

Inspection of St Edward's Catholic Primary School

Wivern Place, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 1RZ

Inspection dates:	25 and 26 March 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is ambitious for pupils to achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Part of the school's mission statement is for pupils 'to learn.' It makes sure pupils make the most of the opportunities on offer and succeed academically and socially. Pupils build their confidence and self-esteem through positive relationships with staff, which helps them to feel happy and safe at school. Across much of the curriculum, pupils achieve well.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Children in the Reception Year learn how to follow class routines and adult instructions. Pupils across the school behave well and value the importance of treating others with respect. Pupils told inspectors how much they benefit from the pastoral support available in times of need.

Pupils have opportunities to develop their talents and interests through the range of experiences available to them. These include crafts, athletics, and cooking clubs. Pupils also have the opportunity to care for the school chickens, which helps them to develop their understanding of teamwork and responsibility. The school ensures that many pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from being part of these wider experiences.

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

The school has worked diligently to develop the curriculum since the last inspection. The curriculum is well thought out from the Reception Year through to the end of Year 6. It carefully considers the important knowledge that pupils should learn. In different subjects, the curriculum is designed precisely to meet the needs of the three mixed-age classes in the school.

High-quality training supports teachers to build their expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively. They use this well and provide pupils with learning activities that help them to develop their knowledge and understanding. That said, previous weaknesses in curriculum design mean some pupils have certain gaps in their knowledge that have not been identified and addressed. As a result, some pupils are not as well prepared for the next stage of education.

The school ensures that many pupils leave Year 6 with the key knowledge they need for their future learning in reading, writing and mathematics. In these subjects, teachers check pupils' understanding of important knowledge effectively. Timely support is provided to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Effective systems identify the needs of pupils with SEND. These pupils benefit from well-chosen resources and timely support, which helps them to access the same curriculum as their peers. Overall, in many subjects, pupils learn well.

The school places a high priority on the teaching of phonics. Well-trained staff teach the school's phonics programme consistently and effectively. Timely extra support helps pupils to keep up with their peers. This begins in the Reception Year, where children also begin

to develop a love of books. They know and enjoy a range of stories. As pupils begin reading books, the school ensures these closely match the sounds they have learned. This helps them to experience the pleasure that comes from reading a book. Parents and carers shared with inspectors that they value the information they receive from the school that helps them support reading at home. Overall, many pupils become fluent readers by the end of Year 2.

There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school. Pupils are attentive in class. Children in the Reception Year cooperate and share well with one another. Some older pupils take great care in helping and leading games with their younger peers during playtimes. The school's systems and procedures around attendance are effective. The majority of attendance concerns are picked up and addressed at an early stage.

Pupils experience a range of opportunities that enhance their personal development. For example, they know how to keep themselves safe when online. Pupils understand protected characteristics and discuss these in an informed and considered manner. The school ensures that pupils learn about the signs of healthy relationships. Activities such as collecting donations for a local food bank help pupils develop their understanding of empathy.

Governors support and challenge the school well. They have maintained a sharp focus on the improvements to the quality of education since the last inspection. Governors work effectively with the school to realise the agreed aims and values. Being a small school, teachers take on a leadership role in several subjects. They appreciate the training and time the school provides for them to fulfil these responsibilities well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, pupils have gaps in their knowledge as a result of weaknesses in the previous curriculum. Some of these gaps have not been identified or addressed. The school should ensure teachers are able to swiftly identify and remedy these gaps in pupils' knowledge so pupils can build and further strengthen their knowledge in these subjects.

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](#)' 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	111319
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10377936
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	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Julie Bullock
Headteacher	Angela Snell
Website	www.stedwardscatholicprimaryschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 December 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- This is a Roman Catholic primary school in the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The previous section 48 inspection took place in November 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place by the end of 2026.
- The governing body operates a breakfast club.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have

taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at the curriculum and pupils' work in some other subjects. The lead inspector observed some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with representatives of the diocese and the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff, and pupils. They also considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons. They spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. They also considered the views of pupils shared through Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's online staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents. They also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Robinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Angela Sweeting

Ofsted Inspector

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