

Inspection of St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School

Sedgley Road, Penn, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV4 5LG

Inspection dates:	12 and 13 November 2024
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Rachael Kilmister. This school is part of St Bartholomew's CE Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Katy Kent, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Richard Pithers.

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this wonderful school. Children get off to a flying start as they join and continue to do well throughout their time in school. All pupils achieve exceptionally highly and are very well prepared to move on to the next stage of their education.

The school carefully supports pupils to be successful in all aspects of school life. Pupils have time to practise what they are learning and improve. They are helped to understand what it means to be part of the school community. Pupils contribute greatly to the buzz of enjoyment that exists throughout the day. Staff are highly consistent with pupils. Pupils, even the youngest ones, demonstrate a strong understanding of the routines and expectations. For example, pupils respond rapidly to instruction as they move between activities, ensuring learning time is maximised.

Pupils particularly enjoy the musical theatre productions, the regular 'Friday Disco' and range of clubs that are on offer. They are very proud of the leadership opportunities they have, which help shape the school. These include contributing to the eco-council, the faith team and building links nationally and internationally. Pupils have a strong sense of being a part of the 'St Bart's family'.

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

Pupils achieve very highly across the curriculum. All pupils learn to read confidently and accurately, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are immersed in the school's reading culture, developing a real enthusiasm for all forms of reading. Those in the early stages of reading are helped to make rapid and sustained progress with learning to read. This means that pupils quickly secure the phonics knowledge they need to read fluently. The transition to reading widely and writing well has been carefully considered and implemented robustly. Pupils have opportunities to practise, make mistakes and improve their skills.

In early years, adults ensure that children develop in the areas they need to. Children settle quickly to activities, concentrate very well and delight in their learning. For example, children in both Nursery and Reception enjoy receiving an invitation to the teddy bear's birthday party. They happily prepare for it by counting candles on birthday cakes, singing songs and using precise cutting skills to prepare party food. Children articulate their learning precisely, using the vocabulary that the school has carefully identified for them to learn.

The school has crafted a curriculum which builds in a highly connected way. This allows pupils to build on their prior knowledge confidently, regardless of the subject. For example, in Reception, children develop precise skills with adults initially and then become increasingly independent over time. Teachers have a strong, shared understanding of the curriculum. They check effectively pupils' knowledge and understanding of what they have learned. The school ensures that staff receive timely and focused support to develop their practice even further.

Adults model effectively the behaviours that they expect. Strongly held and shared values are apparent throughout the school. As a result, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are polite, courteous and extremely well behaved. They have a compelling thirst for learning and enjoy coming to school.

Securing high attendance is a significant priority. As a result of the robust systems to track attendance, the school easily identifies pupils who may need further support. The school works with families to successfully improve attendance rates for these pupils.

The school intelligently integrates its work with respect to behaviour and personal development. A meticulously planned and monitored programme is adapted to support pupils who need specific help. As a result, pupils' character development is truly exceptional. They have a strong understanding of British values, especially the importance of democracy and equality.

Pupils are involved in a wide range of development opportunities. These help them grow and contribute to the school and beyond. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of different cultures and beliefs. Trips and competitions that pupils participate in help with this. All pupils participate in clubs which aid them in the development of different talents and interests. High-quality opportunities build to help pupils become well-rounded citizens of the future by the time they leave.

Leaders at all levels have pupils at the very heart of their decision-making. Trust leaders and governors have a clear, shared vision. They understand their roles and responsibilities extremely well. The school and trust are mindful of the impact on workload of any changes that they introduce. Staff are very proud to work in this school. Parents hold the school in very high regard.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 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	143393
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10344104
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	410
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Richard Pithers
CEO of the trust	Katy Kent
Headteacher	Rachael Kilmister
Website	www.stbartholomewsprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy in September 2016. When its predecessor school, St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of the St Bartholomew's CE Multi Academy Trust.
- The school uses one alternative provision for pupils, which is registered.
- The school is in the process of expanding to have two forms in each year group.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Lichfield. The last section 48 inspection took place in July 2019. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements

(quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with trust leaders, the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors held discussions with members of the board of trustees, including the chair of the trust and the local governing board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, music and physical education. For each of these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, carried out visits to lessons, spoke to pupils and looked at some of their work.
- Inspectors also visited the early years provision at various points during the inspection.
- Inspectors visited some before-school activities and reviewed the extra-curricular activities with leaders.
- Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to parents and pupils at various points in the inspection.
- Inspectors met with leaders in relation to the school's approach to science and writing, including reviewing a range of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited the areas used to support pupils with SEND during the school day.
- Inspectors looked at records and spoke to staff in relation to behaviour, bullying, attendance and safeguarding.
- 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.

Inspection team

Richard Wakefield, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Rachel Henrick	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Madden	His Majesty's Inspector

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