

Inspection of a good school: St Anthony's Voluntary Catholic Academy

Dane Park Road, Hull HU6 9AA

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 January 2022

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy here. Leaders have created a culture of positivity in the school. Everyone encourages pupils to show the St Anthony's 'sparkle'. Teachers reward pupils for working hard and behaving well with 'sparkle' stickers. Pupils value these and subsequently want to achieve. Pupils say that adults in the school care about them. They feel valued and safe.

Pupils behave well in class and at playtimes. Staff have high expectations and highlight examples of good behaviour. Bullying rarely occurs and if it does, pupils say that staff deal with it effectively. Pupils say that lessons are occasionally disrupted by poor behaviour but, when it does happen, staff deal with it quickly and fairly. Leaders have introduced new approaches to help pupils to recognise when their behaviour is not appropriate. Pupils say that this helps them to improve themselves.

Leaders have planned a 'sparkle curriculum' that includes opportunities to show pupils the world beyond Hull. Pupils talk excitedly about future visits to places such as Edinburgh and London. Leaders plan these visits to support pupils' geographical learning. They are also used to develop their cultural awareness through visits to theatres or museums.

Parents and carers and pupils speak with enthusiasm about the wide range of after-school clubs available at St Anthony's. They are particularly enthusiastic about yoga and boxing.

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

Leaders and staff have created a well-ordered and ambitious curriculum. They have planned learning in all subjects to start from the earliest years of school. Some subjects, such as history, geography and science, include the detailed knowledge that they want pupils to learn. These plans support teachers to design lessons that help pupils to remember more over time. The plans for a small number of other subjects, such as art, are not yet precise enough to ensure that pupils can use prior learning and build further knowledge and skills.

The teaching of reading is a priority in this school. Leaders are determined to promote an understanding of texts and a love of story through the regular reading lessons and daily story-time sessions across the school.

Leaders have recently introduced a new phonics curriculum. All staff have received training so that everyone understands the knowledge and skills required at each step of learning to read. Pupils regularly take books home that match the sounds that they are being taught. These books help them to practise reading more fluently. Teachers use assessment well to check the progress pupils are making. Any pupil who is struggling receives extra support to help them to catch up. There is a buzz about reading in this school.

Children in early years are encouraged to talk to adults and to each other. Adults focus on helping children to hear the sounds in words as they teach them to read. They explain unknown vocabulary clearly to ensure that children develop understanding as they listen to stories daily.

Pupils enjoy mathematics at St Anthony's. The well-planned lessons and daily revisiting of prior knowledge through 'flashbacks' help them to become more fluent and confident with number. Teachers model methods and strategies effectively to support learning. Pupils can then use these methods to solve problems and overcome challenges. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), show resilience when work is challenging.

Leaders have clear systems and processes in place to identify and support pupils with SEND. They ensure that teachers are aware of individual pupils' needs. However, some support plans do not clearly identify what pupils need to know to achieve more. This results in some pupils not being able to keep up with learning in some lessons. Consequently, not all pupils achieve as well as they could.

Leaders have carefully considered pupils' personal development throughout the curriculum. Prior to and during the pandemic, pupils were given a wide range of opportunities to develop their understanding of how to be good citizens. They had opportunities to raise money for charities and gather views about climate concerns through the launch of the eco-warriors initiative. They have been taught about concepts such as equality and diversity through the curriculum. However, pupils do not always remember these experiences or this learning. Planning is not precise enough to ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of these and other important concepts, such as democracy or liberty.

The trust is involved in all aspects of the school's development. It has ensured that a strong leadership team is in place. Support is utilised well, especially in improving teachers' subject knowledge. Leaders encourage staff to work with more experienced colleagues in the trust to make their workload manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff care deeply for the well-being of the pupils. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders have a good knowledge of the risks in the local area and work effectively with outside agencies, such as the police or social care. They look for ways to help families when they need support. Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular training to help them to identify and record any concerns. Systems are robust and effective.

The staff work with families well. They encourage them to share any worries, and parents value the support that they give. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online. However, they do not always recall this learning quickly.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum, in some subjects, is not sufficiently detailed. This means that, in some subjects, the curriculum plans do not identify the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn. Leaders must ensure that the planning for these subjects includes sufficient detail to support teachers to plan lessons that are progressive and coherent. Pupils will then be able to build on prior learning to make greater progress.
- Leaders are not clear about how they use enrichment opportunities to develop pupils' wider personal development. Consequently, many pupils cannot recall activities or learning linked to them. Some pupils have a limited understanding of concepts such as equality or diversity and cannot identify why they support charities or the local community. Leaders should ensure that the experiences they plan are supporting pupils to build greater understanding of themselves as citizens of the community and the wider world.

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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, to be good in June 2016.

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	144102
Local authority	Kingston upon Hull City Council
Inspection number	10212093
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Fearnley
Headteacher	Julia Eley
Website	www.stahull.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Anthony's Voluntary Catholic Academy converted to become an academy school in October 2017. When its predecessor school, St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- St Anthony's Voluntary Catholic Academy joined St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust in October 2017.
- The school has a breakfast club.
- The predecessor school's most recent section 48 inspection was undertaken in November 2012.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector spoke with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the deputy and assistant headteachers, subject leaders and other members of staff. Meetings were also held with representatives from St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust, both remotely and in person. The inspector met with a representative from the local authority remotely and a telephone conversation was held with a representative of the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. 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 also looked at further curriculum plans and spoke with leaders about other subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed around school, during lessons and at lunch- and breaktimes.
- The inspector reviewed the policies and procedures that school leaders have put in place to keep pupils safe.
- The inspector considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, along with the free-text responses. The inspector also spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day to gather their views about the school. Responses to the staff and pupil questionnaires were also considered.

Inspection team

Andrea Batley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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