

The Saint Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Kesteven Road, Stamford, PE9 1SR

Inspection dates

26–27 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and governors have a very clear understanding of the academy's strengths and they work well with staff to tackle any weaknesses in teaching or achievement.
- Consistently good teaching in all classes ensures achievement is good across the academy.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They say they feel safe in the academy and most parents and carers agree.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are good, lessons run smoothly and pupils are able to concentrate fully on their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to enable disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who find learning difficult to make good progress.
- The basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy are taught well.
- Children get off to a good start in Reception and are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- The academy works well with its federated partner academy and others in the trust. This has helped to improve teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The work set for the most able pupils is occasionally not challenging enough.
- Teachers' marking does not always focus enough on improving pupils' spelling, punctuation or grammar, particularly when they write in subjects other than English.
- Pupils sometimes present their work untidily.
- The academy does not always make it clear to parents how it takes their views into account.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons, all of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. He heard pupils read, looked at the work in their books and attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff with leadership roles, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors.
- The inspector examined a range of documents, including a summary of the academy's self-evaluation and improvement plan, policies aimed at keeping pupils safe, and information about governance and the management of teachers' performance.
- The inspector analysed the views of 26 parents and carers through their responses on the Parent View website. The inspector also spoke with 12 parents during the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the 16 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Keith Williams, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is smaller than the average primary school.
- The St Augustine's Primary academy converted to become an academy in May 2013. When its predecessor school, St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory.
- The academy is federated with the English Martyrs Catholic Primary Academy in Oakham, Rutland, with whom it shares the headteacher and governing body. Both academies are part of a multi-academy trust, the St Gilbert of Sempingham Catholics Academy Trust. The Chair of the Governing Body is also chair of the multi-academy trust.
- Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. A below average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic heritages. The proportion speaking English as an additional language is about a third of the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is close to the national average, although the number of pupils in each year group is small. In this academy, this relates to those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The academy offers full-time provision for Reception age children.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been a number of staff changes in the past year. The academy is currently without a deputy headteacher.
- The academy operates a before- and after-school club which formed part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - setting work more consistently at the right level of difficulty for the most able pupils to enable more of them to reach the higher levels
 - making sure that teachers pay more attention to correcting pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar, particularly when they mark their writing in subjects other than literacy
 - improving the neatness of pupils' work.
- Work more closely with parents and carers to make sure that they feel their views are taken into account.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The governing body and headteacher have managed the academy successfully during a brief, but potentially unsettling, period of staff changes. They have taken effective steps to secure consistently good teaching and create a supportive climate in which pupils achieve well. Staff share the leaders' drive for improvement and there is a strong sense of teamwork. This has resulted in a happy and harmonious academy where pupils behave well and are keen to learn.
- Subject leaders, including the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage, work well with the headteacher to check on and improve the quality of teaching and learning. They systematically analyse the information they collect from regular assessments, the scrutiny of pupils' work and visits to classrooms. Areas for improvement are flagged up and tackled robustly, and leaders provide training and support where needed.
- Leaders make good use of their links with the federated partner academy and others in the multi-academy trust to take advantage of expertise that might otherwise not be readily available, and also to provide support for the other members of the trust in return. Important aspects of the academy's work, for example curriculum planning and the introduction of new assessment arrangements, have benefited from the academies working together successfully.
- Pupils experience a wide range of exciting and stimulating experiences through the academy's well-planned and imaginative programmes of study, and learn key values such as tolerance and respect for the rights and beliefs of others that prepare them well for life in modern Britain. As a result, they make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The primary sports and physical education funding has been used effectively to pay for specialist coaches to lead lessons and improve teachers' knowledge and confidence. This has helped to improve pupils' skill levels and increased their participation in competitive sport.
- The academy makes pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and needs feel welcome and fully included in what it offers. It tackles any hint of discrimination swiftly and ensures all pupils have the same opportunities to succeed. The academy makes good use of the additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium to give extra support for individuals and groups, and to provide support for visits and staff training.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well led and managed.
- Although the school works well with most parents and carers, a few do not feel that enough consideration is given to their concerns.
- Leaders make sure that pupils are safe and the school's safeguarding arrangements meet all national requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors use a wide variety of ways to check on the academy's work. They make regular visits to classrooms, are linked to subjects and important aspects of the academy's work, meet regularly with subject leaders to check on progress and developments and analyse data thoroughly. As a result, governors are well informed and have a very clear picture of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. They are influential in identifying the solutions to problems and challenging leaders to secure further improvement.
 - Governors receive detailed information about the performance of teachers. They make sure that teachers' appraisals are carried out fairly and effectively and that teachers receive pay awards only when they have successfully met their targets.
 - Governors have a good overview of spending and its impact, including the additional funding for the pupil premium and sport. They make sure that appropriate steps are taken to keep pupils safe.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that most of them usually behave well, and the large majority of parents who expressed a view agree. There have been no exclusions. Teachers manage the very few pupils who present challenging behaviour very well. Pupils are well aware of the penalties for not behaving well.
- Pupils are punctual at the start of the day and to lessons. They listen carefully to teachers' instructions and explanations and move quickly from whole class discussions to individual or group work. Children in Reception change quickly for physical education (PE) and are soon in the hall ready to start the lesson.
- Outside of lessons, pupils are polite and considerate as they move around the academy. Break times are lively and enjoyable times and lunchtime is a civilised occasion. Pupils respect academy equipment and facilities and wear their uniform with pride.
- Pupils enjoy positive relationships with each other and the adults. They enjoy their learning and their attendance is above average. Although most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, they sometimes present their work untidily.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Staff training on matters of safety is regular and up-to-date. Most parents and all staff who expressed opinions agree that the academy promotes pupils' safety well.
- Pupils, including those who attend the before and after-school clubs, say they feel safe. They know how to stay safe when using the internet and in a variety of other situations, for example when out of sight of their parents or crossing the road.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying. They say that bullying is rare and, when it does happen, it is dealt with successfully by staff. The large majority of parents and carers agree. The academy records such incidents, and those of other unacceptable behaviour, carefully and takes appropriate steps to ensure that incidents do not reoccur.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and other adults have created a supportive environment in which good relationships enable pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to achieve well. Strong teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is central to the good progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons that promote pupils' enjoyment and usually take good account of how well pupils have learned previously. They simplify the work set for pupils who find learning difficult as necessary to ensure these pupils understand the activity and can succeed at it. Staff question pupils carefully to keep a regular check on their understanding, correct them sensitively if they make mistakes and respond quickly when pupils need help.
- Teachers generally set work at an appropriate level for the most able pupils although, occasionally, more could be expected of them. While these pupils usually make good progress, their learning slows when they find the work too easy.
- Teachers keep a careful check on the progress of disadvantaged pupils. They ensure they are fully included in activities in and out of lessons. The few pupils at an early stage of learning English also receive good support and they make good progress.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is good, including in Reception. Across the academy,

