

Inspection of a good school: St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

Avenue Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 6UZ

Inspection dates:

28–29 January 2020

Outcome

St Gregory's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Gregory's is a caring school. The school's Christian values shine through. Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils rise to these. They are keen to learn and do their best. Pupils get on well together. They are respectful and kind. As one pupil said, 'It is easy to make friends because everyone cares about each other.'

Pupils follow a carefully planned English and mathematics curriculum. As a result, pupils achieve well in these areas. Pupils enjoy learning in different subjects. In some subjects, pupils' knowledge builds securely as they move through the school. For example, older pupils can speak confidently about themselves in Spanish. Leaders are working to ensure that pupils achieve equally well in all subjects.

Pupils benefit from well-chosen experiences that make learning memorable. These include day trips to places of interest such as the Houses of Parliament, as well as a residential visit in Years 5 and 6. Leaders provide a breadth of extra-curricular activities to develop pupils' talents and interests.

Pupils enjoy school. They feel safe and happy. Parents agree. Pupils know what bullying is. They say it rarely happens. Staff are quick to deal with any problems that occur.

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

Leaders plan pupils' learning well in many subjects, including English, mathematics, science, music, Spanish and religious education. In these areas, pupils' knowledge builds from topic to topic, and from year to year. By the time they leave the school, almost all pupils achieve the expected standards in English, mathematics and science. This provides a strong foundation for their learning in secondary school.

Leaders prioritise teaching pupils to read. Teachers are clear about the sounds pupils need to learn. They teach these in a logical order. Pupils read books that match the sounds they are learning. Workshops help parents to support their children's reading. As a

result, most pupils reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Those that do not receive extra support in Year 2 to catch up. Almost all pupils start Year 3 as independent readers. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Staff foster pupils' love of reading. Reception children have a Year 6 'reading buddy' to read with. Each week, there is a dedicated time for pupils to read for pleasure. Pupils borrow books from the well-stocked library. School librarians help to choose the books that are on offer. Teachers read to pupils regularly. For example, Year 6 pupils have recently enjoyed the book 'Skellig'. Older pupils are enthusiastic readers. Pupils have a good understanding of what they read.

Pupils enjoy mathematics, even when they find it difficult. This is because most teachers have strong subject knowledge. They know what to teach and when. Teachers plan lessons that build on what pupils know. This includes pupils with SEND. Pupils use practical equipment such as counters when they are learning new skills. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to solve mathematical problems. They encourage pupils to explain the reasoning behind their answers.

There are some subjects where pupils' knowledge builds less well. Geography is one of these. This is because plans do not outline what teachers need to teach and the order in which to teach it. Teachers' skills and expertise vary. As a result, pupils do not acquire the knowledge they need by the end of key stage 2.

Across the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. In Reception, children move around the classroom sensibly. They share resources and take turns. Further up the school, pupils work collaboratively with their learning partners. They listen to others' ideas and are respectful of different views. Pupils work hard. They take pride in their work. At social times, pupils play happily. Some enjoy being active while others prefer to sit quietly and play board games.

Pupils learn to become resilient, responsible and healthy citizens. They take on leadership roles and help leaders to make decisions. 'Safety supervisors' check that the school site is tidy and well-looked after. The environment group are currently making eco-bricks. Leaders plan activities to broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils benefit from the school's close links with the Royal Shakespeare Company. They visit different places of worship. Clubs give pupils the chance to do things they enjoy such as singing in the school choir.

Leaders, staff, governors and trustees work well together. They have the skills and expertise to improve the school further and to make sure staff's workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders train staff so that they know what to do if they have a concern about a pupils' welfare. All staff care about the pupils. They know them well and are alert to any changes

in their appearance or behaviour. Staff act quickly if they have any concerns. They let leaders know. Leaders take the necessary action to keep pupils safe.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online and when they are out and about. For example, they learn how to ride a bike safely. All pupils learn to swim.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken in subjects such as science, modern foreign languages and music, that they are in the process of bringing this about.
- In some subjects, such as geography, curriculum plans are at an early stage of development. They do not make it clear what leaders want pupils to know by the end of each topic. Teachers use the national curriculum to guide them, but they do not break these objectives down into cohesive, sequenced lessons that build pupils' knowledge in a logical order. Leaders need to give careful thought to the subject-specific knowledge they want pupils to learn in each topic. Teachers need to plan lesson sequences so that pupils' knowledge builds towards clear end points.
- Some subject leaders are not subject specialists. Senior leaders should equip these subject leaders with the skills they need to ensure that subject-specific content is coherently sequenced and successfully implemented.
- In some classes and subjects teachers' subject knowledge is not as strong as in others. Leaders should further improve teachers' subject knowledge. This will help teachers to build more effectively on pupils' prior learning and ensure that they know and remember more in all classes and subjects.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, to be good on 18–19 June 2014.

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 the school and 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

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| Unique reference number | 143633 |
| Local authority | Warwickshire |
| Inspection number | 10122520 |
| 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 | 198 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Eric Kirwan |
| Headteacher | Jane McNally |
| Website | http://www.st-gregs.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- St. Gregory's is a Roman Catholic school. It has a Christian ethos.
- The school converted to become an academy on 1 April 2017. When its predecessor school, also called St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- St. Gregory's is part of the Holy Family Catholic Multi-Academy Company (MAC). The MAC comprises five primary schools and one secondary school.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, subject leaders and teachers. I met with three representatives of the MAC. I also met the chair and vice chair of the local governing body. I spoke with a representative of the Archdiocese of Birmingham on the telephone. Discussions covered the curriculum, pupils' wider development and staff workload.
- I completed deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. In each subject, inspection activities included discussions with the subject leader, visits to lessons, discussions with teachers, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils.

- I listened to two groups of pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times. I spoke formally with groups of pupils as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- I met with the headteacher about the school's safeguarding procedures. I reviewed policies and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and pupils who have left the school. I spoke to pupils, parents and staff about how safe pupils are at school.
- I reviewed the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans as well as information on the school's website. I evaluated published performance data and documents relating to the curriculum and pupils with SEND. I took account of the 18 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- I took into consideration the 40 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the 24 free-text responses. I spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Claire Jones, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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