

The Saint Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Kesteven Road, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 1SR

Inspection dates

5 to 6 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school has experienced a period of turbulence, which has resulted in a decline in the quality of teaching and learning. In 2018, too few pupils left the school well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Sometimes teachers do not use well enough their knowledge of what pupils can already do to set tasks that accurately meet their needs.
- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because some weaknesses still remain in teachers' subject knowledge and expectations, the teaching of reading and grammar and in the use of assessment to plan lessons which enable pupils to make good progress.
- Sometimes teachers do not use the correct grammar when communicating with pupils verbally, in workbooks and on displays.
- The expectations of teachers are sometimes not high enough. Pupils are not routinely challenged to achieve more, and some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- In the early years, sometimes staff do not use assessment information carefully to plan for children's next steps in learning. Sometimes children repeat tasks they have already demonstrated they can do.

The school has the following strengths

- Together, leaders and trust directors have quickly evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their actions to drive change are rapidly improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils behave well. They are kept safe and are respectful of others.
- The school's curriculum is well balanced and broad. Staff develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Pupils, parents and carers understand the value of regular attendance. Attendance is consistently above the national average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and raise standards by ensuring that:
 - assessment information is used consistently to plan tasks which meet the needs of pupils of different abilities
 - teachers' expectations of what pupils should be able to achieve are high enough to enable them to make strong progress
 - teachers have a secure understanding of what they want pupils to learn when planning tasks
 - teachers have strong subject knowledge to enable them to effectively teach across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in English by ensuring that:
 - teachers sequence learning effectively to build pupils' knowledge and skills
 - pupils' reading books closely match their phonics knowledge
 - teachers develop pupils' reading skills of inference and deduction
 - teachers use the correct grammar when communicating with pupils.
- Improve the early years by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information carefully to plan accurately for children's next steps in learning
 - teachers' expectations of what children should be able to achieve are high enough to enable all of them to make strong progress
 - tasks planned closely match the intended learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school joined the St Therese of Lisieux Catholic Multi-Academy Trust in September 2018. The leadership team are new to post, with the headteacher joining in September 2018. During the past two years the school has been through a period of instability in leadership. As a result, it has been difficult to maintain a consistent approach to teaching and learning, and the quality of education has declined, especially in key stage 2.
- The headteacher is ably assisted by two senior teachers, who have whole-school responsibilities for the provision for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND), English and mathematics. Leaders have high expectations and are providing clear guidance for teachers, which is rapidly improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, resulting in pupils beginning to make better progress and attaining more highly overall.
- Leaders have quickly identified the school's weaknesses and have put in place action plans to rectify these. These robust plans are developing the quality of teaching and learning, in particular in mathematics, reading, grammar and writing. The skills of strong teachers at the school are being utilised to demonstrate good practice and support other teachers.
- Leaders have ensured that the support provided for staff aligns with the school's approaches and is bespoke to individual teachers. Staff receive internal and external training to help them develop their skills. For example, leaders are developing the teaching of mathematics through involvement in a teacher research project, and the Lincolnshire Raising Attainment in English project is supporting the development of English teaching.
- Leadership for pupils with SEND is strong. The extra funding to support this group is used effectively. Leaders' understanding of the needs of these pupils is comprehensive. They closely monitor the support these pupils receive and are holding teachers and teaching assistants to account for the progress that these pupils make. Effective and concise record-keeping mean leaders have a secure understanding of which strategies are making the most difference for pupils.
- The headteacher has inherited the strategy for supporting disadvantaged pupils and is currently evaluating its effectiveness. While disadvantaged pupils have not made as strong progress as other pupils nationally in the past, these pupils are beginning to make better progress because of the more effective use of the pupil premium funding.
- Since taking over the school, trust directors have supported the headteacher to identify the aspects of the school's work that need to be improved. They have provided support for the new headteacher to put in place strategies to drive improvement. They have also provided support for the school's local governing body.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced. Teachers provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities to learn through a topic approach across the curriculum. Pupils learn about different religions and cultures. Extracurricular clubs and enrichment activities are designed to provide pupils with experiences that they may

not receive elsewhere. For example, pupils visit the Wilds Lodge Music Festival, enjoy learning to play the drums, and participate in residential visits.

- The development of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is a strength of the school. Pupils learn about their place in the world, and how their actions impact on others. Pupils are reflective and talk engagingly about their views and opinions. The curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The development of pupils’ physical well-being is a priority for leaders, and the school sport and PE funding is used well. Through extracurricular clubs, lunchtime activities and visitors, pupils understand that being active is important. Coaches support staff to help them develop their planning to teach a wide range of physical skills. Recent involvement has included participation in orienteering and a visit from a Paralympian.

