

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Walsall

Address: Blue Lane East, Walsall, West Midlands, WS2 8HN

Unique reference number (URN): 104233

Inspection report: 3 February 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Across the school, younger pupils learn to read quickly, and this is shown in the positive outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils make positive progress from their starting points and generally learn well.

On the whole, pupils talk about their learning, particularly more recent learning, accurately. In most subjects, they generally grasp the concepts they are being taught. For example, in science, pupils demonstrate secure knowledge of forces such as gravity and air resistance.

Pupils' results in the Year 4 multiplication tables check are improving year on year and are now above the national average. The school's published outcomes in the key stage 2 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics show the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard is broadly in line with the national average and typically has been over time. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve at least in line with their peers. Leaders are focused on increasing the proportion of pupils who reach the higher standard in national tests by the end of Year 6.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Attendance is a success story of this school. Leaders are diligent in their work to promote attendance. Underlying systems to monitor attendance are robust. Attendance is broadly in line with national averages. Where absence is a concern, effective support is put in place quickly. Staff work closely with parents, carers and other professionals to remove barriers to attendance. Leaders' efforts have led to improving rates of attendance and a recent reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Disadvantaged pupils attend at least in line with their peers. Leaders are taking appropriate action to sustain this.

Pupils come into school calmly and quietly. They settle down to their work quickly. In lessons, most pupils are attentive and listen well. Staff follow appropriate procedures and support pupils if they lose concentration and successfully help them to refocus. Pupils say bullying does not happen often, and when it does, it is resolved quickly. Pupils who need extra support to live up to the school's expectations get the help that they need. At social times, pupils generally play with each other cooperatively. Staff have put turn-taking systems in place to ensure that football, basketball and other games are fair. As a result, behaviour is typically positive.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have implemented an ambitious curriculum that is broad and balanced. It starts in the early years and identifies the knowledge pupils should learn year on year. Leaders know the strengths of their curriculum and teaching and where further work is needed. They have trained staff so they are clear on what to teach and how to teach it. Staff implement the school's curriculum effectively. Typically, teachers provide pupils with appropriate models so they know what they are aiming for. Teachers accurately check how well pupils are learning. However, there is some variation in the quality of teaching across the school. This means

that, sometimes, teaching does not meet the aspirational expectations of leaders, and pupils' learning is not embedded.

The teaching of reading and phonics is successful. From the early years onwards, phonics lessons are efficiently delivered. Pupils learn to read well. Pupils who need help to keep up with their peers are well supported. Pupils of all ages enjoy learning about the carefully selected and interesting books they read.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or other vulnerabilities get the help they need. Teachers adapt lessons or tasks appropriately so that all pupils access the curriculum.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders prioritise an inclusive culture across the school. They have established systems and procedures to support staff in assessing and monitoring pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders oversee these carefully. Staff are trained effectively so they can identify the barriers to learning that pupils face as soon as they start school. They put support in place for pupils and review it regularly. They make swift and timely adjustments if they are needed. Leaders set pupils targets that are specific and suitable. Staff work effectively with pupils in order to achieve these targets. They ensure pupils get the support they need to achieve them. As a result, pupils with SEND make clear progress in their learning and development; they achieve well in national tests. Staff support pupils who need help with communication and language, reading or mathematics appropriately. Teachers' adaptations in lessons usually enable pupils who need extra help to access the curriculum successfully. For example, teachers provide pupils with specific targets and prompts. Leaders use additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils effectively. Staff ensure that disadvantaged pupils' pastoral and academic needs are met.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and governors care deeply about the Catholic ethos and culture of the school. They prioritise pastoral care for pupils that is underpinned by this ethos. Leaders know the school well and have ambitious plans for improvement. They are working at pace to improve all areas of the school and embed the clear vision that they have. In most areas, these actions are helping to ensure greater consistency. There is now a drive and ambition within the school to ensure further improvement.

Governors meet their statutory duties sufficiently. They provide support and challenge to school leaders, and they are working to broaden their involvement in the school. They have established new governance committees to further support and challenge the leaders. This is helping to influence the pace of improvement.

Staff at all levels put the pupils at the heart of what they do. Leaders act to ensure that all pupils, but particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those with other vulnerabilities, are supported and cared for. Staff support pupils effectively to overcome the barriers to learning and/or their wellbeing, to make secure progress from their starting points and meet their personal targets.

Leaders have quickly established professional learning for all staff that is wide ranging and effective. Teaching is improving. Staff are wholly supportive of the new leadership. They value the consideration for their workload and wellbeing.

Needs attention

Early years

Needs attention 

In the early years, some activities are not designed carefully enough and do not provide purposeful learning for children. This is particularly the case for outdoor activities. While leaders have a clear vision for the early years and have developed a detailed curriculum, they have not ensured that their vision is securely implemented. In the best examples, activities are carefully considered and provide opportunities for children to maximise their learning. However, there are inconsistencies throughout the provision. There is some variation in the quality of interactions between adults and children, which means some children are not developing their vocabulary and language as well as they should.

