

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

Prospect Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire SL7 2PJ

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Inspection date:

17 December 2024

## Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Al Nicol. The school is part of St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Joe Richardson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Catherine Davies.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, safe and model the school's values wonderfully. Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. Staff manage pupils' behaviour fairly and consistently. Staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. These expectations are realised across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. By the end of key stage 2, pupils have developed secure knowledge and understanding, with many achieving highly in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils thrive through the school's opportunities to take on leadership roles and responsibilities. 'Pupil subject leaders', librarians and school councillors all contribute to school life positively. Pupils learn about how to look after their physical and mental health. Healthy eating is promoted throughout the school community. Cookery lessons also help pupils learn about nutrition and positive lifestyles. Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe online. For example, pupils learn about boundaries, not giving out personal information and understanding digital footprints. The school's clubs include music, gardening and sports. As well as these, the school offers a wide range of music and performance activities which develop pupils' character, confidence and resilience.

The school helps pupils to develop a sense of belonging and places significant emphasis on community. This focus is implemented very successfully. Pupils are well known as individuals and are offered expert support to meet their needs.

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

Leaders are highly skilled. Governors and trustees, for example, know the school's strengths and support the school effectively. Key areas such as phonics, mathematics and the school's personal development work have a strong, positive impact on pupils' learning. The new leadership team acts with courage and passion, taking decisions that are in the best interests of children. Parents and carers appreciate the excellent work from staff at the school. Many parents shared positive views, such as, 'This school is like one family. [It is] a place where children feel nurtured, and staff go above and beyond to support the children in their care.'

The school has an ambitious curriculum. Staff have identified the precise knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need across the curriculum. Early reading is taught expertly. Staff have strong subject knowledge and teach phonics with precision and dedication to every pupil. Staff pay close attention to detail when checking and modelling new sounds to support pupils individually. If any pupils fall behind in reading, they catch up with their peers quickly. The school's thoughtful sequences of English lessons also help pupils to be confident writers. Pupils develop transcription skills and build their knowledge of composition securely. Pupils with SEND have their needs identified quickly. The school uses checks on pupils' learning successfully to improve lessons. Where necessary, lessons are adapted for pupils with SEND successfully. By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Most pupils attend school regularly. The school has positive and supportive relationships with parents and the school community. Managing pupil attendance is a high priority for the school. Staff analyse attendance information thoroughly. They seek to understand the individual contexts and barriers to attendance that might exist. Actions to reduce persistent absence at the school have shown some signs of recent improvement, with some success stories for individual pupils. However, a small number of pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. These pupils miss out on vital learning across the curriculum and do not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils are respectful towards staff and each other. The school has high expectations for behaviour and this is reflected in pupils' positive behaviour and conduct. Staff make sure that pupils follow appropriate routines. Low-level disruption is not tolerated and pupils' behaviour does not disrupt lessons or the day-to-day life of the school. Both in the playground and within classrooms and corridors, pupils are polite and caring. Pupils work well together and feel a sense of responsibility for each other's well-being. Pupils respond to adults' instructions quickly. Pupils know what bullying is. They say that any behaviour incidents are resolved quickly.

The school develops pupils' character, confidence and resilience well. Pupils are prepared to be responsible, respectful and active citizens. Pupils enjoy school trips, such as educational visits to museums and historical sites. Pupils experience presenting publicly and speaking to audiences regularly. They love to take part in whole-school dramatic productions. Pupils enjoy singing carols and reading stories within the community. Pupils know how to make friends and share. Pupils are very well prepared for their next stage of education, both socially and academically.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. Despite some recent improvement, rates of persistent absence are high for a small number of pupils. As a result, these pupils do not benefit from the full range of opportunities throughout the curriculum or achieve as well as they could. The school should continue to work closely with families and ensure that pupils at risk of missing school receive the support they need to attend school regularly.

## **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 predecessor school, St Peter's Catholic Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in September 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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	148669
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10341893
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	77
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Catherine Davies
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Joe Richardson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Al Nicol
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stpetersschoolmarlow.org.uk">www.stpetersschoolmarlow.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Peter's Catholic Primary School joined the St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust in December 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is an academy converter Catholic school in the Diocese of Northampton. Its most recent inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 for schools of a religious character was in November 2024.

## 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 inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior staff.

- The inspectors met with the chair of the board of directors and other senior trust officers as well as the chair of the local governing body and a representative of the Diocese of Northampton.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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' interest first.
- Inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils and observed their behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed from parents and carers through Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Francois Walker

Ofsted Inspector

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