Governance of the school

- The trustees are ambitious for the school. Through close collaboration between trust directors and the leadership team, they have established a culture of high expectations and accountability, which is shared by staff.
- Trustees have ensured that the staff receive the support they need to enable them to carry out their roles effectively. External support has been put in place for senior leaders to help them drive improvements.
- The trust has supported the local governing body to help them develop their role. They have a better understanding of the context of the school, and how outcomes compare with other schools within the trust and locally. Governors are keen to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills required to provide support and challenge to the school’s leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated leaders for safeguarding have audited the school’s systems and process for safeguarding to ensure that they are compliant with statutory guidance. Records are well managed and organised, and include the support provided for pupils and actions following incidents.
- Leaders seek additional support for families when required. They ensure that actions following case conferences and reviews are followed up to ensure that families receive the support they need. When required, they access support from external agencies.
- Staff receive frequent and relevant training in how to keep pupils safe. Staff know what to do were they to have a concern about a child. The school’s safeguarding records show that staff at all levels are confident to pass on concerns. Staff care about pupils and do the best they can to ensure that they stay safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Due to a legacy of poor teaching in the past, some pupils have gaps in their learning,

which have prevented them from making as much progress as they should. Leaders have introduced new approaches to the teaching of mathematics and English to strengthen the progress pupils make. This is being used to differing degrees of success, but overall there are noticeable improvements in pupils' achievement across the school.

- Teachers are implementing the school's strategy to develop the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics. Teachers move pupils through a sequence of learning to complete problem-solving and reasoning tasks. This approach is not used consistently by all teachers. Sometimes teachers are not using well enough their knowledge of what pupils can do to set tasks that precisely match pupils' next steps in learning. Some pupils complete tasks that are too easy for them, and they do not make as much progress as they should.
- The school has recently introduced a new approach to developing pupils' writing and grammar skills. This approach focuses on teaching a sequence of 'read, analyse, write' to provide pupils with a structure to develop their writing skills. Sometimes teachers' expectations of what pupils should be able to achieve are too low, and pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
- The approach to developing pupils' early reading and phonics is consistent. However, as training has only recently taken place, some pupils have not made enough progress, and the expectation of some pupils is too low. Sometimes pupils' reading books do not match their stage in learning. Books do not always match pupils' phonics knowledge.
- The development of pupils' reading skills does not sharply target pupils' next steps in learning. Sometimes teachers do not provide pupils with the background knowledge to enable them to fully understand a text. At times, teachers focus too much on pupils retrieving information from what they read and developing their vocabulary, limiting their development of skills in inference and deduction.
- Sometimes teachers' subject knowledge is not strong enough to enable pupils to make secure progress. The explanations of what teachers want pupils to learn are sometimes not clear enough to give pupils the knowledge they need to move forward with their learning.
- The grammar used by staff when communicating with pupils is sometimes not accurate. This includes spoken English, grammar in pupils' workbooks and on displays.
- Teaching assistants who work with pupils with SEND are skilled in providing pupils with the support they require to make strong progress. Staff sequence learning well to enable pupils to tackle tasks with growing confidence and independence.
- Where the school's approaches to teaching and learning are more well-established, teachers use their knowledge of what pupils do well to set tasks that meet pupils' needs. Teachers provide additional challenge and support to enable pupils to make strong progress. Pupils learn new skills well and then incorporate these in their work. This effective practice is increasingly in evidence as a result of leaders' efforts to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Through the development of pupils' SMSC, they learn how to express themselves well. Staff encourage pupils to consider how their actions impact on others, and how to be good citizens. Each week, pupils consider and discuss a different concept, such as 'I know the difference between safe and unsafe behaviours' or 'I know how to look after myself'.
- Pupils' consideration for the environment and the world around them is at the heart of what the school does. The school's eco warriors highlight the need to keep the school tidy. Pupils collect items that cannot be easily recycled, such as crisp packets, and return these to manufacturers to prevent them going to landfill.
- Pupils have a strong moral compass. Pupils commit to completing charitable acts, such as raising funds, donating their time or unwanted toys to benefit others.
- Pupils have a good understanding of diversity and equality. When discussing what equality means, pupils from key stage 1 said, 'We should treat people the same way. But the poor aren't equal, and that makes me sad.'
- Pupils respect the choices of others and are supportive and caring of each other. Pupils are taught not to use derogatory language, and they understand how hurtful this can be to others.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online. They learn about the dangers they may face on social media and by playing online games. Pupils know not to divulge their personal information. They know to report incidents to adults immediately, and of the dangers of online scams.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe appropriate to their age. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 learn how to contact the emergency services, and what should be kept in a first-aid kit.
- Pupils understand the need for healthy lifestyles and bring healthy snacks into school for breaktime. Pupils participate with enthusiasm in the sporting activities available to them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Attendance is consistently above the national average. Leaders work closely with parents to ensure that they understand the need for regular attendance at school.
- Pupils behave well. They are polite and enjoy talking about themselves and their learning. Pupils play well together and move around the school in an orderly and good-natured manner.

