Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Chapmans Lane, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 1JB

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 October 2024

Outcome

St Peter's Catholic Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils embody the school's golden rule of 'treat other people as you would like to be treated'. They demonstrate this in their excellent conduct and high levels of respect they show to all. Pupils feel happy and safe. They know that staff will deal with any worries they may have sensitively. Pupils know the school rules well. Teachers help them to follow the rules consistently and behave well. Breaktimes are joyful and pupils play together excitedly.

Teachers have high expectations of all pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils work hard to meet these expectations and learn the important skills and knowledge they need. They participate in rich debate in lessons. The vast majority of pupils can explain clearly what they are learning.

Pupils take an important role in the life of the school. Some organise breaktime activities and encourage younger pupils to play cooperatively. Older pupils listen to pupils in Year 1 read and enthusiastically discuss the books they read. There are a range of leadership roles that pupils can apply for. However, the expectation is that all pupils take responsibility for their actions and act as role models. They do this happily and are rightly proud of their school community.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. It has rightly prioritised the important foundational knowledge and skills that pupils require. Well-trained staff teach pupils the sounds and letters they need to become fluent readers. Most pupils learn these swiftly.

Teachers identify precisely the small number of pupils who fall behind and plan effective support to help them catch up. As a result, pupils read with increasing fluency and independence as they progress through the school. Pupils build their knowledge of mathematical processes and learn how to apply them accurately. This starts in early years. However, pupils do not yet learn to write as well as they could. Recent national tests for writing reflect this. The school has responded quickly and has improved the writing curriculum. Pupils can write in a variety of styles and use language creatively. Despite this, pupils' work still shows errors in spelling and grammar.

The school knows its pupils well. Staff quickly identify any barriers to learning pupils may have. They use this knowledge to make effective adaptations to the curriculum for pupils, particularly for those with SEND. Pupils with SEND are seamlessly integrated into class. As a result, they achieve well. Teachers explain learning clearly. They ensure that pupils understand what they need to know and do to be successful. However, in a small number of subjects, teachers do not model the use of vocabulary accurately. Consequently, some pupils cannot explain some of the concepts they learn precisely enough.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils show exceptional attitudes to learning. They listen intently to staff and answer questions eagerly. Classrooms are lively and purposeful places. Pupils take great pleasure from their learning and are keen to share their ideas. They like attending school and know the importance of good attendance. This means pupils attend frequently and punctually. Disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, attend well. The school monitors attendance thoughtfully and applies school procedures consistently. As a result, rare incidences of poor attendance are quickly addressed.

Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They know the importance of resilience and hard work in being successful. The school's popular residential trip enhances these skills. Pupils undertake a range of adventurous activities to build resilience. This also helps pupils in becoming increasingly independent in their own lives. Pupils learn about a range of careers. This encourages them to hold high aspirations.

The school's Christian ethos underpins the school's work on personal development. Pupils learn about diversity and difference within their own community and beyond in personal, social and health education. This helps them to develop mature responses to opinions that differ to their own. Pupils understand the role that democracy plays and can explain the importance of having a voice. They select their own school representatives for a range of roles.

Governors are knowledgeable and hold the school to account well. They ensure that all staff are working in the best interests of children. The school seeks help from external agencies to ensure its work is as effective as possible. As a result, the school has recently refined the curriculum. Staff enjoy working at the school. They receive high-quality training and know that leaders prioritise their well-being and welfare.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of writing historically has not supported all pupils in becoming confident and fluent writers. As a result, pupils have not achieved well in external writing assessments, and a small number of pupils still do not write fluently. The school must continue to embed its new writing approach and make sure that pupils' spelling and grammar improve to ensure that all pupils can become confident writers.
- Teachers do not always have strong enough subject knowledge of the specific vocabulary they teach. They do not model or explain this language clearly enough. As a result, pupils cannot always use this important vocabulary precisely enough and this limits their ability to explain some concepts. The school must ensure that all teachers have secure knowledge of the important language they teach so that pupils have a strong understanding of the concepts they learn.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good/outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use 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	126060
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10341630
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Jack Lusted
Headteacher	Mary Claffey
Website	www.stpeterseastgrinstead.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Peter's Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic school. The most recent inspection of its religious character, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, took place in March 2022. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place within eight school years.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also met members of the governing body.

- The inspector focused inspection activity on the following groups of subjects: early English and mathematics, and geography, history and science. For each group of subjects, the inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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' interest first.
- Throughout the inspection, the lead inspector met with groups of staff. They also considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- The lead inspector met some parents at the start of the school day and had regard to the views expressed through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Gavin Thomas, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector

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