

Inspection of St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School

Arran Way, Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham, West Midlands B36 0QE

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher is Ian Gallagher. This school is part of Our Lady and All Saints Multi Academy Company (MAC), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Peter Davis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Bentley.

What is it like to attend this school?

St John the Baptist is a friendly and welcoming school, where pupils feel a strong sense of belonging. Staff know pupils and their families well and help to ensure that the school's values run through every aspect of school life.

Leaders have high expectations and pupils rise to meet them. Leaders want pupils to enjoy school, love learning and achieve so they can contribute to and access all that modern Britain offers. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the school. Pupils say that it is 'okay to be different' and everyone treats each other with respect.

Staff manage behaviour effectively. Positive relationships are at the centre of everything that the school does. Pupils are happy and safe at this school because staff are vigilant and deal appropriately with any concerns pupils may have.

There is a large number of opportunities for pupils to become leaders in school such as the school council members, e-cadets and reading ambassadors. Pupils thrive in these roles. They have a positive impact on life in the school. The school's social action team has successfully raised money to fund initiatives in other parts of the world.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Leaders have carefully designed subject curriculums from early years through to Year 6. They have sequenced the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that they want pupils to know and when. The expectations for all pupils are high. However, in some subjects there is too much to cover. This prevents opportunities for pupils to consolidate, apply or relate their learning to what they have learned in the past.

Learning is well structured. Teachers present information clearly so that pupils learn new knowledge and find lessons enjoyable. There is a focus for pupils to learn key facts and recall information. For example, in art, Year 1 pupils know the primary colours and how to make secondary colours. In history, Year 3 pupils could explain the hierarchical nature of the Egyptian society and that this was also a feature of Roman society. However, in mathematics some pupils struggled to explain why they needed to follow the steps they had been shown to find an answer. They did not fully understand what to do and could not reason why.

The school prioritises reading. Leaders promote learning to read as being crucial for every pupil's educational success. Pupils at the early stages of reading are well supported to keep up with the expectations of the early reading curriculum. Effective support also helps those pupils who have fallen behind in their reading to catch up swiftly. Staff work together with parents to show them how to support their children with reading at home. The books pupils read are well matched to their reading ability. This means pupils enjoy reading because they understand the books they are

reading. Older pupils analyse and discuss texts in detail, while all ages love listening to their teachers read stories to them with enthusiasm. Initiatives such as the 'guest reader of the week' in Reception Class and the 'reading cafe' in Year 1 and Year 2 create enjoyment and a love of stories from a young age.

All pupils achieve well. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND benefit from following the same curriculum as their peers. The school identifies pupils' needs early, and teaching is adapted to meet the needs of these pupils within the classroom. For example, where needed pupils have word banks and images to support their learning. Additionally, adults support pupils well. Leaders listen to parents and work closely with external experts to make sure that pupils with SEND receive the right kind of support.

Pupils behave well. The school environment is calm and purposeful. Systems for rewarding positive actions, or dealing with negative behaviours, are simple and consistently applied.

There is great emphasis on developing pupils' learning beyond the academic curriculum. The children's charter, alongside the Catholic virtues support an exceptional programme of character development. Staff work on ensuring pupils grow as compassionate and curious individuals who are prepared to take risks and accept responsibility for their community. All pupils benefit from a wide range of carefully considered extra-curricular clubs and groups.

Trustees and governors understand their statutory duties thoroughly and diligently fulfil their responsibilities. They use their detailed knowledge of the school to hold it to account effectively. Staff value the opportunities for training and the consideration of their workload and well-being. They are proud to be part of the school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, there is too much subject knowledge to cover, and this limits pupils' ability to consolidate, apply, or link current learning to past lessons. This means that pupils do not have the opportunity to develop a real depth to their learning. Leaders should refine the curriculum so there is less to cover in order to provide pupils with more opportunity to deepen their understanding.
- Sometimes pupils struggle to explain why they need to follow the steps they have been shown to find the answer. This means they do not fully understand what to do and cannot reason why. Leaders should ensure that staff receive appropriate

training and support so that pupils can further develop their understanding and reasoning skills.

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	148093
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10294700
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Bentley
Headteacher	Ian Gallagher
Website	www.sjb.solihull.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Our Lady and All Saints Multi Academy Company.
- No pupils attend alternative provision.
- The school is a Catholic school. Its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in December 2022.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the Catholic senior executive lead, other leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. They also met with groups of staff and pupils.
- To evaluate the school's curriculum, deep dives were conducted in early reading, mathematics, history and art and design. Inspectors spoke to curriculum leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons and reviewed pupils' work with them.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about pupils' behaviour, attendance and policies and procedures. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. An inspector discussed the school's analysis of attendance with leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed information about other areas of learning and the wider curriculum.
- The lead inspector spoke with the school improvement director.
- The inspection team scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- The lead inspector met with those responsible for governance, including the chair of the local governing body.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors 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' interests first.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and looking at information collected from Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Lynda Townsend, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Tibbits	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Forrest	His Majesty's Inspector

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