

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Dominic Savio Catholic Primary School

Western Avenue, Woodley, Berkshire RG5 3BH

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 April 2025

Outcome

St Dominic Savio Catholic Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and thriving at this school. They feel secure, supported and well looked after. The school has high aspirations for all pupils from the moment they arrive. Pupils excel because their needs are met exceptionally well. The school places the well-being and academic success of its pupils at the core of its work. Pupils achieve highly across the curriculum. They are well prepared for the next stage of learning and life in modern Britain.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They learn to interact with each other politely and act responsibly. Older pupils serve as outstanding role models by demonstrating kindness and respect, reflecting the school's positive values. Pupils raise money for charity and think about others' needs. The school is a harmonious community, where parents and carers are overwhelming supportive.

Pupils benefit from a broad and rich curriculum, including in the arts and sports. The school ensures that pupils of all ages participate in shows and performances as well as sporting competitions. Pupils participate in various extra-curricular activities, such as martial arts, digital leadership and Spanish. Some clubs are managed by pupils, which supports the development of their leadership skills. The enriching shared experiences contribute to the school's sense of community.

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

The curriculum is broad, balanced and highly ambitious. It deepens pupils' body of knowledge sequentially over the years. Across the curriculum, teachers carefully use their detailed subject knowledge to inspire and engage pupils. In history, for instance, pupils apply their knowledge of 9th century Baghdad to create factually accurate prose. Staff understand the specific knowledge that pupils should know and remember in every subject. In mathematics, teachers select activities and resources to help pupils understand concepts clearly. This approach helps pupils achieve accuracy in their number work. Pupils produce high-quality work across the curriculum.

Teachers proficiently explain the concepts and subject-specific vocabulary that pupils need to know. Teachers deliver lessons with exceptional consistency, supporting pupils to become confident learners. They revisit pupils' prior learning, which supports them in making connections across the curriculum and deepens their learning further. Teachers check gaps in pupils' knowledge systemically before introducing new content. They improve pupils' understanding by encouraging critical thinking and explanations. Children in Reception get off to a magnificent start to their education. They learn through a wide range of focused activities, as well as adult-directed sessions. The outside learning space supports children's physical development, for example, when climbing on the adventure playground equipment and building in the role-play construction area.

The school integrates reading throughout the curriculum, promoting reading through activities, such as author visits, book clubs and older pupils reading to younger ones. Pupils requiring additional help with reading are identified swiftly. They receive help straight away to help them catch up to become fluent readers. In Reception, the focus is on developing children's communication and language skills. They learn how to blend sounds and pronounce words correctly and speak confidently. The writing curriculum helps pupils develop their skills and eventually write independently using diverse language.

The school identifies accurately and addresses the additional needs of pupils swiftly. Through careful and tailored adaptations, the school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn the same curriculum as their peers. Staff adapt teaching carefully to adjust learning to pupils' needs, and they monitor the progress precisely that pupils make.

Pupils are polite and friendly. They behave impeccably, both in the classrooms and throughout the school. Their attitude towards learning is intrinsically motivated to achieve their best. They respect and care for their peers. Established behaviour routines are implemented effectively starting from Reception. Children in Reception engage in activities with significant focus and perseverance.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development is commendable. Through the curriculum, pupils gain a deep understanding of diversity and equality. Pupils understand different faiths, cultures and beliefs, and show great respect for one another.

Pupils have opportunities to influence the direction and work of the school through their roles on the junior leadership team. Their key responsibilities, including curriculum and diversity, impact positively on the school. Pupils of different ages take on other leadership roles, such as house captains, sports leaders and peer mediators. They acknowledge the importance of these responsibilities and their role in making the school an even better place.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate how the school considers their well-being and helps with managing their workload. Governors have a deep understanding of the school. They provide both support and challenge to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in February 2020.

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

Unique reference number	110041
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10379727
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Fiona Cottle
Headteacher	Laura Hulland
Website	www.stdominicsavio.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In September 2022, the headteacher began their role after holding the deputy headteacher post at the same school.
- This is a Catholic school in the Diocese of Portsmouth. The school's last section 48 inspection was carried out in November 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place by July 2026.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school club.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, staff and pupils.
- The inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority and the diocese. He also met representatives from the governing body.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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

Darren Aisthorpe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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