

Inspection of St Charles' Catholic Voluntary Academy

The Carriage Drive, Hadfield, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 1PJ

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff do their utmost to ensure that pupils 'Belong, Believe and Blossom' at St Charles'. This ethos and vision shine through many aspects of school life. Pupils say that they are happy and safe. One pupil said, 'It is a pleasure to be here. I am proud to be part of this school.'

Staff have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils work hard. They are enthusiastic learners, who contribute well in lessons. They behave well and are polite to each other, staff and to visitors. Pupils say that bullying incidents are rare and that staff deal with them swiftly and fairly. Pupils explain bullying as being 'repeated, unwanted, intentional and negative' (RUIN).

Staff provide a wide range of popular activities that help to stretch pupils' talents and interests. Staff have thought carefully about these activities. They provide opportunities that pupils may not have experienced within the local community. Visiting a beach, a museum or various places of worship, for example.

Parents have overwhelmingly positive views of the school. One typical comment being 'I couldn't be happier with the progress my child has made since they started at the school.'

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum starts in the early years. It is ambitious and well designed. Individual subjects are carefully thought through and appropriately sequenced. Leaders have made sure that the subject content and key vocabulary they want pupils to learn, and when, is clear. However, these curriculum plans are new. Subject leaders need the time and skills to ensure that their subjects are embedded consistently in all classes.

Assessment is used sensibly. It is not overburdensome. Teachers use end of unit tests. These help them to understand which aspects of the curriculum pupils have learned and which need to be revisited. Pupils appreciate the 'fluent in five' quick quizzes. These occur in a range of subjects. They help pupils to remember for the long-term what they have been taught. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain tasks clearly. Lessons run smoothly with little interruption.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of phonics and early reading. Pupils, and children in the early years, have a good selection of books from which to choose. They are rewarded for reading frequently. One pupil declared, 'I read one-and-a-half million words last year!' There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Staff ensure that pupils' reading books match the sounds that they are learning. Pupils who might be struggling with reading are given extra help and support. However, not all pupils use their phonic skills effectively. They do not always use

appropriate strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. This prevents them from progressing as well as they could.

Pupils have a good attitude to school and to their learning. Staff use the school behaviour system consistently and fairly. Pupils know that it is 'good to be green'. They enjoy receiving certificates and house points for showing resilience, teamwork, empathy and good communication. Pupils' attendance and punctuality is a strength. Leaders take appropriate and effective action in the rare instances that this is not the case.

Leaders have ensured that pupils have a good understanding of diversity and equality. The curriculum encourages pupils to stay safe and be healthy. Pupils learn how to manage their feelings and emotions. The '10:10 pathway' encourages pupils to undertake various challenges. These include activities such as using an Ordnance Survey map, playing a musical instrument and a new board game. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of relationships and health education. For example, they have been educated about same-sex relationships. Pupils are being prepared well for their next steps and for life in modern Britain.

Children in the early years get a good deal. Staff ensure that the planned activities are purposeful and interesting. Children can sustain their attention and concentration on these activities. The well-resourced classroom and outdoor area are busy yet calm. Relationships are warm and positive.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Staff ensure that appropriate support is given to those pupils who require it. There are opportunities for pupils with SEND to improve their self-esteem, self-confidence and organisational skills. There are positive links with outside agencies, such as the speech and language and the autism outreach teams.

The governing body is effective in holding leaders fully to account for their actions. Governors find out for themselves how the school is performing. They visit frequently and talk with staff and pupils. Staff say that leaders are considerate of their well-being and their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make all the required recruitment checks. Leaders and staff have received appropriate safeguarding training. They know the signs of potential abuse and neglect to look out for. They are aware of specific issues around county lines, drug trafficking and the 'Prevent' duty. Safeguarding records are detailed. There are appropriate links with outside agencies, such as social care and the police. Pupils have the opportunity to learn about the potential dangers of using the internet and about staying safe near to water.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The subject curriculum plans are relatively new. They need time to become fully embedded from the early years through to Year 6. Leaders should enable subject leaders to have appropriate time, knowledge and skills to ensure that their subject curriculum is fully embedded and being implemented by staff, in all classes, as intended.
- Not all pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read use their phonic skills to decode unfamiliar words. This is preventing these pupils from progressing as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that staff have the appropriate knowledge, so that these pupils use their phonic skills to be able to successfully decode any unfamiliar words.

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	146273
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10254730
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachel Shaw
Headteacher	Bernadette Quirke
Website	www.stcharleshadfield.srscmat.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Charles' Catholic Voluntary Academy converted to become an academy school in September 2018. When its predecessor school, St Charles' Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school is part of the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Academy Trust.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Nottingham. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school took place in June 2016. The school's next section 48 inspection is due to take place within this academic year.
- There have been significant changes to the membership of the governing body since the previous inspection.
- The school offers breakfast and after-school clubs that are both managed by the governing body.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.

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 has 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 held various meetings with the headteacher and other leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and members of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: phonics and early reading, mathematics, science and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met 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.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and spoke with leaders about some other subjects. The lead inspector observed pupils from key stage 1 reading to a familiar adult and listened to pupils read from Year 6.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at breaktimes and around the school.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector checked the single central record. Inspectors checked staff's knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding records were scrutinised.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's parent and staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Liz Moore

Ofsted Inspector

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