Inspection of Saint Edmund's Roman Catholic Primary School

Duncan Street, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 9BX

Inspection dates:	28 and 29 January 2025
The quality of education	**Requires improvement**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Requires improvement**
Personal development	**Requires improvement**
Leadership and management	**Requires improvement**
Early years provision	**Requires improvement**

The headteacher of this school is Karen Salter. The acting headteacher is Louise Tavener. This school is part of The Dunstan Catholic Educational 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), Helen Taylor, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Catherine Christie.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is happy, welcoming and inclusive. The school's Catholic values are at the heart of all that it provides. Pastoral support is strong. Staff care deeply for pupils and form trusting and supportive relationships with them. Pupils enjoy school and feel safe here.

Until recently, the school's expectations of pupils' achievement have not been high enough. The school now provides a more ambitious curriculum. However, this does not yet result in consistently strong outcomes for pupils. Disruptions to staffing have hindered the pace of improvement.

Most pupils behave well. They are polite and respectful. They understand the importance of the school's values, such as curiosity and resilience. However, inconsistent expectations of pupils' behaviour mean that some pupils do not behave as well as they should.

Pupils enjoy getting involved in their learning. For example, children in the early years enjoy making a house out of cardboard and sticky tape. Pupils relish the chance to participate in extra-curricular opportunities such as dodgeball, or learning to play the violin.

Most parents and carers are very happy with the school, which they say helps their children to thrive. However, some parents are dissatisfied with communication and the way in which the school responds to their concerns.

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

Until recently, the school has not provided a high quality of education for pupils. Leaders' monitoring and evaluation of what pupils are learning has not provided an accurate view of what is going well, and where further development is needed. As a result, pupils have not achieved as well as they should.

The support of the trust is starting to have a positive impact, but there is still much work to be done. The school has recently been through an unsettling period of turbulence in staffing. This has hindered school improvement.

The school prioritises reading. Pupils begin to learn to read as soon as they start school. Phonics teaching is effective and pupils achieve well. Pupils who find reading difficult are provided with effective extra teaching. This helps them to catch up. Pupils are taught wider reading skills, such as comprehension and inference. But they do not yet have a secure grasp of these skills.

The school has carefully identified the knowledge and skills that pupils need to develop, and these are logically sequenced from the early years upwards. However, this work is recent and is not yet translating into consistently effective practice in the classroom.

Pupils are beginning to develop their knowledge and skills, due to the more ambitious curriculum. Pupils are well supported to learn the intended curriculum with the interesting activities the school provides. For example, in art lessons, Year 5 pupils learn techniques used by famous artists, which they apply successfully to their own work. Children in the early years enjoy developing their fine motor and painting skills when they create tree prints. Pupils learn about healthy eating when cooking meals in 'funky food' sessions.

However, teachers' subject knowledge is not yet sufficiently strong. This hinders how well pupils gain the depth of knowledge they should in all subjects. In addition, the checks teachers make on pupils' achievement do not sharply identify what pupils already know and can do. Consequently, teachers do not routinely adapt teaching for pupils of different abilities. This means pupils are not challenged to achieve their potential.

Staff form positive relationships with pupils. Most pupils behave well. However, sometimes pupils are not effectively supported to have positive attitudes to their learning. At other times, low-level disruption occurs, which affects how well other pupils learn.

The school swiftly identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It works closely with pupils, parents and staff to provide well-focused teaching and pastoral support. This enables pupils with SEND to learn the same curriculum as others, and has a positive impact on their achievement.

Some pupils, including pupils with SEND, do not attend school regularly enough. This means that they are at risk of falling behind in their education. Leaders are working closely with parents to address this, but this has not yet had sufficient impact.

The school's support of pupils' mental health and well-being is highly effective. Pupils who have difficulty managing their emotions are supported to share their feelings. They say this really helps to reduce their anxieties.

Pupils are proud to take on positions of responsibility, such as chaplains and house captains. They help with litter picking and raise money for charity. Pupils enjoy sporting events, such as cross-country running.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' subject knowledge is not sufficiently strong. As a result, pupils do not yet deepen their knowledge and recall important concepts. The trust and school must ensure teachers are supported to develop the necessary expertise to implement the curriculum effectively.

- Assessment does not consistently identify what pupils already know and can do. Consequently, pupils often undertake similar tasks, which do not challenge them to achieve their potential. The trust and school need to ensure that staff are supported to check learning carefully, and that this information is used to adapt learning, to support pupils in achieving well.
- Leaders do not evaluate the impact of their work thoroughly enough. As a result, they do not swiftly identify when they need to make improvements. The trust and school must fully evaluate their work, and rapidly intervene when necessary, so that they can make the necessary improvements.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means that they are missing out on vital education. The trust and school must rigorously analyse the causes of absence, and put in place strategies to improve attendance, so that pupils benefit from all that the school has to offer.
- At times, there is an inconsistent application of the school's behaviour policy. This means that some pupils are not supported to live up to the expectations the school has of behaviour, and there is disruption to learning. The school needs to ensure that all staff apply the behaviour expectations consistently, so that pupils are supported to behave well.

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	137426
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10344617
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Catherine Christie
CEO of the trust	Helen Taylor
Headteacher	Karen Salter
Website	www.st-edmunds-pri.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 October 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust, which consists of 10 primary schools. The school joined the trust in November 2023, just after its Ofsted monitoring inspection.
- This Catholic school is part of the Diocese of Clifton. Its last section 48 inspection took place in November 2017.
- The deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator, is currently the acting headteacher. The director of school improvement for the trust and a consultant headteacher work in the school for three days each week. There have been several other recent changes to staffing.
- The school provides before- and after-school care for pupils.
- 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. 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Inspectors held several meetings with the deputy headteacher and the director of school improvement for the trust.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the CEO of the multi academy trust. She also had a meeting with members of the governing board.
- The lead inspector had separate video calls with the chair of the board of trustees and the diocese director for schools and colleges.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, 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.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour at various times during the day, including breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and staff and spoke to some parents to gather their views. They considered responses to the online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, along with free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Catherine Beeks, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Smith	Ofsted Inspector

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