

# Saint Martin's Catholic School, Stoke Golding, Leicestershire

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	138290
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	395309
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 July 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Gwendoline Coates HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	306
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Brenda Carson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Stoke Golding Nuneaton CV13 6HT
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<b>Fax number</b>	01455 212046
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<b>Age group</b>	11–14
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	4–5 July 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	395309



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Gwendoline Coates

Her Majesty's Inspector

Maxine Clewlow

Additional Inspector

Simon Hughes

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors spent approximately 10 hours observing parts of 24 lessons. In addition, one whole-school event was observed and an assembly. 19 teachers were seen in lessons and assemblies and meetings were held with a parent, groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and with staff. Inspectors took account of the small number of responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school's development plan, subject evaluations and the headteacher's report to governors. Account was also taken of the 144 questionnaire responses received from parents and carers, the 107 received from students and the 23 received from staff.

## Information about the school

Saint Martin's Catholic School is a middle, deemed secondary, school, known as a high school, in rural Leicestershire. It provides education for students in Key Stage 3 only, meaning students join the school in Year 7 and progress to one of the local upper schools at the end of Year 9. Saint Martin's is a stable school community drawing students from a wide area of Leicestershire. The majority of students come from White British backgrounds with few students from minority ethnic groups and few students who are at an early stage in learning English. The proportion of students who are known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs is well below the national average.

The school became an academy on 1 July 2012 and is seeking approval to extend the education available on site to students beyond the age of 14 years by opening a 14-18 free school.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key findings

- This is an outstanding school because leadership and management ensure that the provision of education and the support for students is excellent, which leads to outstanding outcomes for students. Despite this, there are areas that can be improved, including aspects of written feedback on students' work and the analysis and evaluation of data to inform strategic decision-making.
- Achievement is outstanding. Students' attainment is above average and the progress they make from their starting points is at least good and often outstanding.
- Teaching is outstanding. Across all subjects, teaching is at least consistently good and often outstanding and enables students to make at least good progress in their learning. While oral feedback on students' work is excellent, the quality of written feedback, although excellent in some subjects, such as English, is not of a consistently high quality to enable students to know, confidently, how to improve their work in all subjects.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Students feel safe in school and are confident that they are exceptionally well cared for. Students' behaviour is outstanding. Their self-management and their attitudes to learning are exceptional and contribute significantly to the quality of their learning.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The quality of middle leadership of subjects and of pastoral provision is exceptional and results in excellent teaching and care, guidance and support for students. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance are excellent. The curriculum meets the needs of students exceptionally well and the promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. However, the rigour with which data for all areas of the school's provision is analysed and evaluated is not as sharp as it could be to better inform and direct strategic decision-making.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate even further the rate at which students make progress by ensuring greater consistency in the quality of written feedback on their work in all subjects, so that they are informed clearly about how to improve and reach their targets.
- Sustain and improve further the school's performance by developing a more rigorous approach to the analysis and evaluation of all types of data at whole-school and at subject level, so that this contributes more effectively to informing and directing strategic decision making.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Achievement is outstanding. Students enter the school with above average attainment and go on to attain well above average by the end of Key Stage 3 when they leave the school. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire judged that their children are making good progress. Inspectors agree that students make at least good progress from their starting points and many make outstanding progress. Progress in English is outstanding for all different groups of students. Student who are disabled and those who have special educational needs attain standards above that of similar students nationally and make at least good progress from their starting points. There are no significant gaps between the attainments of different groups of students. This is a result of the school's approach to treating each student as an individual and ensuring that they have every opportunity to achieve their potential.

Students learn exceptionally well in most subjects and make rapid progress in lessons. In most lessons, teachers focus very well on developing students' literacy and numeracy skills. For example, highly effective application of numeracy skills was seen in a design and technology lesson and the promotion of literacy was observed as a conscious aspect of planning and preparation in a history lesson.

Students' behaviour contributes significantly to their very good learning. They have exceptionally well developed self-management and independent learning skills and particularly strong social and personal communicational skills. Their outstanding achievement and excellent attitudes to learning ensure that they are very well prepared when they move on to Key Stage 4 in the upper schools.

### Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is outstanding. Pace in lessons is very good and activities change regularly to ensure continual student engagement and motivation, with good use being made of information and communication technology (ICT) and high quality

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resources. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire judged that their children are taught well.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and many have a passion for their subjects, which they transmit to students. Teachers' good planning ensures that lessons provide excellent opportunities for collaborative learning and the development of independent learning skills. Learning support assistants provide excellent support for students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs and contribute very positively and proactively to the good and sometimes outstanding progress they make in lessons. There are excellent relationships between teachers and students, so that students feel confident to ask for help and to contribute to discussions. Where this is strongest, teachers empower students so that they actually lead the learning.

Teachers have high expectations of students' behaviour and of what they might achieve. While teaching is consistently good and much is outstanding, in a few lessons, pace, timing and learning activities are not always sufficiently well matched to enable students of all abilities to be fully challenged. Formative written feedback in students' books is particularly good in English where clear marking strategies include structured feedback linked to success criteria and there is evidence that students respond to written comments and improve their work. However, the quality of written feedback across subjects is inconsistent and sometimes does not provide students with sufficient guidance about how to improve. In contrast, oral feedback, observed in lessons, was outstanding. For example, in a Year 7 mathematics lesson, the teacher gave regular oral feedback on what students were doing well and what they could do to make their work even better.

