

Inspection of a good school: St Adrian Roman Catholic Primary School

Watling View, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 2PB

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 December 2022

Outcome

St Adrian Roman Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high ambition for all pupils to achieve well. Pupils enjoy learning a well-balanced curriculum. They are keen to share what they have learned and can remember. Pupils enjoy celebration assemblies, where success is shared with the whole school.

Pupils are happy and safe in this caring school. Staff are warm and friendly and from the early years develop positive relationships with children. Pupils trust the staff in school and know who to speak to if they have a problem.

Starting in nursery, children learn how to behave well and they show kindness and respect to each other as they go through the school. Bullying is rare because pupils know how to be kind. Pupils enjoy making friends. They trust staff to deal with any disagreements quickly.

Pupils enjoy the clubs available at the school and these are well attended. They develop their talents and interests beyond the curriculum. Pupils take pride in the shows that they prepare for parents and peers. Pupils are enthusiastic about making a difference to their school community and helping others. They do this through pupil leadership responsibilities, such as school council, sports ambassadors and prefects.

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

Leaders have planned an interesting curriculum that is suitably broad and ambitious. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils to achieve well. They set out clear expectations for what they want pupils to learn in subjects each year, beginning in the early years. In some subjects, leaders have planned what they want pupils to know by the end of the year but have not broken down what this looks like for pupils from lesson to lesson. Where this is the case, it is not always clear what pupils are learning from the activities that teachers have planned. Children in the early years enjoy a well organised curriculum. Leaders are clear on the skills and knowledge that children are developing and how this will help them in key stage 1.

Work across the curriculum is typically well matched to pupils' needs. In some subjects, this is not the case and staff find it hard to check what pupils have learned or spot gaps in pupils' learning. Where the work is best matched to pupils' needs, it is because teachers are clear about what pupils will learn, practise or revisit in lessons.

Leaders have made reading a priority. Children in the early years learn phonics from the start. Staff quickly spot if pupils are not keeping up with their reading. Leaders are quick to put regular support in place to help pupils catch up with their peers to become fluent readers. Pupils, including those who need extra help, read books that match their reading stage. This means pupils learn to read well. Pupils enjoy reading for pleasure. They choose books that capture their interest. They choose these books from the new library, which they helped to create.

Leaders have clear systems and processes in place for identifying pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Curriculum adaptations are in place for pupils when needed and pupils make good use of them. Adults support pupils during lessons and during catch up sessions with targeted help. However, some pupils are not as well supported as they could be. This is because some support plans do not accurately reflect pupils' needs or help teachers to best support pupils' learning. Some staff have not had training to support pupils with particular types of SEND.

Pupils across the school behave with respect and kindness. They listen well in lessons and focus on their work. Pupils have many opportunities to represent the school through pupil leadership roles and they are proud to serve their school. Pupils learn about British values, such as respect for the beliefs and views of others, through assemblies. They know that being unique is something to celebrate.

Governors are proud to be members of the school community. Leaders, including governors, have a clear vision for school improvement. Leaders have prioritised staff development for early reading but have not provided professional development opportunities for other curriculum leaders in order to develop their subjects. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and well-being when making decisions. Staff speak highly of the support they receive from leaders. Staff are proud to be part of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have clear systems in place to report and record concerns. All staff use the systems to keep pupils safe. Leaders have ensured that staff receive regular safeguarding training. This ensures that staff can spot potential signs that pupils could be at risk or suffering from harm. Leaders provide training for school specific issues. Leaders make timely referrals and follow these up with external agencies to ensure that pupils and families get the support they need. Leaders make the necessary checks when recruiting staff.

Pupils learn about many aspects of safety, including online safety and road safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not clearly identified the knowledge and skills that pupils should learn in some subjects. As a result, pupils are developing gaps in knowledge needed for future learning. Leaders must identify clearly and breakdown the specific knowledge they want pupils to learn in each subject. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders have the training needed to implement curriculum plans and manage their subject effectively, and leaders should check that they do so.
- For some pupils with SEND, leaders' support plans do not accurately reflect the pupils' needs. As a result, some pupils are not as well supported to access the curriculum, and therefore develop learning gaps. Some staff have not had the training needed to effectively support pupils with SEND that they work with. Leaders must ensure that all support plans help teachers adapt their teaching effectively. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the training and expertise needed to support pupils with SEND effectively.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2016.

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	117470
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10200264
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	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martha Moroney
Headteacher	Aideen Porter
Website	www.stadrians.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 October 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There has been a new headteacher appointed since the previous inspection. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) took up their post in September 2022.
- Many staff were not working at the school at the time of the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- St Adrian's Roman Catholic Primary school is a voluntary-aided school. It is part of the Archdiocese of Westminster. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2019. The school's next section 48 will be within eight school years.
- The school does not currently meet the expectation of teaching hours and the governors have begun the process to ensure that the school meets the expectation by September 2023.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders and the SENCo.
- The inspector met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector spoke to staff to discuss workload, well-being and safeguarding.
- To evaluate the quality of education, the inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector looked at curriculum plans for other subjects, including history, art and science.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about their learning, safety and behaviour.
- Documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance was scrutinised by the inspector.
- The inspector took account of the 94 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- The inspector took account of the 24 staff surveys completed.
- The inspector took account of the 139 pupil surveys completed.

Inspection team

Nerrissa Bear, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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