

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

Fort Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO19 2JE

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 April 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are thriving at this exceptionally welcoming school, where everybody has a smile on their faces. Pupils enjoy an excellent all-round education. The school fully lives up to its high expectations for pupils to achieve their full potential and be ready to make a difference in the world. Pupils are happy, achieve highly and grow into confident and responsible individuals. Parents and carers agree and feel fortunate that their children attend this school. As one parent said, 'It's a wonderful school, where children's well-being and happiness is at the forefront'.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils of all ages are well mannered and show high levels of respect and self-control. They appreciate the strong pastoral care that staff provide, which makes them feel safe and understood.

Pupils relish the vast range of opportunities the school provides, which develop their independence and sense of responsibility. They participate in a wide range of clubs, including musical theatre and team sports. Girls particularly appreciate the increased variety of sports they can now do. In addition, pupils are proud to contribute to the school. For example, the maintenance team helps look after the school site, and Mini Vinnies use their faith to help others.

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

Pupils get off to a great start from the early years and go on to achieve outcomes by the end of Year 6 that are well above national averages. Children benefit from a vocabulary-rich setting that develops their early language and communication skills successfully. For

example, children in Reception Year used impressive mathematical vocabulary to describe different types of shapes.

Pupils make particularly strong progress in developing their early reading skills. Staff deliver the school's phonics programme expertly. This begins from the very start in the Reception Year. Children quickly learn to read their first words using their growing knowledge of the sounds that letters make. If any pupils struggle to read fluently, staff waste no time giving them highly effective extra support. As a result, almost all children become confident and fluent readers by the end of key stage 1. Pupils' achievement in early mathematics is similarly impressive. The mathematics curriculum is exceptionally well delivered and leads pupils to gain genuine confidence and enjoy the subject.

Pupils benefit from a highly ambitious and stimulating curriculum, which fosters their positive attitudes to learning. Across the curriculum, pupils build secure knowledge and produce high-quality work. Art and design and music are significant strengths. Singing assemblies are joyous and inspirational, where pupils sing with confidence and expression. Pupils learn to read musical notation and use their knowledge to sing, clap and play instruments in rhythm. The school strives to make learning purposeful and meaningful for pupils. For example, pupils have excelled in writing letters in Spanish to their pen pals and collaborated online with pupils in a school in India in a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) project. These, and other opportunities, broaden pupils' horizons and understanding of their place in the world.

Staff deliver the curriculum with great expertise. Lessons are highly engaging. The school ensures that pupils remember important knowledge and acquire the vocabulary that they need to learn well in all subjects. Staff rigorously check that pupils keep up in class and adapt lessons when they spot errors and misconceptions. Pupils who may need additional help are identified quickly and receive excellent support. The Shamrock Room provides the essential support that pupils with high levels of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) need to access the curriculum. Staff have been very well trained in how to quickly identify SEND. They expertly support pupils with additional needs and adapt activities successfully. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils are very well prepared for life beyond the school. They develop mature social and emotional skills and learn how their brains and bodies work. The school's work to provide career education is inspirational. Pupils learn through the curriculum and the extensive programme of trips and visiting speakers about a wide range of future careers that they could pursue. As a result, pupils talk enthusiastically about a wide range of different careers.

Leaders' drive to improve the school has not been at the expense of staff well-being. Leaders treat staff with consideration and are mindful of workload. The staff love coming to work as the school feels like a family community. Governors are supportive and take their responsibilities seriously. They ensure that they are well informed about school developments and share in the ambition for continual improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 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 [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	116398
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10341454
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	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Steve Deadman
Headteacher	Michael Lobo
Website	www.spcps.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Portsmouth. The religious character of the school was last inspected in October 2021. The next Section 48 inspection is due to be carried out in 2026.
- The school runs its own before- and after-school provision on site.
- The school uses one unregistered 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 inspector met with members of staff, the headteacher and other senior leaders, subject leaders, pastoral leaders and the special educational

needs co-ordinator. The inspector also met with members of the local governing body and had telephone discussions with representatives from the local authority.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some 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' interests first.
- The inspector considered the views of members of staff who responded to Ofsted's online staff survey. The views of parents were taken into account from the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and free-text responses. The inspector met with groups of pupils formally and informally to discuss their views of the school.

Inspection team

Mark Bagust, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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