

# Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Barnsley Road, Sheffield Lane Top, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S5 0QF

---

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	<b>Inadequate</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Inadequate</b>
Personal development	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Early years provision	<b>Inadequate</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Sharon McKeown. The school is a standalone 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 (CEO), Sharon McKeown, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gillian Brown.

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

Pupils' experience of school has been impacted negatively during a period of considerable turbulence in staffing and fragility in governance. Many staff are new to the school, or new to their role. The school does not have the leadership capacity to give staff the support that they need to carry out their role effectively or bring about the necessary improvements to pupils' education.

There are weaknesses in how well the curriculum is taught. The school does not have high enough expectations of pupils' achievement, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND do not get the support that they need. Consequently, pupils, including pupils with SEND, do not achieve as well as they should.

While some lessons are calm and orderly, others are disrupted by low-level behaviour and noise. The school does not support staff to implement the behaviour policy effectively. Pupils reported that there are frequent incidents of poor behaviour and bullying. They have varying levels of confidence in staff to resolve these issues.

Despite these weaknesses, many pupils enjoy school. This is reflected in their good attendance. They learn how to keep themselves safe through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons. There are some opportunities for pupils to take on leadership responsibilities. This helps them to develop their confidence and communication skills. For example, they can become a prayer warrior or part of the school council. However, these opportunities are limited.

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

The curriculums for most subjects are coherently designed. The school has given thought to what pupils need to learn and how their knowledge will build over time. However, in some year groups and some subjects the delivery of the curriculum is weak. Teachers do not consistently choose the most appropriate tasks and resources to support learning. For example, pupils rarely use practical resources in mathematics lessons to help them understand mathematical concepts. This hinders pupils' learning. The school does not make regular checks on whether staff are teaching the curriculum as intended. This prevents it from ensuring that teachers receive the support that they need to help pupils achieve well.

The school has made learning to read a priority. Staff are trained in how to teach phonics and reading books are matched to the sounds that pupils know. However, phonics lessons are often disrupted by poor behaviour. This impedes pupils' ability to learn new sounds. The school identifies pupils who find reading difficult, but it does not put support in place quickly enough to help them catch up.

The curriculum for the early years is designed to ensure that children are prepared well for Year 1. However, not all children have equal access to the early years curriculum.

When this is the case, the school has not given careful enough thought to the curriculum that this group of children receive. As a result, this arrangement is having a detrimental effect on their achievement and their readiness to access their learning in key stage 1.

In some subjects, such as mathematics, teachers check pupils' learning well to identify gaps in their knowledge. Teachers adapt their teaching to help pupils to understand what has been taught. However, in other subjects, assessment strategies are less effective. In English, for example, teachers expect pupils to complete complex writing tasks without the basic knowledge that they need to do so. This means that pupils are not able to build their knowledge over time.

The school does not provide pupils with SEND with a high-quality education. It does not have a suitable system to identify pupils with SEND. Consequently, the school does not know exactly how many pupils with SEND there are on its roll. Most pupils who are on the SEND register do not have an up-to-date support plan. Staff do not understand the needs of the pupils in their class, nor how to support them. As a result, many pupils' needs are not met. This leads to them struggling to access learning and becoming unsettled. This is particularly true in the early years.

The school does not have a consistent approach to managing behaviour. The behaviour policy is relatively new. The school has not ensured that staff know how to apply the policy. This means that staff have differing expectations of pupils' behaviour. Staff do not feel supported to manage more challenging behaviour. Lessons are often noisy with teachers and pupils competing to be heard. This has an impact on pupils' ability to learn. The school's systems for reporting and recording behaviour incidents are not sufficiently robust. Sometimes, staff and parents do not know that incidents have happened. This has caused worry among parents.

Pupils learn how to lead safe, healthy lifestyles and about a range of different faiths. However, teachers do not check whether pupils remember this learning. Consequently, pupils' recall of learning is variable. Pupils know the importance of respect and tolerance for others, but they do not consistently demonstrate their understanding in their actions or words. The school is working to broaden the range of extra-curricular clubs that are on offer to pupils. It uses some educational visits to enhance teaching and to give pupils wider experiences.

There is fragility in relation to the governance of the school. The governing body has not acted swiftly enough to stabilise the school, strengthen leadership, build capacity and bring about improvement. Staff morale is low, although staff do acknowledge that managing their workload has improved this academic year.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are some weaknesses in how the school records safeguarding concerns. Records show that concerns are not consistently logged in a timely manner. Some records do not

indicate what action was taken to resolve the concern. Staff do not fully appreciate how small concerns can form part of a wider picture.

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

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

- High staff turnover and turbulence in governance have had a significant impact on the leadership capacity of the school. Consequently, there are significant weaknesses in the quality of education that pupils receive. The school has not made sure that weaknesses in the delivery of the curriculum are identified and resolved. The school must act swiftly to strengthen leadership capacity at all levels to bring about rapid and sustainable improvement to pupils' education and their experience of school.
- The school does not identify pupils with SEND well enough or provide an education that meets their needs. Staff are unclear about pupils' needs. They do not adapt the curriculum well enough to enable these pupils to flourish. Consequently, the achievement of pupils with SEND is weak. The school must ensure that staff are fully trained in how to identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Many staff are not equipped to implement the new behaviour policy, and there is a distinct lack of clarity around the rewards and consequences that should be used. As a result, lessons are frequently interrupted by disruptive behaviour, and classrooms are, on occasion, loud and chaotic. Some pupils have lost confidence in the school's ability to solve incidents of bullying. The school must ensure that staff are suitably informed about the behaviour policy so that it is implemented consistently well to reduce bullying and improve pupils' behaviour.
- Children in the early years do not receive equitable access to the curriculum. A significant minority of children are registered in the Year 1 class and spend their time between the Reception Year and Year 1. This is having a detrimental effect on their achievement. It lessens their readiness to access the key stage 1 curriculum. The school must ensure that all children of Reception age get full and equal access to the curriculum so that they are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- Staff do not check whether pupils remember what they have learned in some of subjects, including PSHE lessons. Consequently, pupils' recall of learning in these subjects is variable and pupils have gaps in their knowledge. This limits their readiness for life beyond school. The school should ensure that pupils know and remember what they have been taught so that they are well prepared for their next steps.
- There are weaknesses in how well the school records safeguarding concerns. Some records are not completed in a timely manner. The school does not consistently record the action taken following a concern. The school must ensure that strong systems are in place to ensure that all safeguarding concerns are appropriately recorded, including the action that was taken.

HMCI strongly recommends that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers. The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspection we carry out.

## 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>	139347
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10342761
<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>	295
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Gillian Brown
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Sharon McKeown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sharon McKeown
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-patricks.sheffield.sch.uk">www.st-patricks.sheffield.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 April 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There have been significant changes in staffing since the last inspection.
- The school is a standalone academy trust. The headteacher is the CEO. The trustees are also the governors of the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- This is a Roman Catholic school within the Diocese of Hallam. The last inspection of the school's religious character was in December 2022.
- The school offers a breakfast club and holiday clubs. These are run by school staff and managed by the governing body.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and

management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the school business manager. They also met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and subject leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics and history. 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 inspectors considered how the school caters for pupils' personal development, including reviewing the curriculum for PSHE.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around 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 considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View. This included any free-text comments. Inspectors also spoke with some parents at the beginning of the school day. The responses to the staff and pupil Ofsted questionnaires were also reviewed.

## **Inspection team**

Philippa Kermotschuk, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tracy Duffy

His Majesty's Inspector

Emmeline Ford

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024