

Inspection of St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

Grange Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 2AX

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and cohesive school. Pupils get on well with each other. Everyone is expected to be ready, respectful and safe. Pupils understand what this means and do their best to live up to these expectations. This is reflective of the high ambition that leaders have for pupils.

The school is inclusive. Pupils recognise that everyone is special. As one pupil said: 'Being different is not bad. It's being unique'.

Pupils behave well. The recently introduced behaviour policy is widely understood. Pupils value the praise and rewards that they can earn. They know what happens in the event of poor behaviour. The five steps of the behaviour policy are taken seriously. The small proportion of pupils who need help to be ready, respectful and safe get the support they need. Pupils understand their role in this. They support their peers well.

Pupils are eager to take on the many roles and responsibilities available to them. They talk with pride about their work as anti-bulling ambassadors, school councillors, worship leaders and office monitors, to mention just a few. Older pupils enjoy using their common room. They know that this is a privilege. They understand the responsibilities that come with this.

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

Overall, the school curriculum is well planned and sequenced. In the majority of subjects, the curriculum makes clear what pupils should learn at each stage of their education. Content is taught in a logical order. However, a small number of subjects are still being developed. In these subjects, leaders have not yet identified the most important information that pupils are expected to know and remember. Some other subjects are at an earlier stage of implementation. They have not yet resulted in pupils knowing and remembering the identified curriculum content.

Reading is taught well. The phonics programme is well sequenced. Staff have been provided with sustained training and support. This has resulted in phonics being taught consistently well. Pupils enjoy phonics lessons. Overall, they remember the sounds that they have learned and use these in their reading. However, a small proportion of pupils have reading books that are too easy for them. Their books do not allow them to practise the sounds that they have learned. As a result, they do not become fluent readers as quickly as they could.

Older pupils develop an appreciation of reading. They read regularly. During their time in school, they experience a wide range of quality texts. Teachers read to pupils each day. Pupils say that this encourages them to read more widely.

The early years is an exciting place. Children are eager to join in the activities that are provided. The early years curriculum is considered in detail and is sequenced.

Staff have a consistent understanding of what children should know and be able to do at each point of the year. Leaders regularly check to ensure that children keep up with the curriculum. Extra help is put in place quickly for anyone who begins to fall behind.

The recently introduced behaviour policy is clear and concise. It is applied consistently. Leaders monitor how often the 'five steps' are used. However, these checks are in their infancy. They do not yet give a full picture of trends and patterns over time.

The school's curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is broad and well sequenced. Pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs from around the world. Many trips, visits and events broaden pupils' experience of the world. Pupils make good use of the extra-curricular activities that are on offer, including those in the sports and arts. Leaders ensure that all pupils can access these.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to learn the curriculum. Pupils with SEND are provided with small-step targets that are clear, concise and well communicated.

Senior leaders have brought about significant improvements since the last inspection. Subject and phase leaders understand their responsibilities and carry these out effectively. The vast majority of staff are proud to work at the school. They say that leaders are considerate of their well-being and workload.

Those responsible for governance know the school well. They have the knowledge and skills needed to carry out their duties. They provide leaders with the right level of challenge and support. There is effective communication between school leaders, the local academy committee, the trust's central team and the board of directors.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils know how to stay safe in a range of situations, including when learning online, when they are in the community, using roads and the dangers presented from fire. They know who to go to if they have a worry or concern.

Safeguarding records are detailed. Leaders review these regularly to check for any emerging issues. The school's family support worker provides a broad range of support and advice. Leaders know vulnerable pupils and their families well.

The school carries out detailed checks to ensure that only suitable people work with pupils. The record of these checks is comprehensive.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum does not make clear the most important things that pupils should know and remember at each stage of their education. Some subjects are at an early stage of implementation. These have not yet resulted in pupils knowing and remembering more. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is fully planned and sequenced, across all subjects, and makes clear the most important things that pupils need to know at each stage of their education.
- A small proportion of pupils have reading books that are not matched to the sounds that they know. This means that they cannot practise the sounds that they have learned in lessons. Leaders should ensure that all pupils have reading books that match the sounds that they know.
- Leaders have recently started to record early breaches of the school's behaviour policy. They have not been able to check these for any trends or patterns that might emerge. Leaders should ensure that they continue to record early breaches of the school's behaviour policy and routinely check these for trends and patterns.

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	142733
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10241080
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	256
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of the trust	Christopher Donnellan
Headteacher	Kirstie Yuen
Website	www.stgregoryscatholicprimaryschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 and 29 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Gregory's Catholic Primary School opened in April 2016. It is part of the Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academies Trust.
- Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academies Trust was formed in February 2020 with the merger of St Thomas of Canterbury Academy Trust, St Luke's Academy Trust and the Bedford Catholic Schools.
- The school is part of the Catholic Diocese of Northampton. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place on 20 June 2016. An interim monitoring visit was carried out on 2 July 2019.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school, curriculum leaders, the early years leader and those responsible for SEND.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in five subjects: reading, mathematics, modern foreign languages, religious education and history. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and met with teachers and pupils. Inspectors also looked at curriculum information for other subjects, including art, geography, computing and PSHE.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the board of directors and representatives of the local academy committee, including the chair. He met with the strategic executive lead and the director of primary improvement from Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academies Trust.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. They spoke informally to parents and carers outside the school. They considered the responses to surveys carried out by the school.
- Inspectors met with safeguarding leaders. They reviewed school documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors visited breakfast club, observed lunchtime in the dining hall and spoke informally with pupils on the playground.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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