

Inspection of St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School

Elmfield Walk, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire DY13 8UB

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| Inspection dates: | 11 and 12 February 2025 |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Requires improvement |

The executive principal of this school is Emma Brocklesby. This school is part of the Emmaus 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, Suzanne Horan, and overseen by a board of directors, chaired by Joanna Griffin.

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is proud of the family feel at this school. It cares about every pupil. Leaders want every pupil to be fully involved in school life and to do as well as they can, whatever barriers some may face. Consequently, pupils achieve well in lessons and in the published assessment results. They enjoy school and are happy.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are sociable and get on well with each other, including with those who may be different from them. They fulfil the school's values 'to inspire and serve others'. Many have leadership roles, such as well-being champions, helping children in Reception or as Year 6 sports' champions who sometimes work with a local sports partnership. Pupils seek to serve the local community through the delivery of food parcels.

Pupils get to choose the activities they would like the school to put on, for example 'the cat club' for those interested in these animals. They have a wide variety of trips, such as to Manor Adventure. They feel safe in school and know there is a trusted adult to talk to if they are worried about anything. They can also use the 'safe speak box'.

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

The school has set out an ambitious curriculum, which pupils can access whatever their different starting points. It is designed in a way that enables pupils to learn knowledge sequentially, building on their prior learning. Leaders have also effectively planned and structured the early years curriculum to ensure a clear progression in learning.

Leaders have given careful consideration to how all pupils can access the core knowledge in each subject. As pupils are in mixed-age classes, which can change each year due to variable cohort sizes, they have produced 'road maps'. These ensure that by the end of Year 6, all pupils have covered the same key content across the curriculum.

Subject leaders in the wider curriculum have also thought carefully about the content and vocabulary they want pupils to learn. In most subjects, teachers implement the school's curriculum well. In a small number of subjects, teachers' confidence to deliver the curriculum is not as strong as in others. This leads to some inconsistency in the quality of the provision. The school checks closely how well pupils are doing. In lessons, targeted questioning helps teachers to find out what pupils know and where there are misconceptions to be addressed.

Reading is a key priority. Children joining in Reception get off to a rapid start with their phonics programme, which adults deliver consistently well. Those at the early stage of reading have developed the decoding skills they need to become confident and fluent readers. They read books that are well matched to the letters and sounds they know.

The school identifies the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. The good relationship with the main feeder nursery means that early help is already in place for those who need it. Adults working in Reception have

a good understanding of children's individual needs so they can ensure they receive appropriate provision and support. Subject leaders make suitable adaptations to the curriculum, and teachers make sure pupils with SEND can access the learning.

The school has worked tirelessly to improve attendance levels. However, levels of persistent absence remain high.

Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values. All encounter democracy, including children in early years who vote on which book to read. The wider curriculum is enhanced through field trips to the local canal or to a local farm to see how food is produced. Pupils experience orienteering during their residential trip. In a rainforest workshop, they got to meet members of an Amazon tribe via a video link.

Senior leaders and members of the local governing body are very mindful of workload and the welfare of staff. This was much appreciated by staff spoken to. The school has significantly invested in staff training, including for subject leaders, to build up their knowledge and expertise in many subjects. Members of the local governing body know the school well. Alongside the trust, they provide a good balance of support and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Plans for the implementation of some wider curriculum subjects are not as well developed as others. In some subjects, teachers' subject knowledge is less secure. As a result, the delivery of the curriculum in some subjects is not as effective as it could be. The school should ensure that teachers have the skills they need to teach all curriculum subjects consistently well.
- Persistent absence is high for some families. This leads to loss of learning and gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school should continue its efforts to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.

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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

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| Unique reference number | 141444 |
| Local authority | Worcestershire |
| Inspection number | 10344044 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 133 |
| Appropriate authority | The board of directors |
| Chair of trustees | Joanna Griffin |
| CEO of the trust | Suzanne Horan |
| Executive Principal | Emma Brocklesby |
| Website | https://stwulstans.sch.life |
| Dates of previous inspection | 29 and 30 November 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The executive principal and head of school were both appointed in September 2023.
- The chair of the local governing body was appointed in September 2024.
- The executive principal also oversees Saint Ambrose Catholic Primary School. The local governing bodies merged in September 2024.
- The school currently makes use of one registered alternative provision.
- The school has a Catholic ethos. It is part of the Diocese of Birmingham. The last section 48 inspection took place in January 2025. The next scheduled inspection should take place by January 2030.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive principal, head of school, other leaders and staff.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils to learn their views of the school.
- The lead inspector met with members of the trust including the chief executive officer and school improvement leader.
- The lead inspector met with five members of the local governing body including the chair.
- The lead inspector spoke by telephone to the school's external improvement partner and to a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. Inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors considered information on pupils' behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science and geography. For each deep dive, they held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.

Inspection team

Mark Sims, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Stuart Grimes

Ofsted Inspector

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