

Inspection of St Chad's Catholic Primary School

Catholic Lane, Sedgley, Dudley, West Midlands DY3 3UE

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Many effective changes have taken place at St Chad's Catholic Primary School. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. These are now beginning to be realised. Changes to the curriculum means that current pupils are catching up quickly.

Leaders provide experiences for pupils in a carefully considered way. These are underpinned by the school's Catholic social teachings. Pupils know the importance of being a good person. They help others in the community. Pupils show kindness and respect to others as a result. Pupils exemplify their motto, 'Christ in our heads, our hearts and our hands'. They say that everyone is loved and welcomed.

Pupils behave well when moving around school. They remind each other about the school's expectations of behaviour. For example, older pupils show younger pupils how to walk quietly into school from playtime. 'Sports leaders' set up playtime activities. They referee games and show pupils how to play fairly.

Pupils' physical and mental health are taken seriously by leaders. Pupils can discuss their worries and feelings with trusted adults. Some staff have additional training to support mental health needs. All pupils benefit from support with their physical health. They know how to improve their physical health through sports, movement and an active lifestyle.

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

Leaders have made many improvements across the school. These include changes to the curriculum. However, results in national tests for Year 6 pupils who left in 2022, did not reflect the impact of these changes. Leaders are committed to improving the learning experiences of pupils. This is now realised through a well-constructed and ambitious curriculum.

Leaders have set out the key knowledge they want pupils to learn over time. This starts from the early years in most subjects. Leaders make careful choices when sequencing different subjects across the curriculum. This helps pupils build their knowledge in a considered way. Pupils are taught subject-specific vocabulary, which they use effectively when explaining their work. Assessment systems in subjects such as reading and mathematics are secure. Leaders have an accurate view of how pupils are achieving. They quickly put support in place for those who need it. Pupils are catching up quickly as a result. However, assessment systems in the foundation subjects have only been implemented recently. As a result, it is too soon for leaders to know how effectively these systems assess pupils' learning.

Teachers' subject knowledge is mostly secure. They provide pupils with opportunities to revisit their learning in most subjects. For example, in mathematics, this helps

pupils with their fluency and reasoning. In geography, pupils are taught how to compare countries, map work and understanding different viewpoints.

Pupils behave well most of the time in most lessons. Any low-level behaviours are addressed quickly by staff.

Reading is prioritised by leaders. Phonics is taught from the start. Children in Nursery learn to identify sounds accurately. They take part in nursery rhymes and songs. Pupils at the early stage of reading work well in small groups. They are assessed regularly and given work that matches their needs. Leaders provide regular training and support to staff. As a result, staff are highly skilled in teaching pupils how to read. Pupils are excited by books and 'mystery readers'. These are teachers who visit classrooms and read books to pupils.

Leaders have created an inclusive school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged are well cared for. Leaders provide a highly nurturing environment for those who need additional support. Pupils with SEND are well supported in class most of the time. There are secure systems in place which identify which pupils have SEND. However, targets set on individual learning plans for some pupils with SEND are not clearly defined. This means that teachers do not always set work which closely matches their learning needs.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils. They learn about different religions to their own. They have a wide understanding of different religious beliefs. Pupils have an exceptional understanding about diversity. They know the different characteristics which make people unique. They respect these and say that everyone is equal. Pupils show deep compassion for others and respect views which are different to their own.

Governors and trust leaders know the school well. They provide appropriate challenge when needed. The trust provides effective support to school leaders. This is helping to drive improvements. Parents and carers speak highly of the recently appointed school leaders.

There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities available to all pupils. This includes sports, dance, yoga and reading. Those pupils who are disadvantaged are supported to regularly take part in these.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant and know how to identify and raise safeguarding concerns quickly. Leaders follow up any concerns promptly. All staff receive regular and updated training about how to keep pupils safe. Trust leaders meet regularly about safeguarding. They review systems and provide helpful support to the school.

Leaders take appropriate recruitment checks on all staff and volunteers before they are appointed. These checks continue regularly while staff are still employed by the school.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils lead 'safety days' where they teach each other about staying safe online and when out in public.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders do not always set clearly defined and specific targets for pupils with SEND that identify sufficiently well how teachers should support these pupils. This means that work does not always match the needs of some pupils with SEND. Leaders should review and evaluate these targets to ensure that the right support and activities are always provided during lessons.
- Assessment systems in some foundation subjects have been implemented very recently. Leaders do not yet know how well these systems assess pupils' learning. Leaders need to continue their work to embed assessment systems in foundation subjects and ensure that information is used to evaluate the impact on pupils' learning.

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	140144
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10256844
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Phil Hancox
Executive Headteacher	Mandy Grubham
Website	www.st-chads.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 and 12 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is the first full graded inspection since the school converted to an academy in September 2013.
- There have been several changes to leadership since the last inspection. This includes a new executive headteacher, chair of governors, chair of trustees, acting head of school, special educational needs coordinator and early years leader.
- St Chad's Catholic Primary School is one of eight schools in The St John Bosco Catholic Academy trust.
- The executive headteacher works across two schools within the trust.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was in May 2016. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The school do not use any alternative provider.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club. This is operated by the school.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and acting head of school.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and members from The St John Bosco Catholic Academy trust, including the chair of board directors. The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with a representative from the archdiocese of Birmingham.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders to discuss safeguarding, early years, provision for pupils with SEND and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Additional areas of the curriculum were discussed, including science, physical education and art and design.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school.
- Safeguarding documents were reviewed, including the checks that leaders make on staff's suitability to work with children. The inspectors examined how staff implement safeguarding policies and procedures effectively across the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the free-text responses received during the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school improvement priorities, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records and minutes of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Anna Vrahimi, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gary Richards

Ofsted Inspector

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