Teachers, in subjects across the curriculum, ensure a good focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills and provide very good opportunities to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students are given many opportunities to think hard about important moral issues. In a Year 7 English lesson on 'The Merchant of Venice', students considered the treatment of Shylock and whether Shakespeare might have been a racist. Their responses were thoughtful and well-argued, indicating an impressive depth of understanding about the play and the moral issues involved. In Year 8 history lessons, students were provided with excellent pictorial resources that they used to consider the American civil rights movement. Teachers' questioning challenged students to think hard about the validity of historical source material while also considering the moral issues raised by racial segregation.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The behaviour and safety of students is outstanding because students behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school and leaders ensure that the school is a safe place to be.

In lessons, students exhibit excellent self-management and often act to influence

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positively the behaviour of their peers. Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire judged that there is a good standard of behaviour in the school and that lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour.

Bullying is minimal, and when it does occur is addressed firmly by the school. The school's 'M20' mediation programme ensures that all students know what to do if bullied and provides a student-led mentoring approach that students value. Overall attendance is above average and students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs have better attendance than that for all students.

All staff in the school are proactive in maintaining a safe and secure learning environment. In the safety-conscious learning environment of a Year 7 design and technology lesson, students were encouraged to take risks while remaining safe. Similarly in a Year 7 science lesson, students stayed safe because of well-rehearsed procedures and processes. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire judged that their children feel safe at school and most students who answered the questionnaire and all those who were involved in discussions with inspectors said they feel safe at school. There were many examples of students who faced challenging circumstances being exceptionally well supported by the school and one student exemplified this by commenting that 'the school is always here for me.

### **Leadership and management**

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. Leaders at all levels have very high expectations about teachers' performance and students' behaviour, attitudes and achievement. Middle leadership of subjects and of pastoral provision is very strong and contributes significantly to the outstanding achievement of students. There is a strong sense of community, underpinned by the Catholic ethos of the school and its Christian beliefs.

Comprehensive and supportive systems are in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, including paired observations and learning walks. Very good professional development opportunities exist for all staff, including individual coaching, whole-school training on key issues and extensive opportunities to share good practice with colleagues in other schools. Although detailed tracking and monitoring of individual students' performance takes place, the school recognises it needs to introduce more efficient whole-school assessment and tracking systems so that progress can be monitored more effectively against measurable outcomes.

The school promotes equality and tackles any evidence of discrimination, so that every student has the opportunity to reach their potential in all aspects of their education – whether academic or in the development of their wider social skills.

Strong partnership working was evident in the transition arrangements organised for pupils from primary feeder schools and those in place for students in Year 9 to ease their move to upper schools. Extensive liaison occurs with other high schools and

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upper schools in relation to curriculum networking groups for teachers and liaison groups for support staff and for senior leader groups. International partnerships, for example with schools in India, Tanzania and Malaysia, help to broaden students' horizons.

The curriculum matches very well the needs of students and students' views inform the curriculum review process. The school's citizenship and personal, social and health education programme provides students with valuable additional learning opportunities about a range of important issues, which one student described as 'really useful stuff'. The curriculum includes very strong provision to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies provide many special moments for students. At an assembly that took place during the inspection, a former student, who is a wheel-chair user, was applauded and celebrated as an Olympic torch bearer. This event provided a powerful moment for all students to develop their spirituality, an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of the human condition and the positive reinforcement of a person with a disability as a strong role model.

School leaders at all levels, including members of the governing body, know the strengths and weakness of the school well. Recent appointments to the leadership team indicate highly effective succession planning that ensures good capacity to sustain its outstanding performance and continue to improve. However, school systems, in terms of the rigorous analyses and evaluation of data of all types, whether linked to achievement, teaching or behaviour, over time and at group level, at whole-school and at subject level, are not as sharp as they could be, particularly in their ability to inform and direct strategic decision-making effectively.

Members of the governing body are fully committed to the school, actively involved in its activities and ensure the school meets all statutory requirements in relation to safeguarding.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



6 July 2012

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Saint Martin's Catholic School, Stoke Golding CV13 6HT**

Inspectors really enjoyed visiting your school and would like to thank all of you for being so courteous and polite.

Saint Martin's is an outstanding school. You receive an excellent education because staff at the school work hard to ensure that every one of you has the opportunity to reach your potential. School leaders provide you with a curriculum that is very well matched to your needs and teachers ensure that lessons are interesting and that you make rapid progress in your learning. As a result, your achievement is outstanding and you are very well prepared for the next stage of your education at upper school. It is also important to say that your own behaviour contributes significantly to your very good learning. Inspectors were impressed with your very well developed self-management and independent learning skills and your very strong social and personal communicational skills.

To ensure your school remains outstanding and continues to improve, we have asked the headteacher and members of the governing body to address the following issues:

- improve the quality of marking and written feedback you receive on your work in all subjects so that it is as good as in English
- develop more rigorous systems for analysing and evaluating data, for example about the progress you make, so that this contributes more effectively to informing decisions about how good the school is and what it should do to improve even further.

You can help your school by continuing to attend regularly and continuing to behave in the exemplary manner you exhibited during the inspection.

Yours sincerely

Gwen Coates  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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