

Inspection of a good school: St Rose's Catholic Infants School

Green End Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 1QW

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

Outcome

St Rose's Catholic Infants School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Rose's is a happy and calm place to learn. Pupils are kind and confident to be themselves. They are curious about the world around them and ask questions to deepen their learning. Pupils approach visitors with respect and engage in an articulate way. Pupils have positive relationships with staff.

Pupils enjoy learning a varied and well-sequenced curriculum. They recall what they have learned with enthusiasm. Pupils like the challenge of learning new things. From early years, children learn phonics and they become confident readers and achieve well.

Pupils know what bullying is and know what it means to be a good friend. They trust adults to help them and they feel safe. Pupils behave well. In lessons, they listen and follow instructions attentively.

Pupils take part in a range of after-school clubs, including dance, drama and construction clubs. They enjoy their trips and talk about how these link to their learning, such as the trip to a castle linked to history. Some pupils hold responsibility as part of the 'Dom Squad'. They help to create community events and vote for changes in the school. Pupils would welcome further opportunities to contribute to wider school life.

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

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils should learn. Starting from early years, leaders consider the knowledge they want pupils to learn and by when. They are constantly reviewing areas of the curriculum to ensure that the quality of education is improving. Where leaders have made changes, these have led to rapid improvements in outcomes for pupils. However, some of leaders' work to improve the curriculum has been hampered this year due to staff changes. As a result, in a small number of subjects, they have not set out in detail the building blocks of knowledge that pupils need. They also have not checked thoroughly how well teachers are teaching different subjects. Pupils are usually taught well and learn what they should, but some aspects of the curriculum have

not been taught as leaders intended. This has led to some pupils having gaps in their knowledge on some aspects of the curriculum.

Staff use carefully selected resources to teach pupils about difficult concepts. They change and adapt what they teach to ensure that pupils develop a solid understanding of new concepts. In most subjects, staff identify misconceptions when these arise. They check that pupils have remembered what has been taught.

Pupils listen to high-quality texts often, including audio books and listening to teachers read. They read widely and regularly, which helps them to become confident and fluent readers. Children in Reception learn to read as soon as they start school. Staff diligently follow the well-thought-out phonics and reading curriculums. This ensures that pupils crack the phonics code by quickly learning the sounds that letters represent. Leaders know what pupils can do and where they have gaps in their learning. Support for pupils who need extra help with reading is timely and effective and helps them to keep up with their peers.

Leaders' ambition for all pupils to receive a high-quality education shines through. New systems ensure that pupils' needs are being identified accurately. Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported and achieve well. The 'woodland room' intervention space helps some pupils to build routine and confidence. Learning is broken down into small, manageable steps. This supports pupils to return to learning with their peers successfully. In early years, some children with more complex needs are not always supported as well as they could be. Some staff do not have the skills to adapt the curriculum to meet their needs.

Pupils want to do their best and are proud of their achievements. Pupils learn how to be kind and caring individuals. From early years, sharing and expressing feelings are explicitly taught. This means that pupils are confident to resolve friendship issues calmly. Most pupils show the learning behaviours of perseverance, confidence, resilience and determination in lessons. They look forward to receiving 'private praise' postcards as a reward.

Leaders carefully consider pupils' personal development. Pupils develop an understanding of tolerance, democracy and different faiths. For example, children in early years vote daily for their choice of book at story time. Pupils learn about being healthy, such as about why it is important to only have sweet treats some of the time.

Staff appreciate the care and support they receive for their well-being. The staff work together as a team to make the necessary improvements. Governors make regular and thorough checks on the school to ensure that the work of leaders is making a positive difference to pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are tenacious in their approach to keeping pupils safe. Staff receive regular training. They know that safeguarding is the responsibility of 'everybody every day'. Leaders act swiftly to resolve the concerns they receive. They work to get the right help from external agencies where needed. Pupils feel 'super safe'. They trust adults to help them. They know what to do if they have a worry that they need help with. Pupils know how to stay safe when online.

Leaders ensure that the right checks are made when new staff start at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not set out in detail the important building blocks of knowledge they want pupils to learn. Leaders have also not checked thoroughly that different aspects of the curriculum are taught as planned. This means that teachers sometimes do not teach these aspects of the curriculum as leaders intend. In turn, this hinders how well pupils learn some more complex ideas.
- Some staff do not adapt teaching to meet the needs of some pupils with SEND. Therefore, these pupils are not given work that is well matched to their needs. This means that they are not making as much progress as they should. Leaders need to ensure that all staff are well trained in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND and that they make appropriate adaptations to what they teach.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 school to be good in November 2013.

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	117484
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10288465
Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Kelly
Headteacher	Michelle Anderton
Website	www.stroses.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has been recently appointed.
- St Rose's Catholic Infant School's most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in November 2021. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a breakfast club that is run by the school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, subject leaders and the SENCo. The inspector also met with six governors, including the chair of the governing body.

- The inspector met with a representative from the local authority to gather information about school support and development.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with the subject leader, 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. The inspector also looked at other curriculum plans and pupils' work, including for history, geography and science.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance. She also spoke to pupils and met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspector took account of the 76 responses and free-text comments submitted to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector took account of the 29 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 28 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. The inspector also spoke to pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes and during lessons to seek pupils' views. She spoke with groups of staff to gather their views.

Inspection team

Nerrissa Bear, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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