

Inspection of a good school: St Philip's Catholic Primary School, Arundel

London Road, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 9BA

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 December 2021

Outcome

St Philip's Catholic Primary School, Arundel continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at school. They feel valued and supported. They thrive because teaching is effective and opportunities for wider development are plentiful. Pupils are encouraged and supported to do their best in all aspects of school life. A culture of high expectations surrounds them. They have plenty of opportunities to practise their developing personal skills as librarians, school council members or as buddies for the youngest pupils. A pupil explained this by saying, 'we become good role models'.

Good behaviour is the norm. Pupils behave consistently well. Playtimes are happy. Games are good natured and everyone can join in. Around the school, pupils are friendly towards each other. They get along well and support each other. Pupils trust in adults to help sort out any occasional problems, which they do. Pupils explain that bullying is not a problem because they learn about the importance of responsibility, for both themselves and others.

Links with the wider community are well established. Pupils benefit from engaging with local issues, being involved in community projects and from well-supported transitions to secondary school. This helps ensure that they are well prepared for the next stages of their education and beyond.

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

Pupils' skills and knowledge build effectively in English and mathematics. Detailed plans support teachers well in putting learning in order as pupils move through the school. They clearly set out what is to be learned and when. This helps to ensure that pupils attain well. Wisely, leaders are revising these plans in English to respond to gaps that are emerging as the school continues to deal with high levels of sickness and absence caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Plans are also in place in subjects other than English and mathematics. However, in some subjects there is insufficient focus in these plans on the Reception Year. This makes it hard for key stage 1 teachers to build on the learning that takes place in the early years.

Children get off to a good start learning to read in Reception Year. They benefit from regular systematic teaching of phonics. This builds their knowledge of the sounds that letters represent and how to blend them to read words effectively. This focus continues as pupils move up through the school so that they become fluent readers. Reading books are well matched to pupils needs to help support this and build confidence. Any pupils who struggle or start to fall behind are given the support they need to help them to catch up quickly.

Pupils know that reading is important. They read regularly at home and school. Pupils are interested in the stories their teachers read to them. They relish the regular opportunities to use the school library to read books by their favourite authors or to explore new genres.

Children enjoy mathematics in the Reception Year. Their taught sessions are reinforced effectively through regular activities and play involving counting and exploring numbers. Across the school, pupils demonstrate secure number skills and an appetite for mathematics that supports their learning well. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the help they need to be successful. Pupils are keen mathematicians. They relish the many opportunities to build their skills and memory, such as the weekly times tables challenges.

Leaders have ensured that lessons are carefully structured so that teachers have opportunities to assess learning. Teachers quickly identify any misconceptions and address them promptly so that pupils' learning is not interrupted.

Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum that helps them to learn about themselves and the wider world. For example, in geography, pupils who had been learning about Europe were able to compare different countries knowledgeably because they had learned about their locations and populations. Pupils with SEND are well supported to access the breadth of the curriculum.

Pupils are attentive and behave well in lessons. They display consistently positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are quick to offer solutions and engage in discussions with the teacher and each other about their approaches and ideas. This helps to deepen and stretch their learning.

Leaders have carefully considered pupils' personal development. Pupils benefit from a myriad of opportunities to develop as confident, articulate and thoughtful citizens. The Christian ethos of the school is demonstrated for example, by the school prayer book which pupils have contributed to. Pupils also display a wide understanding and tolerance of a range of beliefs. They have a good understanding of British values and how these link to their lives at school and beyond.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to help identify safeguarding issues. There is a well-established system to record concerns, which are reviewed promptly and monitored regularly. This supports timely identification of needs. Help and support are quickly signposted or secured from other agencies to help keep pupils safe. All necessary checks are carried out and recorded appropriately.

The family feel of the school encourages communication and trust. Pupils have confidence in adults to help keep them safe. They learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, by completing road safety training. Pupils remember their learning about online safety and from regular safeguarding assemblies.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects other than English and mathematics the early years foundation stage is not included in leaders' subject progression sequences. This means that in those subjects it is not clear how knowledge is built on between Reception Year and Year 1. Leaders should ensure that the early years foundation stage is sufficiently well considered in progressions across the curriculum to further support the building of knowledge sequences across the school.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2012.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	126036
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10200421
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denise Jenkins
Headteacher	Lucy Horne
Website	http://www.stphilipsarundel.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the deputy headteacher has left the school. The leadership structure has been altered so that the headteacher is now supported by two phase leaders.
- The last section 48 inspection of this Catholic school was undertaken in June 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- During the inspection, the inspector met regularly with the headteacher. Meetings were also held with other school leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector met with governors, including the chair. The inspector also had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector conducted deep dives into reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to some pupils reading.

- Records associated with safeguarding were reviewed, including the single central record and appointment procedures. The inspector spoke to staff about their safeguarding training and spoke to pupils about the support they have in understanding how to keep safe.
- The inspector reviewed responses to the parent, pupil and staff Ofsted questionnaires.
- Groups of staff met with the inspector to share their views about the school, including on workload and well-being. The inspector completed a tour of the school with pupils and spoke to them on the playground and in the lunch hall.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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