

St Paul's Catholic Primary School

Address: Sisefield Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham, West Midlands, B38 9JB

Unique reference number (URN): 141830

Inspection report: 10 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.

Strong standard ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders and staff share a commitment to ensure this is a truly inclusive school. The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve, regardless of any barriers they may face.

Right from the start of early years, staff get to know children and families well. They gather detailed information about individual pupil's starting points and personalities. As a result, the school accurately identifies pupils' needs quickly.

Leaders provide training for staff that enhances their knowledge and skills. Teachers know how to use different teaching approaches, additional support and specialist advice to make sure pupils get the help they need. This enables pupils who encounter barriers to learning to attend regularly, make progress and thrive. Leaders thoroughly check that the work they do to support all pupils makes a difference. This means leaders know what is working well. All pupils are successful and fully included in all aspects of school life.

Leaders, including governors and trustees, ensure that the pupil premium grant is carefully allocated and closely monitored. This has notable impact for those who are eligible for the pupil premium funding. As a result, achievement and attendance for this group of pupils are typically high.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders are rightly proud of the school's personal development and wellbeing programme. It begins for children in early years and is embedded across all areas of school life. It is designed and adapted to meet the needs of pupils and the community. Leaders regularly review the programme to ensure that disadvantaged pupils benefit from the full range of opportunities on offer. This means leaders know all pupils get the best chance to develop personally and acquire the skills they need to successfully face any future challenges.

Leaders organise trips and visitors to deepen pupils' learning and broaden their experience. The school seeks out opportunities for pupils to learn about relevant local and national issues and events. This helps pupils to be well informed and make positive choices. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and the risks they may face online in an age-appropriate manner. As a result, pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are encouraged to believe in themselves and have high aspirations. They know that staff believe there are no limits to what they can achieve if they persevere. As a result, pupils are ambitious and many are planning to help others by becoming doctors, firefighters and nurses.

The school provides opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles and demonstrate fundamental British values in action, such as through the school council or by acting as a play leader. This fosters a sense of belonging and responsibility. Pupils are highly respectful of difference and speak with clarity about why they should understand and respect those who have different beliefs or come from different cultures. This helps pupils to be well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders put in place additional pastoral support swiftly and effectively for pupils and families who need it. This is highly beneficial and tailored to help pupils manage their emotions and wellbeing so they can attend well and thrive.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Across the school, pupils typically progress well. Leaders' careful analysis of pupils' learning helps to make sure that pupils receive the support that they need. From what are often low starting points on entry to school, pupils achieve in line with national averages by the time they leave Year 6. Disadvantaged pupils achieve especially well.

The school's work to develop pupils' language is having a positive impact on reading and writing. However, as this is still at an early stage, it has not yet had an impact on all pupils' outcomes in the Year 1 phonics test, which are below the national average.

Pupils take pride in their learning and talk enthusiastically about what they know across the curriculum. Pupils can explain, for example, why Belfast shipyards were important to the development of the city and how we can learn lessons from the abolition of slavery. Pupils make sound connections between current and earlier learning. Their written work clearly shows their knowledge.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

The impact of leaders' work to reduce absence shows in recently improving attendance rates for all groups of pupils. This is because leaders forensically analyse the data, identify pupils and families with poor attendance and put a number of effective measures in place to reduce barriers. These include regular communication, practical help, rewards and encouragement. All teachers are involved in supporting families of pupils who are at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Pupils behave very well across the school, reflecting leaders' high expectations. This is because staff consistently model and promote the school's mission and values. From the moment pupils arrive each morning, they are supported by staff, who provide a warm, personal welcome and help them settle into established routines. The school rules are clearly understood and fairly applied. This makes pupils feel secure and they know how to behave. Pupils concentrate on learning because classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils respond quickly and positively to staff's instructions. Social times are harmonious and pupils play respectfully. Pupils know that if bullying were to occur adults would resolve concerns promptly. Pupils who require additional support to regulate their behaviour receive highly successful and individualised targeted help.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The school has thought carefully about the curriculum to make sure that it suits the needs of its community. For example, leaders understand that some pupils join the school with less-developed communication skills and so oracy and language are central to the ambitious curriculum. Leaders have a secure understanding of the quality of the curriculum across the school. They review it regularly to check that it builds knowledge in a clear, logical order. Pupils use and apply what they know when learning new things. For example, pupils compare how artists like Paul Klee use different techniques for mark making. They then use this knowledge to create their own continuous line drawing in a similar style.

Leaders consistently check the quality of teaching across the school and recognise where further refinement is needed. They provide relevant and effective training for staff. This means that teachers typically understand pupils' needs and have secure subject knowledge. Teachers regularly check what pupils know and can do. They give effective feedback and plan further opportunities for pupils to consolidate learning if needed. Teachers use well-tailored adaptations to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn well.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in the early years get off to a happy start. They love coming to school. This is because staff build warm relationships with them and their parents and carers. Children settle quickly into the established routines and move around the room in a calm manner, packing away activities and moving to sit quietly on the carpet when asked.

