

Inspection of Our Lady and St Oswald's Catholic Primary School

Upper Brook Street, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 2TG

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This 'small school with a big heart' is valued by pupils and parents. Leaders have high regard for pupils' personal development. They make sure that pupils feel listened to and valued. Pupils enjoy attending.

Pupils play and learn well together. They say that bullying hardly ever happens. Pupils are confident that teachers would sort out any problems quickly if they were to occur. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. The sense of community and ethos in the school is evident. One parent described it as, 'a family-oriented school, never fails to show love, care and commitment to the children in their care.' This summed up the view of many.

Leaders have revised the curriculum. They have considered what they want pupils to learn by the time they leave. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is broad and ambitious and supports all pupils to make progress. Pupils can explain their learning and how it will help them in the future.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enjoy extra responsibilities, for example as librarians or buddies for younger pupils. Residential visits and the regularly-used forest school help to challenge and prepare pupils for life ahead.

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

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. All staff deliver the phonics system consistently. They ensure that reading books match the sounds pupils know. This helps pupils to get off to a good, early start in learning to read. Staff have received the right training to help them support pupils to become fluent and accurate readers. This includes those pupils who need extra support. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and stories. Pupils enjoy reading and know it is important. They have helped leaders to choose books for the library and appreciate being able to take these home.

Leaders have reviewed the curriculum to ensure that it is well sequenced with clear start and end points. It maps out the important knowledge that leaders intend pupils to learn by the time they leave the school. Leaders have started to add more detail into the curriculum. However, the impact of COVID-19 and staff absences in this small school has delayed leaders' work. In some foundation subjects, such as geography and art, leaders have not yet set out in precise enough detail what knowledge must be taught. There has been limited professional development in these subjects for teachers to acquire the subject knowledge to deliver the curriculum well. This means that pupils are not achieving as well as they could.

Pupils are eager to talk and write about what they have learned. For example, when discussing the work of the artist Paul Nash, pupils talk confidently about the visual imagery and the way it makes them feel. Occasionally, teachers do not notice and correct pupils quickly enough when they do not form their letters and numbers correctly. This prevents some pupils from developing fluency in their writing.

Pupils with SEND are supported well by staff. Leaders are quick to identify pupils' individual needs. Staff are clear about how to provide appropriate support for these pupils. They use a range of effective strategies to help pupils with SEND learn well alongside their classmates.

Children in the early years are in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. Leaders have thought carefully how best to ensure that their learning and pastoral needs are met. As a result, children enjoy exploring and learning together. Staff plan for them to take well-managed risks such as climbing trees in their forest school. Children follow well established rules and routines. They accurately count within ten, make marks and communicate well.

The focus on pupils' personal development and behaviour has been a priority since the last inspection. Leaders are conscious of pupils' well-being and resilience. Pupils understand what it means to be physically and mentally healthy. Their daily 'mile with a smile' starts the day positively. Pupils are proud of the charity work they do, for example to help those with polio in other countries. They enjoy taking part in competitive sports and particularly enjoy working with community groups to raise funds to stock the school library.

Governors are proactive. They challenge and support well. They recognise the challenge that mixed-age classes present. They have resourced cover so that teachers can plan the curriculum together. Governors are monitoring the effectiveness of this additional resource.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They are positive about the support they receive from leaders and governors.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know families very well. They ensure there are robust procedures in place to help keep pupils safe from harm. They are tenacious when there is a concern to follow up. All staff receive appropriate safeguarding training. They know the signs of abuse and act swiftly if they have any concerns. Leaders work closely with external agencies when necessary to support vulnerable pupils and their families.

Pupils learn through lessons and assemblies about the risks they may face. They have a good understanding about how to keep themselves safe, including when crossing the road, climbing trees or using social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few foundation subjects, leaders are still refining and embedding the curriculum. The key knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember is not yet precise enough. As a result, in these areas of the curriculum, pupils are not achieving as well as they could. Leaders should refine the curriculum in these foundation subjects to give staff clearer guidance about the precise knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember.
- Not all staff have received the training they need to deliver the curriculum well. Leaders should implement their planned programme of staff training and ensure that subject leaders check how well the curriculum is being delivered and support staff accordingly.
- Occasionally, teachers do not notice quickly enough when pupils make errors in their work or work with pupils to put these right. This means that sometimes numbers and letters are not formed correctly. Leaders should ensure that staff regularly check and support pupils to meet high expectations for presentation.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	123553
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10227744
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	128
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Julia Thomas
Headteacher	Nikki O'Dwyer
Website	www.osoprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is currently an acting deputy headteacher in place.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID 19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body, the vice chair and three other governors in person.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, who is a designated safeguarding leader, the school office administrator, the deputy headteacher who is the mathematics and geography leader, the early years leader who is also the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), the reading leader and the art leader.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics art and geography.

- For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors made visits to classrooms. Most of these visits were with leaders, including the deputy headteacher and subject leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, in classrooms and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their learning and experiences at school. They looked at pupils' work to see how well staff implement the curriculum.
- Safeguarding documents were checked, including the checks that leaders make on staff's suitability to work with children. Inspectors checked that staff implement safeguarding policies and procedures effectively across the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View and free-text responses received during the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the pupil survey.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school improvement plan, headteacher's reports, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, published information about pupils' performance and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors considered information published on the school's website.

Inspection team

Stephanie Moran, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Justine Lomas

Ofsted Inspector

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