

# Inspection of a good school: St Martin De Porres Catholic Primary School

Pastures Way, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 0PF

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Inspection dates:

3 and 4 July 2024

## Outcome

St Martin De Porres Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

There are two co-headteachers of this school. They are Annette Barnaville and Hayley Gallagher. This school is part of St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Joe Richardson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Catherine Davies.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are notably happy at this school. They talk excitedly about how much they enjoy it here. There is a culture of respect. Pupils embody the virtues the school teaches. For instance, pupils learn about service. They help at food banks, and support peers in class.

Staff have high expectations for what pupils will learn. Pupils enjoy learning and take pride in what they do. Consequently, they produce impressive work and achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils receive the support they need to succeed.

Behaviour is purposeful throughout the day. Pupils concentrate and work hard. Children in the early years learn how to manage their feelings well and develop independence. Pupils are kind to each other. They are confident that any unkindness will be addressed swiftly by staff. In this safe culture, pupils become friendly, polite and confident.

Pupils come from diverse backgrounds. The school regularly celebrates this. At special events, pupils and parents champion their various cultures and ethnicities. Pupils learn a lot about those from differing contexts, such as other religions. They demonstrate humanitarian as well as Catholic values. This prepares them well for life in a changing world.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Its aims are well defined. Pupils learn skills such as critical thinking, leadership and teamwork, ready for secondary school. Subject leaders

plan pupils' progress step-by-step from the early years. In most areas, this means pupils develop detailed knowledge. In mathematics, pupils are assured with calculations, and in using these to solve a range of different problems. That said, in a few areas the school has not effectively identified and taught the most important content pupils need. In history, for instance, pupils know somewhat disconnected facts rather than having a web of connected knowledge. The school has begun to address this, but they have plenty to do to improve it as they wish.

Staff teach the curriculum well. They receive high-quality training from the trust and subject leaders. Teachers explain new content clearly. In most lessons, they make sure misconceptions are addressed before moving forwards. Consequently, pupils know and can do more over time, for example those in Year 2 use conjunctions, and in Year 4 use these in more complex sentences. While this is the case, sometimes tasks are not well adjusted for pupils' different levels of prior knowledge. Where this happens, some understand the learning quickly, but others get stuck. Staff generally pick up on this, but some pupils do not learn as well as they might.

Staff teach reading consistently well. Pupils quickly learn to read with fluency. This includes those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils use their phonics knowledge to write, such as well-structured sentences in Year 1. The love of reading is a focus across the school. Older pupils talk with enthusiasm about the library and the books they read.

Pupils with SEND receive strong support. The school has seen needs rise sharply. The 'hub' helps children with complex SEND to access the curriculum. For instance, they learn to sit still, develop their language skills and do tasks independently. In class, teachers adapt learning well for pupils with SEND. These pupils build up their knowledge, such as their writing and mathematical skills. Consequently, they do well and are proud of what they achieve.

The school culture supports very positive behaviour. Clear routines help children in the early years to behave calmly. Pupils respond well to the frequent rewards and celebration of their success. They benefit from nurturing relationships with staff. Pupils want to be in school so they attend regularly and enthusiastically.

There is a well-considered programme for personal development. The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe. For example, pupils learn how to avoid online risks. They praise the lengths the school goes to safeguard them, such as regarding road safety. Pupils enjoy a range of leadership opportunities. They suggest many of the clubs which take place, such as ballet. These experiences help pupils build their characters, such as their resilience and independence.

Staff value the collaborative ethos. They see how they are part of a team that helps pupils succeed. Workload is manageable because the curriculum is well planned.

The trust gives the school effective support. For instance, it has supported the new co-headteachers' role and development. Trustees and governors keep a close oversight of provision. This has helped improve areas such as support for SEND.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In a few areas of the curriculum, the school does not identify and teach the most important knowledge effectively enough. This means that, in these areas, pupils remember disconnected facts rather than developing a connected web of knowledge. The school needs to ensure it identifies the most important knowledge pupils need to know in all areas of the curriculum and teaches this in a way that helps pupils build up deep and rich knowledge.
- Teachers do not always adapt what they teach successfully according to pupils' levels of prior knowledge. This means that some pupils can struggle to understand the learning. The school should make sure teachers get the guidance and support they need to pitch learning more precisely to differing levels of knowledge, so that pupils make better progress.

## 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in 4–5 December 2018.

## 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>	142264
<b>Local authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10345415
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	421
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Catherine Davies
<b>CEO of trust</b>	Joe Richardson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Annette Barnaville and Hayley Gallagher
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmartindeporesluton.co.uk">www.stmartindeporesluton.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	4 and 5 December 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust.
- There are two co-headteachers. They were both appointed in September 2023.
- The school has a Catholic character. It was last inspected under Section 48 of the Education Act in June 2023. There will be another inspection within seven years.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

## 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 leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the co-headteacher, other school leaders, staff, and pupils. As part of evaluating governance, he spoke with the chair of the trust, the chair of

governors, and another trustee. The inspector met with the CEO and the school improvement advisor from the trust.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: English including early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, he discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, met with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also evaluated the curriculum in some other subjects, particularly history, geography and science.
- As part of evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector met with leaders, governors, staff and pupils. He scrutinised the school's single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. The inspector considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documents, including curriculum plans, school development plans, minutes of local academy committee meetings, and documentation for behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's questionnaires for parents, pupils and staff. He also considered responses to the school's own parent survey.

### **Inspection team**

Charlie Fordham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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