

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

Whitefields Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 3NZ

Inspection dates

26–27 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, who joined the school in September 2017, provides excellent leadership for the school. She has reversed the decline in standards that occurred after the last inspection and ensures that expectations of staff and pupils are high.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the quality of education the school provides. They are uncompromising in their pursuit of excellence for all their pupils. The standards that pupils achieve across the school are good.
- Children do well in the Reception class. This is because it is well led, and staff have high expectations. Links with parents and carers are strong.
- The teaching of early reading is a strength of the school. All pupils achieved the expected standard in phonics in Year 1 in Summer 2018.
- New approaches to the teaching of mathematics and English are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. However, these new initiatives are not yet fully embedded across the school.
- Most teaching is effective, and some is outstanding. Pupils enjoy learning in interesting, attractive classrooms where skilled staff care for them well.
- Pupils are well behaved. Relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils are excellent.
- The school has a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum that helps pupils understand the world around them.
- The school's work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is strong. Staff provide pupils with opportunities to explore this awareness through many extra-curricular clubs and activities.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. They achieve well from their starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils are carefully supported. The school works effectively to minimise barriers to the learning and well-being of these pupils.
- Pupils are encouraged to stay fit and healthy and to take part in a wide range of sporting activities.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff and governors receive appropriate, up-to-date training that provides them with the knowledge and skills to keep pupils safe.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed the recently introduced approaches to the teaching of mathematics and English to ensure that pupils make strong progress in these subjects as they move through key stage 2.
- Ensure that the outstanding teaching that is evident in some parts of the school is systematically shared across all years.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership for the school. She is well supported by a highly effective deputy headteacher. There is a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that St Augustine's Catholic Primary School is a harmonious school underpinned by strong Christian values. Leaders are inspirational role models for their pupils.
- Leaders and governors know their school extremely well. They have an accurate understanding of the areas of strength and those that require further attention. Leaders have made rapid improvements in the last 18 months. Consequently, after a decline in standards after the last inspection, the school now provides a good standard of education.
- Frequent monitoring of the quality of teaching ensures that it is consistently good, with an increasing number of lessons judged by senior leaders to be outstanding. Lesson observations and work scrutiny during the inspection confirm this. There is constant professional dialogue about how best to improve pupils' learning.
- Teachers' ongoing training is effective, well structured and closely linked to teachers' performance management and the school's improvement priorities.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and creative. Outdoor education, visits, trips and extra-curricular provision all enrich pupils' experiences and enable their knowledge, skills and understanding to deepen. For example, in history, pupils gained a deep understanding of the roles of staff in upper-class Victorian homes through writing an advertisement for a cook.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used extremely well. Pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities, including dance, cheerleading and multi-skills, both in the school day and after school.
- Leaders make highly effective use of the pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils' progress. Their plans are clear and detailed.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. In particular, leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn about, and from, other religions.

Governance of the school

- Governors are insightful, well informed and realistic. They know the school and the community that it serves well. They are ambitious for the school and care deeply about the pupils. They are well led and constantly seeking to improve. Governors draw on a range of information and aspects of the school's work to assess how well it is doing. They are provided with detailed information by the headteacher, but they do not rely solely on this to make their judgments. They visit the school regularly and receive information from leaders responsible for a particular area or subject. This two-way process ensures that there are clear lines of accountability.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Effective procedures for checking the suitability of visitors and staff recruitment are in place.
- Leaders ensure that all staff and governors are well trained and skilled in safeguarding matters. There are regular training sessions to keep staff informed and up to date.
- Leaders maintain a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff show a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the processes used to keep pupils safe. As a result, staff promptly identify and appropriately support potentially vulnerable pupils. They also engage well with outside agencies so that pupils get the support they need.
- Pupils learn how to stay safe through the subjects they study, in class time and during personal, social and health education lessons. Assemblies are used to launch new themes, such as 'healthy me', and pupils said they learn regularly how to stay safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The headteacher has addressed the legacy of recent weaker teaching, particularly in key stage 2. She has appointed high-quality staff and used performance management of both teaching and support staff to identify and refine their skills.
- Leaders have introduced several new approaches to the teaching of mathematics and reading. While they are clearly showing a positive impact on outcomes, these approaches are not yet fully embedded across the school.
- Relationships across the school are strong. Pupils enjoy learning and respond positively to staff when they are challenged. For example, an inspector saw how Year 5 pupils were encouraged to write at a higher standard from the outset in an English lesson. Pupils were asked to write a descriptive paragraph about what the boy in a text they were reading sees from the window and how he wishes he could be somewhere else.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved over the last year. Pupils can demonstrate their understanding using pictures and pieces of apparatus. They are challenged well in many lessons, particularly to use and develop their reasoning skills.
- Staff, overall, show high levels of skill, but currently opportunities to observe and share best practice are limited. Some staff use probing questioning to elicit detailed responses from pupils. Pupils of all ages rose to the challenge of these questions and, as a result, their learning and progress were better.
- Staff have strong subject knowledge. They know the pupils very well. They generally plan learning that builds on what pupils already know and understand. They monitor their pupils' learning carefully. Those at risk of falling behind are quickly identified and given additional support.
- Staff follow the school's feedback policy, and pupils respond promptly and effectively to teachers' comments and advice.

