

Inspection of St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

St Mary's Street, Bungay, Suffolk NR35 1AY

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 July 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The headteacher of this school is Samantha Barlow. This school is part of St. John the Baptist Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Kim Payne, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ruth Hollis.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have a strong sense of community in this small school. Pupils are kind and respectful. They know the school has high expectations of them. This means pupils try their best. They acquire positive character traits through the 'Joy of Not Knowing' (JONK). Pupils work hard to earn JONK certificates and house points. Pupils develop curiosity and a reflective attitude to their work. This helps them realise success with new learning. Pupils are happy and safe at school.

Pupils know the school's rules. The school takes decisive action if the behaviour of pupils disrupts learning. Pupils embrace the school values of ready, respectful and safe throughout the school. This means lessons are rarely interrupted and pupils focus on learning.

Pupils develop leadership skills. They volunteer as a 'Minnie Vinnie' to set up play equipment and keep the school tidy. Pupils understand democracy. They elect school council representatives and appreciate the events they organise, especially those that raise funds for people less fortunate than themselves. Pupils learn new sports in after-school clubs and develop new interests. Pupils also lead their own clubs. This extends their talents, as well as their peers.

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

The school has a broad and ambitious curriculum. Over the past two years, some of the curriculum has been reviewed. This has improved the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. This has made a positive difference to pupils' achievements in key stage 1. Some of these changes have not yet had an impact on the outcomes of previous cohorts and are not reflected in the published outcomes of 2023 for key stage 2.

The curriculum sets out the important knowledge pupils should learn and when it should be learned. Pupils revisit key topics. This helps pupils remember more because they make connections with their previous learning. For example, pupils talk with confidence about learning in science and they remember sketching techniques they recently learned in art.

Well-trained staff teach reading well. Pupils read books matched to the sounds they know. This helps develop fluency. Pupils learn, early on, to read with expression. Teachers are quick to identify pupils who are not keeping up with the phonics programme. Extra help enables pupils to catch up well. The focus on pupils' learning new words helps broaden their vocabulary. Pupils apply this in their written work.

The school has experienced a period of staff turbulence. This has led to variability in the quality of pupils' work and what is expected of them. This means some pupils do not progress in their learning as quickly as they could. In some subjects, historical gaps in pupils' learning have not been identified. This is because leaders have not checked these as systematically as they do in English and mathematics. Despite this,

and the school's low published outcomes last year, the impact of the school's review of the curriculum and leaders' actions to support less experienced teachers is evident in the achievements pupils are now realising.

The school has an above-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils learning needs are well considered. Adaptations to learning help them complete tasks in lessons with their peers.

Pupils behave well. They are polite and respectful. Leaders set clear expectations for behaviour. Bullying is rare and it is dealt with if it happens.

The school promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils understand responsibility by helping others and visiting the local care home. Pupils show respect for different views and beliefs. The local area is used well to enhance pupils' learning through visits to the local castle and river.

Leaders at all levels know the school well. They have worked together to improve the curriculum. Leaders understand the impact of staff turbulence on parents' confidence in the school and are working to renew this. Staff feel well supported by leaders and appreciate the training they have.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some instances, the quality of pupils' work and what is expected of them in their learning is not consistent. This results in some pupils, particularly more able or disadvantaged pupils not making as much progress as they could. Leaders should ensure they focus on further developing teachers' subject knowledge so that their vision for the curriculum can be fully realised in practice.
- In some foundation subjects, the quality and content of pupils' learning is not systematically checked. In these subjects, this means that historical gaps in pupils' learning are not identified as quickly they could be so that pupils secure the learning intended. Leaders should ensure that pupils' understanding in these subjects is checked in a systematic way so that any gaps in learning can be addressed.

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	142770
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10323766
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ruth Hollis
CEO of the trust	Kim Payne
Headteacher	Samantha Barlow
Website	www.st-edmundsrc.suffolk.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the St. John the Baptist Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, which consists of ten schools. The school is federated with St Benet's Catholic Primary School in the trust.
- This school is a Catholic primary school. The last section 48 inspection took place on 17 May 2022 and received a good outcome. The next inspection will take place in three years.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, relevant subject leaders, the chair of trustees, representatives from the local governing body, including the chair and vice-chair, the chief executive officer and deputy chief executive officer.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, art, 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. The lead inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects and looked at a sample of pupils' work across year groups and observed pupils reading.
- The lead inspector reviewed information on the school's website, including school policies and information about the curriculum.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leads to discuss arrangements that are in place to support safeguarding. They checked the single central record for pre-employment checks, and the school's safeguarding records.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's behaviour records, including records of incidents of bullying and how these are followed up. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes.
- The inspectors considered the 20 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Mireille MacRaid, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Carol Dallas

Ofsted Inspector

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