

Inspection of St Edmund's and St Thomas' Catholic Primary School

Oxford Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, Merseyside L22 8QF

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

At this welcoming school, pupils enjoy learning and are very happy. Staff and pupils demonstrate the school's values of 'service, love, compassion and respect' in the courteous and caring ways that they treat others. Staff and pupils help those new to the school, including children in the early years and those from other countries, to settle in well and to quickly feel that they are a valued part of the school community.

Pupils know that leaders and staff have high expectations of behaviour. They respond by behaving with good manners and a positive approach to all aspects of school life. Leaders deal swiftly and effectively with the rare incidents of unkind behaviour, including bullying. They have high expectations of what pupils will achieve. Pupils work hard and most achieve well in most subjects.

Leaders provide well for pupils' wider development. Pupils spoke animatedly to inspectors about taking part in residential trips which benefit them academically and socially. Pupils make a strong contribution to their school community. They learn the meaning of democracy, for example by holding elections to select candidates to represent their age group on the school council. They told inspectors that they have helped to make decisions such as about the design of new outdoor facilities and the choice of playtime equipment.

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

Pupils benefit from a well-designed and ambitious curriculum which allows learning to progress logically from the beginning of the Nursery class to the end of Year 6. Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same curriculum as their peers. A small number of pupils with SEND benefit from individual curriculums which better match their learning needs.

Leaders have made sure that teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. In most subjects, teachers implement the curriculum as leaders expect. However, in some subjects, for example mathematics, sometimes teaching does not fully match the intended curriculum. As a result, some checks on learning do not align with what leaders expect pupils to know and remember. Sometimes, pupils cannot build effectively on previous learning.

Leaders make sure that teachers and subject leaders undertake training in the subjects that they teach. Teachers' good subject knowledge contributes to clear explanations and skilled questioning. In most subjects, teachers adapt learning activities well to the needs of pupils with SEND. However, in some subjects, this is not fully effective. As a result, in these subjects, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Leaders and staff are very knowledgeable about how pupils, including children in the early years, learn to read. Staff teach the reading curriculum very well. They quickly identify pupils who are falling behind and give them the help that they need to catch

up quickly with their peers. Teachers make sure that they match pupils' reading books to their current level of understanding of letters and sounds. Pupils become confident and fluent readers ready for the next stage in their education.

Staff carefully choose the range of books that pupils read as they move up the school. Pupils read widely and often. They thoroughly enjoy listening to staff reading to them as well as reading aloud themselves. They appreciate trips to the local library, including to perform Shakespeare. They respond very well to reading competitions and rewards such as becoming a 'millionaire reader' after each one million words read at home.

Leaders quickly identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers, as well as the school's pastoral and counselling staff, care for these pupils very well. Pupils with SEND have all the help and guidance that they need to participate safely and happily in all aspects of school life.

Pupils behave very well in class and at social times. Teachers generate very positive relationships with praise and humour. Staff skilfully address the needs of those pupils who have behaviour-related SEND so that lessons are orderly and undisturbed.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of sporting, artistic and musical activities, which take place before school, after school and at lunchtime. The extensive sporting provision is particularly effective in developing attributes such as resilience, self-esteem and teamwork. Pupils learn how to stay physically and emotionally healthy. They respect and value those who are different from themselves. In an age-appropriate way, they learn about matters such as healthy relationships and consent.

Staff are proud to work at this school. They said that they feel that leaders take into account their workload and well-being when making decisions. Governors are very knowledgeable about the school and make a significant contribution to its development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors, have developed a very strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders, staff and pupils fully understand their role in keeping the whole school community safe from harm.

Staff undertake regular training so that they know how to recognise if a pupil is at risk and how to follow agreed procedures correctly. Leaders respond very quickly to safeguarding concerns. They have developed strong links with a wide range of external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the best possible support.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe from physical and emotional harm. They understand local risks such as the dangers of playing near the sea. They have learned how to use the internet safely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, sometimes teachers do not adapt activities well enough to meet the learning needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, in these subjects, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that teachers adapt the activities which they choose for pupils with SEND well enough for this group of pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- In some subjects, including mathematics, leaders do not ensure that subject content and teachers' checks on learning fully match the intended curriculum. As result, at times, teachers cannot build effectively on prior learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers fully implement the intended curriculum and check how well pupils know and remember it so that, in all subjects, pupils reach their full academic potential.

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	104928
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10256049
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	336
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carmel Howard
Headteacher	Kieran Loftus
Website	www.stedmundsprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 to 22 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Edmund's and St Thomas' is a voluntary-aided Roman Catholic primary school in the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in November 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, history and computing. For each deep dive, they met with leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their

learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. An inspector also observed pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 reading to familiar adults.

- Inspectors considered other subjects in the school's curriculum.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- An inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. She spoke with representatives of Sefton local authority and a representative of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils to gather their views about the school, including on behaviour and learning. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtime.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including the free-text responses. An inspector spoke to a range of parents and carers in the playground at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the responses to the Ofsted online survey for staff. There were no responses to the survey for pupils.
- An inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. She scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. She also spoke with governors, staff, parents and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation provided by school leaders and staff. This included the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, headteacher's reports and the leaders' self-evaluation document.

Inspection team

Liz Kelly, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Woodhouse	Ofsted Inspector
Shameem Patel	Ofsted Inspector

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