Children are taught early reading from the outset. Phonics teaching is effective, and children learn to read accurately. They enjoy sharing books and visiting the library regularly. Children learn the foundations of early mathematics through counting and shape activities.

Relationships between adults and children are caring and warm. Parents and carers appreciate this and are positive about the school. Leaders have ensured that routines are well established. Clear expectations mean that most children behave well. They engage in the limited activities that are available.

Generally, children make clear progress from their starting points and are prepared sufficiently for Year 1. Leaders know the priorities for the early years development. They have taken swift action but these are yet to fully impact on the provision.

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

The way the school approaches teaching pupils the personal, social and health education curriculum is variable. Although the curriculum is appropriate, pupils' knowledge of fundamental British values, such as the rule of law and individual liberty, is not as secure as it needs to be. While pupils are caring and thoughtful, some pupils do not have a secure enough understanding of the differences between people's characteristics that are protected by law, such as disability, ethnicity or gender. This means pupils are not as prepared as they need to be for life in and beyond modern Britain. Leaders do not have a clear oversight of pupils' participation across all personal development activities. This limits their ability to ensure that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are benefiting from the range of opportunities they provide.

Pupils value the effective pastoral support they receive, which is underpinned by the school's Catholic ethos. Staff care for pupils greatly. They know the pupils well and are quick to put support in place for those who need it. The 'nurture room' provides individualised

support, tailored to pupils' needs. Pupils trust adults and know they can turn to them for support.

Pupils benefit from an increasing range of experiences. For example, visits to the local canal and a living history museum typically help pupils to understand the curriculum and consider the world around them. Older pupils look forward to residential trips that build their independence. Leaders ensure that this offer is inclusive and accessible to all pupils.

Pupils learn about relationships in an age-appropriate way. Generally, pupils understand how to stay mentally and physically healthy and about changes that occur with growing up. They have a firm understanding of staying safe online.

Pupils care about their school and local community. They are typically well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils in Year 6 are supported well with the transition to secondary school.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils benefit from the school's caring and supportive ethos as it helps them feel safe and valued. Warm relationships between staff and pupils foster a culture of mutual respect. Adults listen to pupils and act quickly if they have any worries. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Clear routines help them take turns, play together and manage conflict fairly. Bullying is uncommon, and staff deal with any incidents promptly.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They talk with enthusiasm about subjects across the curriculum, including Spanish and geography. Pupils develop an understanding of new vocabulary and successfully use this to describe their learning. The curriculum is well planned and helps pupils build their knowledge step by step. Effective teaching typically reduces the barriers to learning that some pupils face. As a result, most pupils achieve well.

Pupils feel a sense of belonging. They attend well and value the opportunities that widen their experiences, such as visiting Warwick Castle and taking part in themed days that bring learning to life. Pupils learn how to stay safe online and how to treat others with kindness. However, some aspects of the personal development programme do not help pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values or appreciate some of the differences between people that are protected by law, such as disability or ethnicity, as well as they should. Leaders recognise that this area of the school's work needs strengthening.

Children in the early years settle quickly and benefit from warm, nurturing interactions with staff. They learn phonics from their first days in school, which helps them get off to a swift start in reading. However, not all activities in the early years support children's learning as well as they could. Leaders understand that developments in how they design activities, including outdoors, are needed to enhance children's learning and support for their wider physical and social development.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that in the early years, all activities are carefully designed and implemented to maximise learning both indoors and outdoors.
 - Leaders should improve the effectiveness of their personal development programme to ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values and protected characteristics.
 - Leaders should ensure that teaching is consistently high quality across all year groups, so that standards are increased and pupils deepen their learning.
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About this inspection

The chair of the governing body is Mike Quinn.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with members of the local governing board and held meetings with the headteacher, school leaders, teachers and pupils during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character and is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The school's most recent section 48 inspection of its religious character was carried out in December 2021.

The school does not currently make use of alternative provision.

Headteacher: Krystyna Bickley

Lead inspector:

Rob Matthews, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Nina Sangha, Ofsted Inspector

John Bates, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 3 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

220

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

210

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

39.29%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.64%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

16.82%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	70%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	66%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	72%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	73%	60%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	84%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	76%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	94%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	80%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	69%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	78%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	77%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	78%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	72%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	78%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	83%	73%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	63%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	43%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	70%	44%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	76%	62%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	64%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	88%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	75%	60%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	50%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	76%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	75%	58%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	75%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	57%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	76%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	59%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference

between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	63%	68%	-5 pp
2024/25 (revised)	43%	69%	-26 pp
2023/24 (final)	71%	67%	3 pp
2022/23 (final)	70%	66%	4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	76%	80%	-3 pp
2024/25 (revised)	64%	81%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	88%	80%	9 pp
2022/23 (final)	75%	78%	-3 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	69%	78%	-9 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	76%	78%	-1 pp
2022/23 (final)	75%	77%	-2 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	75%	80%	-5 pp
2024/25 (revised)	57%	81%	-23 pp
2023/24 (final)	76%	79%	-3 pp
2022/23 (final)	85%	79%	6 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	5.2%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.8%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.7%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	14.9%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	12.6%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	20.0%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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