The curriculum sets out what children need to learn as they move through the early years. Many children join the school with knowledge and skills that are lower than is typical for their age. The curriculum is adapted to take account of these low starting points. Most children catch up quickly. They have the skills and knowledge they need to be ready for Year 1 by the time they leave early years, including in phonics.

Interactions between staff and pupils are purposeful. Staff model language well and skilfully use questions to extend children's vocabulary. Staff prepare and deliver engaging activities that suit children's individual needs. For example, in Nursery, staff draw on children's interests in dinosaurs to engage them in cutting and sticking activities. This develops their fine motor skills. Children work well together, sharing resources and cooperating on construction tasks. This develops their social skills, confidence and resilience.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

The trust, governors and leaders are highly ambitious. They form part of a united team with staff, who work together with the best interests of pupils at the centre of all they do. To achieve their ambitions, leaders have developed appropriate improvement plans.

The trust and governors regularly check aspects of the school's work. This means they have the information they need to ask difficult questions and challenge leaders. The school is in the process of developing some aspects of middle leadership to ensure consistently high

standards of teaching across the curriculum. The school does not consistently use information about how well individual pupils learn in some foundation subjects to evaluate the performance of different groups. This means leaders do not have a complete overview of the effectiveness of provision across all subjects.

The school has developed trusting relationships with parents and carers. Leaders provide staff with rich opportunities for research-informed training through a repeating cycle of deliberately designed professional development. Staff agree this training is useful and helps them to support pupils and understand them well. Staff feel valued. They know that staff workload and wellbeing is considered and that leaders care about them.

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

Pupils at St Paul's belong to a friendly and welcoming school. The staff team make sure each pupil and their family feel supported, providing pupils with care and a happy place to learn and play. Every pupil is valued as an individual and staff know them well. This means that staff understand what each pupil needs to be able to learn successfully. Staff recognise if something is worrying pupils and, if this is the case, the school provides highly effective support.

Pupils enjoy their learning and typically achieve well. They understand the importance of attending school regularly and on time because this means they do not miss learning. In class, staff know what works well for pupils and use this knowledge to reduce barriers to learning.

The school ensures that every pupil is included in all aspects of school life. Pupils enjoy a range of interesting opportunities and experiences to develop their talents. The school listens to pupils and finds out about their interests so that suitable clubs can be offered, such as football, gardening, art and drama. Pupils go on many trips, including to London, and a residential trip to take part in adventure activities like 'leap of faith', where they overcome their fears. Pupils come back from these experiences with increased confidence, an understanding of their own capabilities and experience of places beyond the local area.

Pupils behave extremely well. They focus on their learning in the classroom and are eager to know and do more. They are respectful to adults and kind to each other. Playtimes are sociable and friendly and older pupils are proud to look after younger children. Pupils know that if bullying were to happen it would be quickly sorted out. They trust adults to sort out any concerns and this makes them feel safe at school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that highly effective teaching is embedded across all subjects equally well.
- Leaders should continue their work to improve outcomes in phonics so that all pupils secure early reading skills quickly.

- Leaders should further develop the expertise of foundation subject leaders so they understand what is working well and what next steps are needed in their subject.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Lumen Christi Catholic Multi Academy Company, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Rebecca Nash, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Graham.

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 school leaders during the inspection. Inspectors met with governors, who are all members of the school standards committee, and trust leaders, including the CEO. They held meetings with the principal, school leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and books. They also talked to pupils and staff to gather information about school life.

To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 reviewed a range of school documents. These include information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning.

Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and spoke with parents and carers at the start of the school day.

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 October 2024.

The school does not currently make use of alternative provision.

Principal: Haylia Williams

Lead inspector:

Corinne Biddell, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Roulla Gabriel, Ofsted Inspector

Helen Large, 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 10 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

173

Below 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)

68.71%

Well 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

1.73%

Below 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

20.81%

Above 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	64%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	65%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	61%	60%	Close to average

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	74%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	81%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	68%	73%	Close to average

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	77%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	81%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	77%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	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	77%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	77%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	77%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	79%	73%	Close to average

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	62%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	61%	47%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	60%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	65%	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	74%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	83%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	70%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	70%	60%	Close to average

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	76%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	78%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	70%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	80%	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	74%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	72%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	80%	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	62%	68%	-6 pp
2024/25 (revised)	61%	69%	-8 pp
2023/24 (final)	60%	67%	-7 pp
2022/23 (final)	65%	66%	-1 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	74%	80%	-5 pp
2024/25 (revised)	83%	81%	3 pp
2023/24 (final)	70%	80%	-10 pp
2022/23 (final)	70%	78%	-8 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	76%	78%	-2 pp
2024/25 (revised)	78%	78%	0 pp
2023/24 (final)	70%	78%	-8 pp
2022/23 (final)	80%	77%	3 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	74%	80%	-6 pp
2024/25 (revised)	72%	81%	-8 pp
2023/24 (final)	70%	79%	-9 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	80%	79%	1 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)	6.5%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	5.9%	Close to average

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)	23.7%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	20.9%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	22.3%	16.2%	Above

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.

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