

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

Wilman Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9AL

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 September 2021

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

St Augustine's is a kind place. Pupils like their school. They say that 'you can make a friend everywhere you go'. Everyone is welcome here. Pupils feel valued and included. They grow in confidence, which helps them to try new things, for example 'getting into sport'. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) thrive. They participate fully in wider school life, such as in the Pupil Parliament.

Pupils feel safe. They know that keeping safe extends beyond the new school fencing to aspects of the online world. They recognise how easily you can 'stumble into something' online. Pupils have confidence in adults to help them sort things out. There are established systems for reporting problems, such as the worry boxes. School records demonstrate how any issues are dealt with quickly and effectively.

Expectations are high throughout the school, and pupils rise to them. In classes, pupils listen and try their best. Bullying is not a problem here. Pupils enjoy social times. They value their friendships, especially since lockdown. Pupils' occasional fallings out are used as learning experiences. The spirit of resolution is one of 'growth, not blame', in keeping with the ethos of the school.

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

Leaders have improved the curriculum since the previous inspection. They have ensured that pupils develop knowledge across all subjects, in keeping with the national curriculum. Teaching is well planned in sequences that help pupils build their knowledge over time. Where possible, learning is linked across curriculum areas, which helps it to be meaningful for pupils.

In English, mathematics and science, teachers' plans are closely matched to what pupils know and can already do. Learning is carefully assessed both during lessons and by regular quizzes and tests.

Subject plans are in place that build knowledge successfully across the wider curriculum. Occasionally, these plans do not pay close enough attention to what pupils have previously studied. Subject leaders are beginning to monitor their subjects more regularly again after the lockdowns. They know that this will help them to spot this problem quickly and to tweak plans accordingly.

Leaders have ensured that reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Books abound, and they are highly valued by pupils. Teachers read to pupils regularly. Pupils talk passionately about stories and authors they enjoy.

As soon as they start school in Reception Year, children start to learn to read. During the inspection, children who had just started school beamed as they joined in with known rhymes, using instruments. This quickly progresses to structured daily phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) teaching. This helps pupils to learn to read quickly and well. Most pupils can read fluently by the end of key stage 1.

Pupils' phonics learning has been affected by the lockdown. Measures are already in place that are helping younger pupils to catch-up quickly. Leaders have recently changed the way the school teaches phonics. Staff are positive about this and are using their training to good effect. However, training has not yet been fully implemented in key stage 2. This means that some older pupils who are still struggling to learn phonics are not yet benefiting from this new approach.

Behaviour in lessons is good. This helps pupils to learn well. Pupils who find behaviour challenging are given the support they need to learn to manage their emotions. This means that disruption to learning is rare and everyone can enjoy whole-school special learning days around, for example, a bridge building challenge.

Pupils benefit from the rich range of cultural diversity within the school's population. Each week there is a focus on one of their many countries of origin. Pupils glow with pride when theirs is the featured country and bask in the interest of their peers. Pupils learn about their own faiths and about those of others. They value and respect difference.

This is an inclusive school. Those pupils with SEND have their needs met well. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is highly skilled in identifying needs, creating learning plans and working with other agencies. She ensures that staff have the training they need to support pupils and is always on hand to provide advice.

The school is led and managed well. The trust works with leaders to ensure that staff are provided with good-quality training and support. Governors know their school well and keep a weather eye on things, including staff workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that everyone is well trained to spot when pupils are at risk. Policies are regularly reviewed and updated. They reflect the latest guidance, including in

relation to harassment and abuse. Leaders are tenacious in securing the help that pupils need to stay safe. They work closely with other agencies when appropriate. All necessary checks are in place, including those around staff recruitment.

Regular curriculum input helps pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils know how and when to get help. They trust staff. They know that they will be listened to and supported.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The new phonics training has not yet been rolled out to all key stage 2 staff. This means that older pupils who still need to master phonics are not getting the level of support they need to develop these skills when learning to read. Leaders should ensure that all staff are confident in the new way of teaching of phonics.
- There is occasional overlap in teaching plans in some foundation subjects. This means that pupils can spend too much time going over what they already know. Subject leaders should monitor plans and teaching to identify when this happens and provide support for staff to adapt plans accordingly.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school with the same name to be good in November 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

Unique reference number	144836
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10200852
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	290
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Powis
Principal	Jon Crozier
Website	www.st-augustines.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Augustine's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy school in July 2017. It is part of the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership. When its predecessor school, St Augustine's Catholic Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The last section 48 inspection of this Catholic school was undertaken in February 2015. Reinspection was interrupted by the pandemic and has been rescheduled accordingly.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the principal and executive principal throughout the inspection. The inspector met with the SENCo and had meetings with representatives from the trust, diocese and governing bodies.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and design technology. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked

at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector held meetings with other school staff, including early career teachers.
- The inspector scrutinised records and policies to do with safeguarding, including the school's records of any incidents. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads and spoke to staff, parents and pupils about how effectively the school works to keep pupils safe.
- The inspector met with a group of parents to seek their views on the school and considered the responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View.
- The inspector went on a tour of the school accompanied by some pupils and spoke to pupils informally in the dining room and on the playground.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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