

# Inspection of a good school: St George and St Martin Catholic Academy

Boulton Street, Birches Head, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST1 2NQ

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Inspection dates:

27–28 November 2019

## Outcome

St George and St Martin Catholic Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

St George and St Martin Catholic Academy is an exciting place to learn. Leaders and other staff work really hard to make this happen. Staff care a great deal for pupils and want the best for them. They make sure pupils are well looked after and stay safe.

Pupils are respectful and polite. They enjoy coming to the school. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. This means that pupils can learn without interruption. Play leaders help pupils to play well together, make friends and socialise at playtimes. Pupils know what bullying is. They say it does happen occasionally. Most pupils agree that, when bullying does happen, staff deal with it quickly.

Children are encouraged to be respectful, independent, responsible and confident members of their community and the wider world. Leaders plan the curriculum well to help pupils develop personally as well as achieve academically. Pupils are taught to lead healthy and positive lifestyles, respecting themselves and others. A range of clubs are provided to develop pupils' interests. Parents are positive about all aspects of school life, such as the range of after-school clubs organised for pupils.

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

Leaders, governors and staff are ambitious and have high expectations for all pupils. They have provided a rich curriculum which prepares pupils well for life. Pupils rise to these high expectations. Teachers plan lessons that meet pupils' needs. However, teachers are not always clear about what needs to be taught within each term. This means that knowledge and skills are not always built well over time. The development of teacher subject knowledge has been and continues to be a priority. Staff are proud to work at their school and enjoy coming to work.

Children in the early years are safe and happy. They behave and play well together. Particularly strong aspects of the provision are in the development of communication and language, and personal, social and emotional skills. Daily opportunities for phonics,

reading and writing contribute to pupils' good progress. During the inspection, children in the nursery enjoyed chalking pictures outdoors of famous buildings around the world. Leaders ensure that early reading is prioritised. Consequently, all pupils can read by the end of key stage one. Any pupil who falls behind is identified and supported to catch up. Pupils read regularly at home and in the school. Staff teach phonics well, as a result of effective training. Pupils are engaged in their learning. Pupils apply their phonic knowledge well when writing. Teachers read with enthusiasm to children. Pupils develop a love of reading. Teachers select from a range of high-quality texts. The 'Stoke One Hundred Reads' are promoted across the school. Pupils become members of the local library while at the school and visit it regularly.

Pupils develop close links with a local care home for the elderly. They enjoy a range of school visits linked to their learning. During a trip to France, older pupils practised speaking French, the modern foreign language they are learning in the school.

Pupils achieve well in mathematics. They enjoy mathematics lessons. Pupils talk about their love of mathematics and how they enjoy having to think hard about their learning. In physical education (PE) lessons, pupils develop a broad range of skills. Pupils enjoy PE and have fun in lessons. They are able to talk about how their skills are improving. The PE subject expert provides support and training to staff. This has increased staff confidence. Active family workshops allow pupils and their families to learn ways to live healthier lifestyles.

Staff want pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who are disadvantaged to do well. Leaders make sure that these pupils receive the support they need. Teachers adapt curriculum plans and provide additional resources to help these pupils in lessons. However, teaching assistants do not always support pupils as well as they could. They would benefit from further training to support them in their role.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff attend safeguarding training and know what to do if there is a concern about a pupil. The leader works well with other professionals to safeguard pupils who need it. This ensures that they get the right help at the right time.

Leaders have ensured that the proper checks have been carried out on staff before they start to work at the school.

Pupils learn about risks in the local area and how to keep themselves safe. Older pupils and their parents and carers recently learned about the dangers of knife crime and gang violence.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers are not always clear about what knowledge and skills need to be taught in each term. Consequently, teaching does not always build on what pupils have learned in the past. The school needs to further develop termly curriculum plans, so that teachers know what they need to cover each term.
- At times, teaching assistants do not always support pupils effectively. This means that pupils, particularly those who require additional support, do not always get the help they need. The school needs to ensure that teaching assistants possess the necessary skills and knowledge to support pupils with their learning consistently across all areas of the curriculum.

## 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 St George and St Martin Catholic Academy to be good in May 2015.

## 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 are 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140145
<b>Local authority</b>	Stoke-on-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10088546
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	223
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The board of directors
<b>Chair of governors/trustees</b>	Gillian Meller
<b>Principal</b>	Dawn Farmer
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sgsmacademy.co.uk">www.sgsmacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6–7 May 2015

## Information about this school

- We last inspected the school in May 2015 under section 8. That inspection confirmed the school's good judgement.
- The school runs a Nursery class for children aged three to four years old.

## Information about this inspection

I carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- During the inspection, I focused in particular on the following subjects: reading, mathematics and PE. In these subjects, I visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, and talked with pupils and staff about the way these subjects were taught.
- I examined external performance data about the school and looked at school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. I also checked the school's website.
- I asked pupils, staff, leaders and governors about safeguarding arrangements. I examined the record of employment checks on school staff and looked at other school records. I also found out about safety procedures and routines at the school.

- I watched pupils' behaviour in class and at other times during the day.
- During the inspection, I had formal meetings with the principal, subject leaders, chair of the board of directors, chair of the governing body, senior executive leader, teachers and pupils. I also talked informally with pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- By the end of the inspection, there were 24 recent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View. I considered these and looked at the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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