improvements to the teaching of writing, which has been the focus of staff training, have contributed to pupils making better progress. Good teaching is leading to steady improvements in pupils' mental mathematical skills.

- Marking is usually good, particularly in English and mathematics, where teachers give pupils clear feedback about how they can improve. Pupils respond to these suggestions conscientiously, which contributes to their good learning. Marking in other subjects, while otherwise good, does not always put enough emphasis on improving pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The small numbers in each year group mean that the children's level of development, when they first join Reception varies from year to year, depending on the proportion of more able children or those who find learning difficult. Nevertheless, children make good progress, whatever their starting points, and they are well prepared for when they move into Year 1.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 achieve well. Although attainment at the end of Year 2 in writing and mathematics was below average last year, the work of current pupils and the school's assessments show that standards are rising. Current pupils are on track to be much closer to the national average this year.
- Pupils make good progress in learning phonics (the sounds that letters make). The results of the national phonics check in Year 1 were above the national average last year. Pupils build up their reading skills systematically. Older pupils have developed clear preferences for authors and types of story. They read widely and use their skills well to extend their learning.
- Attainment is broadly average at the end of Year 6, reflecting the good progress pupils make from their starting points. Although test results must be treated cautiously, because of the small numbers of pupils involved, last year fewer pupils made good progress in writing than they did in reading and mathematics. In addition, the academy's results in grammar, punctuation and spelling check were below average. The academy has worked well to rectify this and, this year, more pupils are making good progress in these aspects of writing.
- The most able pupils achieve well because, usually, teachers set them challenging work that makes them think harder and enables them to reach the higher levels. This is not always the case, however, and their progress slows when the work is too easy or when they are asked to cover work they have already done.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress but there are not enough of them to comment on their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics without identifying them.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their different starting points. This is because teachers and teaching assistants provide thoughtful support that is carefully tailored to meet their specific needs.

The early years provision is good

- Good leadership and teaching in Reception enable children, including disabled children and those who have special educational needs, to enjoy their time in this setting and achieve well. The proportion reaching a good level of development last year was close to that found nationally and current children are on track to match this. Children are well prepared for their education in Key Stage 1.
- The leader ensures that staff are consistent in their approaches to teaching and assessment and make sure that the setting is a safe and secure. Links with parents are good, which enhances children's learning and enjoyment and enables parents to support learning at home.
- Staff plan carefully together to cover all areas of learning and make good use of the classroom and

outdoor area. Adults help children to develop the ability to make choices for themselves and work under their guidance.

- Staff question children sensitively to deepen their thinking and to encourage them to widen their vocabulary and extend what they say. They know when to step back to enable children to try things for themselves.
- Staff promote children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, well. They ensure that children learn class routines and understand what is expected of them. As a result, children settle quickly and are keen and eager to learn. They behave well, take turns and willingly share the setting's resources with others.
- Staff keep a close check on children's learning and build up a detailed and accurate picture of each child's progress. The academy introduced a new online system for recording these assessments earlier in the year. This information is readily available to parents, who are able to use it to add contributions of their own to that being collected about their children's performance by academy staff.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139626
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	449939

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	139
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joe Scott
Headteacher	Sue Hooley
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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