints that the school want pupils to learn with knowledge building progressively over time. Staff 'reactivate' prior learning at the start of a new lesson to assess what pupils have remembered. However, not all staff are consistently checking pupils' understanding as learning takes place or responding to misconceptions as they arise, meaning some pupils continue to make the same mistakes at a later point.

Reading is a high priority. The school have purchased extensive reading materials that excite the imaginations of many pupils. Children learn to read from the first days in school and many go on to grasp phonics by the time they leave key stage 1.

The school have identified that more work is needed to develop how fluently the weakest readers can read, knowing that this will support their ability to understand what they have read.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. Developing children's communication and language skills is a high priority. The school successfully achieve this by linking the curriculum to the interests and needs of the children. A key success is how well children are able to regulate their emotions. This is achieved because staff form close relationships and help children to feel secure quickly. Many leave the early years showing that they can concentrate for long periods of time and a readiness for more formal learning.

Pupils with SEND are increasingly well supported. A new leader has worked well to develop new systems that now more successfully identify and assess the needs of pupils with SEND. Learning is adapted to support pupils to access the same curriculum as their peers. Support plans are in place to remove barriers to learning, however, not all pupils have plans that identify precisely enough what is needed to help them to be successful in their learning.

Pupils behave well and know that being kind is the most important thing to be. They use 'kind words and hands' and see their responsibility in making their school a nice place to be. They talk enthusiastically about opportunities they are provided and are increasingly resilient to setbacks when learning becomes a challenge. Most attend school regularly with the school successfully supporting parents to understand the importance of attending school. The welfare team build strong relationships with families and remove barriers to pupils coming to school on time and regularly.

Pupils know the importance of being tolerant and active citizens and understand that being different is to be celebrated. They help others by raising money for local families in need and know how to keep themselves safe online and in the real world. It is an exciting time to be part of the St Patrick's community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all staff consistently check pupils' understanding as learning takes place or respond to misconceptions as they arise. This means that some pupils make the same mistakes and do not build secure knowledge as well as they might. The school should continue to ensure that all staff know the importance of checking pupils' understanding.

- Some of the weakest readers are not supported to develop their reading fluency quickly enough. As a result, they struggle to comprehend what they read, affecting their enjoyment and understanding. The school should ensure that all staff develop an understanding of how to support pupils to read fluently at the earliest point.
- Not all pupils with SEND have support plans that identify precisely enough what is needed to support them to be successful in their learning. Consequently, targets do not focus on the specific small steps required to help them to progress. The school should ensure that staff are supported to use new systems as intended and monitor the effectiveness of support plans.

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	147630
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10322916
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	242
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christopher Walker
Principal	Sophia Mulrooney
Website	https://stpatrickscpa.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- This school is one of a religious character and, therefore, received a section 48 inspection in June 2023. It will receive the next inspection in 2028.
- The school runs a breakfast club provision.

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.
- 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.

- Inspectors met with a range of leaders, including those responsible for the curriculum, teaching and learning, behaviour, attendance, personal development and safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector also heard a selection of pupils read from Years 1, 2 and 3.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The lead inspector spoke with the chair of trustees and two members of the trust board. He also spoke to the chair of the local board.
- The lead inspector spoke to the diocese school improvement adviser.
- The lead inspector also spoke to the chief executive officer, director of education and academy improvement leader.
- Inspectors considered the survey responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments from parents.
- Inspectors considered the responses to staff and pupils' surveys.

Inspection team

Tony Bradshaw, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tim Bassett

Ofsted Inspector

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