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

Tutbury Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE13 0AJ

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 December 2024

Outcome

St Modwen's Catholic Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Modwen's is an extremely friendly and welcoming school. It sits at the heart of the local community. The school has set an ambitious mission for its pupils to aim high and achieve their potential as socially responsible citizens. Pupils work hard and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

The environment for learning at this school is very positive. Staff consistently set high expectations for how pupils should behave. Pupils know exactly what is expected of them. They are incredibly polite and respectful. Pupils are sensible and behave well. Pupils are happy and safe.

Music has importance here. Pupils learn to play instruments such as the ukulele, violin and flute. They have regular opportunities to perform, recently singing Christmas carols for the Lord Mayor. Pupils take part in activities such as running, Gaelic football and gardening.

Pupils learn how to be responsible citizens by taking on one of the many leadership roles at the school. These include team captains, head boy and head girl and 'Mini Vinnies'. Pupils fundraise for an annually appointed charity. They are taught about the importance of contributing positively to the local community and have volunteered at a local soup kitchen.

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

In most subjects, the curriculum clearly sets out what pupils should learn and when. This enables pupils to build their knowledge over time. In these subjects, they know and understand important concepts and vocabulary. However, in a few subjects, the curriculum is not clearly set out in a way that builds knowledge effectively over time. This means that teachers are not able to consistently share important knowledge clearly with pupils. In these subjects, pupils do not know and remember more.

Reading is prioritised. Children in the early years are taught phonics from the Reception Year. Staff have the necessary expertise to teach reading well. They spot pupils' misconceptions and address them swiftly and effectively. Staff carry out regular checks so that they know each pupil's stage of phonics knowledge. Pupils who need to catch up attend effective additional phonics lessons each day. Consequently, gaps in pupils' learning are decreasing. Pupils regularly make use of the school library and read books for enjoyment. Most pupils read with fluency and accuracy by the end of Year 2.

Children in early years are well cared for in a nurturing environment. Staff have identified that children start school in need of more specific learning around communication and language and fine motor skills. As a result, staff have made sure that the curriculum has daily opportunities to focus on this learning. This includes manipulating dough in time with music and bespoke speech and language support. Staff have precise knowledge, which they use to teach the curriculum. However, the support for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in the early years is not working well. Some pupils with SEND learn less successfully because the curriculum is not well adapted to their needs.

Pupils with SEND are identified early on. Staff are knowledgeable about pupils' needs and possess appropriate knowledge to support some pupils with SEND. As a result, some pupils with SEND are well supported. However, some staff are unsure about how to make changes to the curriculum for pupils with SEND. This impacts on teaching and, therefore, the achievement of these pupils.

Pupils know to treat everyone equally. They understand fundamental British values, such as being tolerant and respectful of the views of others, which they are. Members of the school parliament have visited the Houses of Parliament in London to learn about democracy and the rule of law. They have shared this learning with others. In Year 6, pupils build their confidence and resilience through going on an outdoor learning residential trip. Pupils take part in visits to enrich their learning, for example to Tutbury Castle and a local farm to enhance the science curriculum.

Pupils attend school regularly. The school sets high expectations for attendance. Pupils' absences are followed up swiftly and effectively. Recently, the school has improved its overview of how regularly pupils attend school. This work is leading to more effective work with parents and carers and impacting positively on pupils' attendance.

Governors appropriately support and challenge the work of the school. They are knowledgeable about the school. Governors make decisions in the best interests of pupils. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about their workplace. They appreciate the investment in their support and continuous professional development.

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 few subjects, the curriculum does not build knowledge effectively over time. This affects how well pupils remember important knowledge in these subjects. The school should review and revise the curriculum for these few subjects so that pupils build their knowledge successfully over time.
- Some pupils with SEND, including in the early years, are not supported well because curriculum adaptations that the school makes are not effective. This affects the achievement of some pupils with SEND. The school should ensure that strategies to support pupils with SEND are effective so that all pupils with SEND achieve its ambitious outcomes.

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 November 2014.

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	124326
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10343886
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jerome Emery
Headteacher	Andrea Sherratt
Website	www.st-modwens.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school's most recent section 48 inspection was in February 2018.
- This is a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Birmingham.
- The school makes use of 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and other leaders. The inspector met with representatives from the archdiocese and the local authority. Meetings were held with the school's curriculum leaders, teachers and support staff.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour and interactions during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes and spoke to pupils during the inspection.
- 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 responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. The inspector spoke to parents and carers. The inspector also reviewed responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Emma Titchener, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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