- The school's classrooms are attractive and well cared for. The walls of the school are enhanced by examples of pupils' high-quality work and other engaging displays that support and celebrate learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are polite, kind and aware of the needs of others. They relate well to each other and to staff. They spoke with real pleasure about how much they enjoyed the school and how well the staff care for and look after them. They know staff are there for them if they have a problem.
- Pupils wear their uniforms smartly. They care for their school. There are many well-maintained and informative displays, both in and out of the classroom, that help pupils understand and celebrate their place in the school and the wider world.
- As a result of the school's vigilance and actions, pupils have a good understanding of the range of forms that bullying can take. They say it is very rare at the school. They also say that, on those occasions where it does take place, it is promptly dealt with by adults at the school. Pupils said that they feel safe and know how to keep safe, particularly when online.
- Pupils are aware of differences and diversity, both at the school and in the wider community. Pupils develop high levels of empathy and understanding of each other, because of the imaginative ways the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils learn about a variety of other religions and have opportunities to visit a range of places of worship, for example Islamic exhibitions and a Jewish synagogue.
- The school actively encourages a healthy lifestyle, through healthy snacks at breaktimes and high-quality PE lessons. The school follows the diocesan scheme for relationships and sex education, which develops an understanding of healthy relationships.
- The quality of extra-curricular activities is first-rate. Pupils have the opportunity to excel in sports, music and the arts and participate in an animation club and a 'War Hammer' club, which is very popular with pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is impeccable. During the inspection, there was no off-task behaviour.
- Procedures for managing and analysing absence are well organised. Attendance figures have improved over the last year to above the national average, and incidents of persistent absence have reduced in the same period.

- Pupils have excellent manners. This was observed in relation to using knives and forks correctly and engaging in polite conversations over lunch.
- Pupils link their learning about Catholic virtues to how they should behave. They know the importance of being learned and wise. They live by these virtues in their everyday actions and interactions at the school. There is a strong emphasis on care, which reflects the school's Christian ethos.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment and progress at the end of key stage 2 have been variable.
- Following the appointment of the current headteacher, outcomes have improved across the school. The majority of children enter the Reception class with skills that are typical for their age. Good teaching enables pupils to progress well as they move through the school.
- Pupils' progress in phonics is strong, due to effective teaching. In 2018, all Year 1 pupils achieved the expected standard in phonics.
- Outcomes in key stage 1 are strong. The proportions of pupils attaining the average and higher standards have been above national figures for three years.
- In key stage 2, the proportions of pupils attaining the average and higher standards have been in line or above national figures for three years. However, pupils' progress has been broadly average. In 2016/17, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 was well below that expected. Their progress was also poor.
- The headteacher has introduced several new approaches to teaching and has swiftly reversed the decline in standards. Attainment and progress improved in 2017/18, with just over half the pupils attaining at the higher standards in reading and mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 2 in grammar, punctuation and spelling has been above the national average for three years.
- Work in pupils' 'Discovery Learning' books shows that their knowledge and skills are developing well in other subjects. This is particularly the case in science and in religious education.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership of the early years is good. The early years staff forge positive relationships with parents and begin their accurate and thorough assessments of children on entry. The team draws on a wide range of evidence and information about each child. By the time children enter the Reception class, staff know them well. There are, however, some inconsistencies in teaching and learning approaches across the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Children settle well on entry to the early years provision. The morning begins with a prayer and there is a real 'family feel' throughout the setting.

- Most children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge typical for their age. They make strong progress. This is because activities are carefully planned, and the staff's observations of how children are doing are used well to inform next steps.
- Children's acquisition of language and communication skills is a high priority in the Reception class. Inspectors saw staff modelling language as they spoke with children. They used questioning expertly to encourage and extend children's vocabulary. At this early stage of their time at school, such teaching has a positive impact on children's confidence and language skills.
- Staff have developed stimulating and safe indoor and outdoor learning environments which provide a range of interesting learning activities and experiences. A great deal of thought goes into equipping the spaces to support and stimulate children's pleasure in learning. Children respond positively to this.
- Children with SEND are carefully identified and their needs are met. Over time children with SEND make good progress.
- The teaching of reading is a strength in the early years. Phonics is well taught and reading outcomes at the end of Reception are strong over time, with 100% of children achieving the expected standard in Summer 2018.
- The percentage of pupils who achieve a good level of development by the time they reach the end of the Reception year is above the national average.
- All the statutory welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	104100
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10058651

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annie Fuller
Headteacher	Julie Foley
Telephone number	0121 705 4355
Website	www.st-augustines.solihull.sch.uk
Email address	85office@st-augustines.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2014.

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- At around 4%, the proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- There is a nursery which operates mornings only. It provides part-time provision for 26 children.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2017.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in all year groups, jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with a group of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at social times, both on the playground and in the dining room, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, as well as other senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector met with governors, and both the diocesan and local authority school improvement advisers.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation. This included assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is monitored and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors considered the 55 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View and the school's own questionnaire to parents. One inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Heather Phillips, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Catherine Draper

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Ofsted Inspector

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