

Inspection of St Edward's Catholic Primary School

Wivern Place, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 1RZ

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including children in early years, enjoy coming to this school. Leaders have created a warm environment that helps pupils to feel happy and safe. Pupils strive to learn together in a caring manner. They live up to the school motto of 'To love, to serve and learn'. Pupils benefit from strong and supportive relationships with staff and their peers. One pupil summed up the views of many when they said, 'It is hard to be a stranger in our school. It is so easy to make friends.'

Pupils behave well. They are well mannered and respectful towards staff and each other. Leaders deal with incidents of poor behaviour, such as bullying, swiftly and with sensitivity.

Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, these aspirations are not fully realised. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in a number of subjects. This is because, over time, pupils have not benefited from an ambitious curriculum that enables them to know and remember more.

Pupils enjoy the range of clubs that they attend, such as art, choir and cooking. They described how they enjoy spending time with their school fish and Lizzie and Beth, their school hens.

Pupils enjoy taking part in regular music sessions. They sing enthusiastically. Pupils carry out leadership responsibilities with pride, such as being members of the school council. They relish the opportunity to support charities through their fundraising initiatives, such as selling knitted Christmas baubles and supporting the shoebox appeal.

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

Until recently, the curriculum that pupils followed was not clear enough about what pupils needed to learn. Leaders have begun to devise a more aspirational curriculum for children in the early years and for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. They have begun to ensure that key knowledge is taught in a logical order. However, this work is at different stages of development. The impact of the new curriculum on pupils' learning is variable.

In some subjects, including reading and mathematics, leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils will learn and when this will be taught. This means that pupils, including those with SEND, are able to build on what they have learned before. In these subjects, pupils achieve well.

In many other subjects, leaders are at the early stages of pinpointing what pupils should learn and when this will be taught. As a result, teachers are not clear about what to teach or the order in which new subject content should be taught. This

hinders teachers from designing learning that helps children and pupils to build up their knowledge over time. It also means that teachers are unsure what to assess to check that pupils have remembered their learning. This prevents teachers from checking on misconceptions and it hampers pupils' achievement.

Staff have been trained well to teach the new phonics programme. They check pupils' progress through this programme carefully and provide effective support to those pupils who are not keeping up. The books that pupils read allow them to practise the sounds that they know. Teachers read regularly to pupils. This, together with a new library and 'book barn', has helped to foster pupils' love of reading. Over time, most pupils develop into confident and fluent readers.

Pupils, including children in the early years, behave well in class and around the school. They are keen to learn. Pupils are considerate of others. They follow routines and abide by the school's rules. This means that disruption to learning is rare.

Leaders have ensured that pupils with SEND have their needs identified in a timely way. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. However, as is the case for other pupils, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they should due to weakness in some subject curriculums.

Leaders have thought carefully about how to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils are taught to value diversity in the world. They develop a mature understanding of the importance of equality. Pupils develop as active citizens and are fully involved in school life. They have a secure understanding of healthy relationships and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders, including members of the governing body, have an accurate understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve. Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the support that leaders give to their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive regular safeguarding training. Staff understand how to spot if a pupil might be at risk from harm. Staff act on any concerns promptly. Leaders work closely with parents, carers and external agencies to ensure that pupils get the support that they need.

Pupils know how to stay safe. They learn about the different risks that they may face and how to manage these. For example, pupils learn about how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not clearly identified the key knowledge that they want pupils, including children in the early years, to learn and when this should be taught in all subjects. As a result, teachers are unsure what should be taught. This hinders the achievement of pupils, including those with SEND. Leaders should ensure that teachers know what pupils should learn and when this should happen so that pupils can build their knowledge securely over time.
- In some subjects, teachers are uncertain how to check if pupils have learned what they should. This is because the curriculum does not make it clear what pupils should know and remember. Teachers are not able to check for misconceptions to stop gaps in learning emerging. Leaders should ensure that teachers are able to check that pupils have gained the knowledge that is intended.

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	111319
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10242011
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	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Caulfield
Headteacher	Angela Snell
Website	www.stedwardscatholicprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and several new members of staff have taken up post.
- The governing body is responsible for the daily breakfast club.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The last section 48 inspection took place in November 2019.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

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 that the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders and teachers. They

visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' and children's work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning. The lead inspector observed pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.

- Inspectors spoke with members of the governing body, the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors talked with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, SEND and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. They discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders and staff. Inspectors also checked the single central record.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about safeguarding and their wider experience of school. Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' and children's welfare and education. They observed pupils' and children's behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Liz Davidson

Ofsted Inspector

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