- Pupils take pride in their work and present their work well across the curriculum.
- The school's behaviour logs show that incidents of poor behaviour are extremely rare. When they do occur, leaders manage them well.
- Pupils say that there are very few incidents of bullying. They were confident that should an incident occur, it would be dealt with well by adults.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined at the end of key stage 2 has been below the national average for the past three years. The progress pupils make has been strengthening since 2016, and in 2018 key stage 2 pupils made progress similar to pupils nationally.
- Due to weak teaching in the past, some pupils still have gaps in their knowledge. Pupils' workbooks show that tasks set sometimes do not meet pupils' needs. Next steps in learning are not always well planned and some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils in key stage 1 make stronger progress than pupils in key stage 2. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standards in reading and writing was similar to the national average. Pupils' work books show that where teaching is consistent with the school approaches, pupils make strong progress.
- In the past, disadvantaged pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have not made as much progress as other pupils nationally. The school's assessment information shows that the support provided for these pupils has enabled them to make stronger progress this year. While these pupils still have gaps in learning, they are making better progress than in the past.
- From their respective starting points, pupils with SEND make strong progress. The tasks set and support provided for these pupils are sharply matched to their needs.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards in the end of Year 1 national phonics screening check has been rising, and in 2018 was similar to the national average. However, as training and development of phonics teaching has only recently occurred, some pupils are not moving quickly enough through the phonics programme to enable them to make as much progress as they should.
- Where teaching is stronger, pupils' workbooks show that teachers sequence learning well to enable pupils to make strong progress. Work is sharply targeted to meet pupils' needs. In these instances, pupils are making consistently strong progress and gaps in knowledge are closing rapidly.
- The school's own assessment information shows that most pupils, in key stage 2 especially, are now beginning to make stronger progress than in the past, due to improvements evident in teaching, learning and assessment.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years leader is passionate about providing children with opportunities to

learn across the curriculum. Leaders have effectively identified what needs to improve and have put in place effective action plans to make improvements, and this is beginning to drive improvements. Staff in the early years are undertaking training and development to help them to strengthen their practice.

- Children's learning journals show that while their knowledge is developed sequentially, their needs are not always met. Some children complete the same or similar tasks they have already demonstrated they can do. These children do not make as much progress as they should.
- The tasks set by the teachers do not always help children learn what was planned. Sometimes, adults do not consider future steps in learning when demonstrating concepts to children. Sometimes adults do not build on children's responses or questions well enough to develop their learning further.
- In 2018, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development fell below the national average. Close transition between the early years and Year 1 ensures that children who do not meet the early learning goals at the end of the early years are well supported.
- Children participate well with the activities provided for them. They are keen to learn and share their learning with adults. They behave well and are respectful of each other. All welfare requirements for the early years are met.
- There is effective transition into the Reception class from home or nursery settings. Children and their parents have many opportunities to visit the early years before they start the school and to get to know teachers and support staff.
- Leaders ensure that children who have an additional needs are well supported. Staff seek support from the school nurse for children with medical needs, and the additional-needs team to ensure that the needs of those children with SEND are met.

School details

Unique reference number	139626
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10057691

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	129
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	George Krawiec
Headteacher	Rachel de Wet
Telephone number	01780 762 094
Website	www.st-augustine.lincs.sch.uk
Email address	Clare.Rudkin@st-augustine.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 February 2015

Information about this school

- The school joined the St Therese of Lisieux Catholic Multi-Academy Trust in September 2018. The powers of governance lie with the trustees of the trust. The trustees have appointed a committee known as the local governing body. The trustees delegate some of their powers to the local governing body.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2018.
- The proportion of pupils with a first language not believed to be English is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in a number of lessons, some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. They observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils read. The inspector also talked with pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work in all year groups to gain a view of the impact of teaching over time.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime staff. The inspector also spoke with the trust's director of performance and standards and chair of the local governing body.
- The inspector spoke with parents informally and considered the nine responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View, and the 11 responses to the staff survey.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including: the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement; the most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; information relating to the health, safety and safeguarding of pupils; and the most recent data relating to the attendance of pupils.
- The inspector considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website.

Inspection team

Helen Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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