

Inspection of a good school: St Gildas' Catholic Junior School

Oakington Way, London N8 9EP

Inspection dates:

2 May 2024

Outcome

St Gildas' Catholic Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Gildas' are incredibly proud of their school. They described it as a community of 'brothers and sisters' where they support each other. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm, caring and nurturing. They are based on mutual respect. Pupils feel valued and are happy.

Pupils feel safe at this school. They trust adults to deal with any issues or worries, such as bullying. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online and in different real-life situations. For instance, pupils receive cycle safety training as a way of helping them to keep safe when outside of school.

The school's new approach to behaviour has been appreciated by pupils. Pupils know what is expected of them. They are polite and well mannered. In lessons, they are generally focused on their learning and classrooms are calm and orderly. At social times, pupils from different classes and of all ages play happily together.

Pupils are rising to the new leadership team's high expectations for their achievement. They generally achieve well across the curriculum, and in the subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, the recently revised curriculum has not had time to fully ensure that pupils are remembering what they are being taught in the long term across all subjects.

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

The school's new leadership team have worked at pace to strengthen the education for pupils at St Gildas'. The governing body, diocese, local authority, school leaders and staff have been united in identifying strengths and areas to be addressed for school improvement. This has enabled many positive changes to be successfully implemented in a short space of time, and in turn ensure that pupils learn well overall.

There is an ambitious curriculum in place. The curriculum has been carefully sequenced and thought out to help pupils to achieve the aspirational end goals. Expectations for pupils' learning in each subject, while now clear, have undergone recent changes. Some subject curriculums are more developed than others. For example, in English, mathematics and science, staff have secure subject knowledge. They are skilled at delivering lessons that enable pupils to remember what they have been taught. Across the wider curriculum, subject expertise and leadership are developing. Pupils' recall of their learning is not as secure as that found in English, mathematics and science. This is because curriculum thinking is not yet fully understood by all staff. The delivery of the curriculum and the checks on pupils' learning are not focused sharply on the key skills, knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to know and remember.

Reading is prioritised. In lessons, adults use high-quality texts to model reading with fluency and prosody. They explicitly teach pupils how to understand and interpret the texts that they read, such as by making predictions and inferences. Regular checks identify if any pupils are not keeping up or on track with the reading curriculum's expectations. Pupils who need it attend well-targeted phonics or group reading sessions and read individually to an adult. Through this, pupils are helped to get better at reading. A love of reading is promoted through events such as World Book Day and initiatives such as 'secret reader'. Reading for pleasure is promoted through the school library and visits to the local library.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in school life. They learn alongside their peers with adaptations made to ensure that their needs are being met. For example, teaching breaks learning down into smaller steps so that pupils can take tasks in their stride. However, pupils with SEND are sometimes moved on too quickly to new learning before they have securely acquired the key knowledge that they need. While the school's 'pupil profiles' ensure that staff who are supporting pupils with SEND have the information they need, sometimes the targets set for pupils' learning are too vague. In these instances, targets are not precise enough to ensure that additional support can be sharply focused on each pupil's next steps.

Pupils enjoy school and all it has to offer. This is reflected in their high attendance, which is closely tracked and monitored by leaders.

Pupils take their roles of responsibility, such as school councillors, anti-bullying ambassadors or chaplaincy members, very seriously. Pupils enjoy the competitive sports that they can take part in and other special events, such as singing at the local singing festival. The curriculum for relationships and sex education and health education provides opportunities for pupils to explore their feelings, emotions and relationships. They are taught that not all families are the same. What pupils learn focuses on helping them to develop an understanding that everyone has the right to be treated with respect.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Many subjects across the curriculum have recently undergone changes. In some of these subjects, the school is currently developing subject leadership and expertise. As a result, the delivery of the curriculum is not precise enough to enable pupils to remember in the long term what they have been taught. The school should ensure that, across all subjects, the delivery of the curriculum supports pupils to learn and recall knowledge in the long term. This should include building on the school's existing work to develop leadership and teaching expertise in these subjects.
- Sometimes, pupils with SEND are moved on too quickly to new learning before they have acquired the key knowledge that they need. In some cases, targets set for pupils with SEND are also not precise enough to support their progression in learning. As a result, some pupils with SEND are not developing as deep an understanding across the curriculum as they could do. Staff that are supporting pupils are not able to be sharply and consistently focused on pupils' next steps. The school needs to continue to develop expertise in the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND so that these pupils are consistently well supported to build on what they know and achieve their targets

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 in February 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	102151
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10327642
Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Frances Booker
Headteacher	Peter O'Shannessy
Website	www.stpetersandstgildas.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic school within the Diocese of Westminster. The last statutory inspection under section 48 of the Education Act was in June 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, governors, including the chair of governors, and representatives from the local authority and diocese.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey as well as responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Julie Wright, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Deborah Walters

His Majesty's Inspector

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