

Inspection of a good school: St Edmund's Catholic Academy

Compton Park, Compton Road West, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV3 9DU

Inspection dates:

26–27 November 2019

Outcome

St Edmund's Catholic Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Edmund's is a welcoming school with a nurturing and supportive environment. Pupils are valued and cared for. Pupils are safe and know where to go if they have a problem. Pupils describe the staff as 'always being there' for them. Bullying is rare and when it does happen, teachers deal with it swiftly and effectively.

The principal and her leadership team are ambitious for all pupils. The principal has made many positive changes. Leaders' work is now sharply focused on ensuring that all subjects are planned and taught effectively.

Behaviour in the school is exemplary. Pupils move about the school in a very calm and orderly manner. In lessons, pupils behave well, and low-level disruption is extremely rare. Pupils are proud of their school and wear their uniform with pride. They value and take care of their learning environment.

Teachers love working at the school. Staff work very hard to help pupils to achieve. There are excellent relationships between staff and students. The 'CARE' culture runs through the school and is felt positively by all. Teachers help pupils to see that it is fine to be different. Their beliefs and values are respected and celebrated.

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

The new principal and her senior team have made some significant improvements to the quality of the curriculum. The principal is relentless in her desire for pupils to succeed both academically and socially. Staff say they feel well supported by leaders. They are proud to work at the school.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils to do well. In most subjects, teachers have thought very carefully about what pupils need to know, understand and do. Curriculum leaders have carefully planned what they think pupils should learn and the order they will learn it in. This is leading to pupils having a deeper understanding of key topics. This is particularly

strong in English and humanities. Teachers use effective strategies to enable all pupils to be successful, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is an ambitious and inclusive curriculum for pupils with SEND. Staff use good strategies to help these pupils to learn and to remember more.

In most subjects, teachers give helpful feedback to pupils to help them review and recap knowledge. However, in mathematics this could be more focused on what pupils have not properly understood. Sometimes, misconceptions in mathematics are not picked up. The most able mathematicians are not always challenged and stretched enough to develop their knowledge deeply.

Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils. Pupils respect each other's views and opinions and are encouraged to speak out in class. Pupils want to do well and concentrate in lessons. This means that they learn well.

Pupils have access to a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom. They participate in many clubs such as rock band, chess, 'Formula One', debates and many sporting events. They go on trips and visits to support their understanding of the world around them. The school gives advice and guidance to pupils about future careers. However, some younger pupils feel that they would like more information about this.

Sixth-form students benefit from excellent provision. Students are well-supported by their teachers, but are also encouraged to be independent learners. They are proud of their school and act as important role models to younger pupils, helping them to read, for example. Sixth-form students work hard in lessons. They are making good progress towards the next stage in their lives.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils behave well in lessons and during social times. The school is very calm and orderly and this enables pupils to concentrate on their work in lessons. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors. They show respect to people with different faiths or beliefs from their own. The Catholic values are at the heart of the school and are respected by all.

Governors play an active role in the school. They know what the school does well and what leaders need to work on. They, and the representatives from the multi-academy company, are effective in monitoring the work of leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff receive appropriate training. They are very vigilant and are able to spot quickly when pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders work with a range of external agencies to provide effective support for pupils.

Pupils know that they have appropriate adults to go to if they are worried. They say that adults will help them to resolve any problems. Pupils are aware of different risks that may

face them. The school helps them to learn how to keep themselves safe through assemblies and the formal curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have thought carefully about the sequencing of the curriculum and what they want to achieve. Teachers are effectively implementing this new curriculum. Leaders should continue to embed the work started on the curriculum to ensure that it has a positive impact on the outcomes for pupils.
- The quality of feedback in mathematics is not as strong as in other subjects. Pupils do not always know what they do well or how to improve. Misconceptions in pupils' learning are sometimes missed. Leaders should ensure that in mathematics pupils know what is expected of them, what they have understood well and what they need to do to improve, in the same way as they do in other subjects.
- In key stage 4 pupils receive strong advice and guidance about their future careers. This is not as well thought out or planned in key stage 3. Some pupils in year 7 and 8 do not feel that they receive enough information about their future careers. Leaders should ensure that careers advice and guidance for pupils in key stage 3 is as high quality as it is at key stage 4.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Edmund's Catholic School, to be good in October 2012.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	139891
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10111738
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	913
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Margaret Gallagher
Principal	Margaret Hazeldine
Website	http://www.stedmundscloud.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2016

Information about this school

- This is a Catholic faith school. The school admits pupils from other religions. The school received its last section 8 inspection in March 2016. The school uses Braybrook, Midpoint and The Orchard to provide alternative provision for a very small number of pupils.
- The school is part of the newly formed St Francis and St Clare Catholic Multi-Academy Company.

Information about this inspection

- We held meetings with the principal and other leaders. We also met with a range of teaching and support staff.
- We evaluated the quality of education by looking in detail at the teaching of English, mathematics, history, geography and modern foreign languages. We discussed curriculum design with leaders, carried out lesson visits, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers from the lessons visited. We were accompanied by senior

leaders when visiting lessons.

- We met with members of the local governing body and the multi-academy company.
- We evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. The school's single central record was reviewed. We met with the designated safeguarding leader and reviewed processes relating to safeguarding.
- We took into account the views of 50 members of staff who completed the Ofsted survey.
- We took into account the 55 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, including the 25 text-free responses.

Inspection team

Neil Warner, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Helen Reeves

Ofsted Inspector

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