

Inspection of a good school: Saint Peter's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Mill Lane, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire LE9 7AW

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 February 2023

Outcome

Saint Peter's Catholic Voluntary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a warm family feel at Saint Peter's Catholic Voluntary Academy. Pupils go about their school lives with smiles on their faces. They feel safe, comfortable and confident in their surroundings. One pupil, with a comment that was typical of many, said, 'The teachers are really kind here. They always help you and make time for you.'

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum. They are aspirational for every pupil. Leaders encourage pupils to live out the school's mission statement by 'aiming high' and 'striving to improve'.

Pupils are caring and respectful. They are well mannered and hold doors open for each other. Pupils are enthusiastic and positive about school. They are proud to attend Saint Peter's. They try their best in lessons and focus on their work. Classrooms are calm, purposeful places where pupils can concentrate on their learning. Staff wear 'Stop and Think Hands' on their lanyards to remind pupils of the expectations that staff have of their behaviour. This approach means that pupils are ready to learn.

Pupils understand what bullying is. They know it is not tolerated at their school. They report that it does not happen very often at all. On the very rare occasion that it does, leaders deal with it immediately and effectively.

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

Reading is at the heart of the school's success. Pupils learn to read accurately and fluently from a young age. This is because staff teach phonics so well. All staff have the expertise to teach the school's chosen phonics programme. Staff show pupils how to say and blend sounds so they can read whole words. Staff make sure that the books pupils take home to read match the letter sounds they know. Older pupils love the books they read in class. Pupils in Year 5 said, 'The teachers choose amazing books to share with us! They read to us in such exciting ways.' As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to reading and enjoy reading for pleasure in their own time.

Passionate and well-informed subject leaders have set out most of the curriculum at Saint Peter's in a logical order. They have planned the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn in small, progressive steps. Teachers follow these plans precisely. They know how their lessons link to what has been taught before and what will be taught next.

To help pupils remember what they have been taught, teachers revisit prior learning. In every mathematics lesson, for instance, pupils reuse knowledge from previous lessons. As a result, by the time pupils reach the end of key stage 2, they can add, subtract, multiply and divide quickly and accurately. In history, teachers regularly review the order of the events pupils have studied from the past. This is so that pupils develop their chronological understanding of history. For example, older pupils can place the stone age, ancient Egypt, the Romans, Vikings, the Wars of the Roses, the Tudors and the Victorians on a timeline in the correct order.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers make adaptations to their lessons so all pupils can access the learning. This means that pupils with SEND access every part of the school's curriculum and achieve well.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain things clearly. Developing pupils' spoken language is an important part of the curriculum at Saint Peter's. The 'sticky vocabulary' that leaders want pupils to use is set out on all curriculum plans for teachers to follow. Consequently, pupils express themselves precisely, using the correct technical terms.

However, in some of the foundation subjects, some aspects of the curriculum are not clear enough about what pupils need to know and remember. As a result, pupils do not gain a deep and detailed understanding of some of the important concepts that are in the national curriculum.

The wider work of the school is giving pupils the knowledge and attitudes they need to be successful learners and citizens. Pupils hold positive views towards difference and diversity. They understand why equality is important. They know that discrimination is wrong. However, there is a limited range of extra-curricular clubs on offer at the school, which prevents pupils from developing a wide range of talents and interests.

The headteacher and the assistant headteacher lead the school well. Staff are proud to work at the school. They receive the training that they need to teach the curriculum and lead their subjects effectively. Staff really appreciate the mental health support they can access at Saint Peter's.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding matters. Staff say that weekly reminders keep safeguarding matters in the front of their minds. Pupils know

to tell a trusted adult if something is not right. Staff promptly report concerns whenever they are worried about a pupil's welfare. Record-keeping is thorough. Leaders meet every week to review all aspects of the school's safeguarding practice. They check to make sure that pupils are okay, and that things are improving where they need to. Leaders work well with other agencies. They make sure that pupils get the support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some of the foundation subjects, curriculum thinking is not as clear as it needs to be. This means that pupils do not acquire a deep and detailed understanding of some of the important ideas and themes that run through subjects. Leaders need to refine their curriculum thinking in these subjects so that pupils develop their knowledge of key concepts over time.
- There are a limited range of clubs on offer at the school and uptake is quite low. This prevents pupils from developing a wide range of talents and interests. Leaders should review the extra-curricular offer at the school and ensure that all pupils have access to a greater variety of extra-curricular opportunities.

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 predecessor school, Saint Peter's Catholic Primary School, to be good in November 2016.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	146133
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10254875
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	206
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Noon
Headteacher	Helen White
Website	www.stpetersprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Saint Thomas Aquinas Multi-Academy Catholic Trust in September 2018. When its predecessor school, Saint Peter's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection of the school since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For the deep dives, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, curriculum leaders and a sample of teaching and support staff. The inspector met with the leaders responsible for pupils with SEND, behaviour and personal development.

- The inspector met with the designated leaders for safeguarding to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- The inspector examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of governance, and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 read to a familiar adult. The inspector met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The inspector met with the chair of the trust board and the vice-chair of the local governing body. He also met with the chief executive officer and the director of performance and standards from Saint Thomas Aquinas Multi-Academy Catholic Trust.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff survey and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Shaun Carter, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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