

Inspection of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Windermere Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2RF

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 July 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Chris Beazeley. This school is part of Assisi Catholic Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief accounting officer, Gemma Ackred, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Frank McEvoy.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has a warm and friendly ethos. Pupils respect their teachers and one another. Pupils show their support in a multitude of ways, from helping others learn lines for the school's production to celebrating when a peer does well. Older pupils support younger ones when at play, taking them under their wing. Pupils appreciate difference. They view pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) as having a 'superpower'. Hence, pupils with SEND are comfortable talking with others about what helps support them.

Pupils are proud to help their school and the local community. The eco-council works on sustainable projects, such as improving the local beach habitat. Pupils' contributions to the 'hungry cupboard' support homeless people in Southend. Pupils are eager to learn. They look forward to the many trips and visits they have that enrich the curriculum.

Pupils rise to adults' high expectations of how to behave. Children in Nursery sit beautifully on the carpet ready to learn. Their learning behaviours continue as they move through the school. Pupils listen closely to their teachers and are curious to know more. In social times, pupils trust adults to deal with concerns and friendship squabbles when they arise.

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

The school has improved its curriculum, including that of early years, so that it builds pupils' knowledge and understanding over time. Staff share the school's vision. They are keen for pupils to broaden their horizons and to have experiences they may not ordinarily have. Hence, the school has a wide enrichment offer linked to the curriculum.

'Being the best you can be' not only drives the curriculum but also the training offer for staff. This is broad and ensures staff have access to the latest educational research. As a result, staff readily pick up pupils' errors and address misconceptions. They explicitly teach the vocabulary of the subject. They make sure pupils revisit key concepts to consolidate learning. However, in a few classes, staff do not consider carefully enough how to adapt their teaching so that pupils with high prior attainment deepen their thinking. Similarly, in some lessons, pupils with SEND could achieve more. On occasion, teachers do not use the best strategies to teach these pupils well.

The school has re-energised its reading curriculum. Pupils enjoy and have access to a wealth of texts that celebrate their heritage and many different backgrounds. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite books and authors. A love of reading is palpable. Pupils who are learning to read are well served. Staff build pupils' reading fluency by giving them opportunities to practise their phonics knowledge. This includes at times other than in their phonics sessions. The school's early

reading intervention programme effectively supports those pupils who need more help to progress.

The identification procedures for pupils with SEND are clear for staff. The school's introduction of an electronic system is improving staff access to and the reviewing of pupils' support plans. This is helping ease staff workload. Staff have a greater understanding of how to support pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. They are pertinently using class resources to help reduce pupils' anxiety.

The provision in Nursery 'shines' as described by parents. Staff know the children exceptionally well. They adjust children's learning according to their starting points. In their outdoor learning, children consolidate what they have learned earlier. Children also undertake targeted activities to help their physical and social development, for instance practising their fine motor skills through painting. In Nursery, continuous provision builds upon what children know and can do. However, in Reception, checks to inform teachers' planning and delivery are not as precise. This means that sometimes children in Reception do not always undertake purposeful activities that consolidate their learning.

The wider development of pupils is well considered. The school's Christian ethos is woven throughout school life, while also celebrating other religions, cultures and traditions. The teaching of the core values of faith underpins the respectful behaviour of pupils. This begins in Nursery where children learn to work well and cooperatively with one another. Older pupils have multiple opportunities to practise leadership. This includes being school ambassadors, leading learners and sports captains.

The trust, aided by the local governing body, provides effective support and challenge for the school. They check to ensure staff feel valued. The school looks after its staff through initiatives such as well-being Wednesdays. The morale of staff is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes teachers do not effectively adjust their teaching to suit all pupils' needs and abilities in their lessons. This means that some pupils who are high attaining stall in their learning as sometimes they find work too easy. Sometimes pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they are able to. The school should provide further training so that teachers sharpen their adaptive practice, thus ensuring that learning is effective for all pupils.

- In Reception, staff do not use assessment as well as they might to identify exactly what children can and cannot do across all areas of learning. As a result, staff's use of continuous provision sometimes lacks precision. Children do not always undertake purposeful activities to consolidate their learning. The school should review how assessment informs planning so that staff have a deeper knowledge of what children know and can do, thus ensuring that children make the best start they can to their education.

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	145678
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	10288563
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	456
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Frank McEvoy
CAO of the trust	Gemma Ackred
Headteacher	Chris Beazeley
Website	www.shs-southend.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 June 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school has several new senior leaders. This includes the current headteacher who joined the school in September 2023.
- The school's denominational education and collective worship were inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in January 2023. The next section 48 inspection will take place within eight years of this date.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and

have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust, the chief accounting officer for the trust, trustees and representatives from the local governing body. She also spoke via telephone to a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with a leader at alternative provision.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, design technology, music and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read with a familiar member of staff.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects, including personal, social and health education.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times. They considered pupils' views about behaviour in school. They also spoke with staff about pupils' behaviour and staff's workload and well-being.
- 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' interests first.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey and Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They also read an email from a parent.

Inspection team

Liz Smith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Nicola Shadbolt	Ofsted Inspector
Bessie Owen	His Majesty's Inspector

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