

# Inspection of St Charles Voluntary Catholic Academy

Norfolk Street, Hull HU2 9AA

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Inspection dates: 15 and 16 March 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Charles Voluntary Catholic Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Everyone is made to feel welcome at St Charles Voluntary Catholic Academy. Pupils embrace the school motto of 'REACH for the Stars!' Pupils know that each letter represents a quality that leaders expect them to demonstrate: resilience, empathy, aspiration, contribution and happiness. Pupils are proud to earn 'core value tokens' and certificates, which are celebrated in the 'Friday Fun' assembly.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils academically and socially. Pupils receive a good education and enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular experiences. Art has a high profile across the school, with high-quality work on display. Staff and pupils were particularly excited when a famous artist retweeted their post.

Pupils are polite and courteous. They walk through school calmly and line up smartly. They play well together during breaktimes and lunchtimes. They enjoy using a range of equipment, with their friends and well-trained adults, to play games such as volleyball and rounders. However, some pupils are not engaged thoroughly with their learning. These pupils become restless in lessons. They disrupt others from learning. Leaders have not ensured that clear routines are established in the early years. As a result, children are often off task and not engaged with their learning.

In the early years, leaders have put a new curriculum in place. This curriculum has not had time to have an impact on children's learning.

Pupils say that they feel safe. The majority of pupils are happy at school. They feel that adults listen to them and take their concerns seriously. Anti-bullying ambassadors have been trained to spot other pupils in distress and help them. Pupils understand the repeated and targeted poor behaviours that constitute bullying. Staff deal with the rare instances of bullying well.

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

Leaders have ensured the curriculum is well planned to show what they want pupils to know and remember. Plans are written by knowledgeable subject leaders. They share their knowledge with staff through regular training.

Leaders make sure that pupils' learning builds up over time. In subjects such as mathematics, history and art the curriculum is broken into small chunks. This enables pupils to access new learning. Teachers provide 'knowledge mats' for pupils in all subjects. These set out the knowledge that teachers plan for pupils to learn. For example, in key stage 2, pupils learn about specific concepts such as 'civilisation' through topics such as the Romans and Vikings. Teachers use 'retrieval practice' to help pupils remember what they have previously been taught. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 remembered that Anglo-Saxons used to play musical instruments such as the crot and lyre.

The special educational needs coordinator works with class teachers to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The plans that are put in place do not set out the precise support that pupils with SEND need. As a result, some pupils with SEND are unable to access the curriculum fully.

Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants promote a love of reading. Teachers read with enthusiasm during daily story times. Leaders support all members of staff effectively to deliver reading lessons. Well-taught daily phonic sessions start in Reception. Books for early readers are fully matched to the sounds they are learning. As a result, pupils read well, using their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words. Adults identify pupils who struggle to read fluently and provide timely support. Pupils love to read books from the new school library. They recall stories they have read previously well.

Leaders, including the new head of school, have identified the strengths and weaknesses in the early years provision precisely. Some children do not engage in the planned learning activities well. For example, in a mathematics lesson for a mixed group of Nursery and Reception children, Nursery children struggled to learn about the number six. They did not have the pre-existing knowledge necessary. There are times when children are slow to respond to adults' instructions. The new early years leader is supporting staff to plan purposeful activities to help children learn and develop routines.

Most pupils generally behave well in lessons. However, some older pupils say that their learning is disrupted by other pupils' poor behaviour. Although pupils are aware of the school's behaviour 'consequences', some pupils say they are rarely used and are ineffective. Some children in the early years also need help to manage their behaviour.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils beyond the curriculum. Pupils enjoy lunchtime clubs, such as 'singing and signing' club where they learn sign language actions for songs. Leaders teach pupils to be active citizens. Staff provide a range of leadership opportunities for pupils. These include the school librarian and bullying ambassador roles. School council members are currently raising funds to buy more playground equipment. Pupils in Year 6 have written to parents requesting donations for refugees of Ukraine. Pupils feel that they make a difference. However, pupils struggle to recall some of their knowledge in detail, for example when discussing the British values or different religions.

The school is well led and managed. The trust supports the school well through high-quality training. Staff feel well supported by leaders in school. Most staff appreciate the efforts leaders have made to reduce their workload. A small minority of parents, nine out of 187, responded to Ofsted's questionnaire. Of these, eight were positive about the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make the relevant recruitment checks to ensure that adults are safe to work with pupils in school. Leaders ensure staff receive regular safeguarding training and weekly updates. Staff identify pupils who may be at risk of harm and check in with them regularly. There are effective systems in place to log concerns. These are followed up with timely actions. Staff ensure pupils get the help that they need.

Pupils have a good understanding of online safety and know not to share their personal information online.

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

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

- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' learning behaviours, including children in early years. Some pupils are not fully engaged in their learning and their behaviour disrupts others. Leaders need to ensure the school's behaviour policy is implemented consistently.
- Leaders have developed a new curriculum for the early years. However, this is at the early stages of implementation. Currently, staff do not have the knowledge and expertise to deliver these plans effectively. Some children do not successfully access learning and do not have the knowledge and skills necessary for the next stage of their education. Leaders should ensure that staff receive training on how to effectively implement the new curriculum.
- Leaders do not plan effective support to enable pupils with SEND to access their learning. Some pupils with SEND do not do as well as their peers. Leaders need to ensure that individual education plans set out the precise additional support that pupils with SEND need.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144103
<b>Local authority</b>	Kingston Upon Hull City Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212103
<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>	187
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Peter Fearnley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Woodmansey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stchull.org">www.stchull.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Charles Voluntary Catholic Academy converted to become an academy school in October 2017. When its predecessor school, St Charles' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be requires improvement overall.
- There has been high staff turnover since the predecessor school's previous inspection.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2021.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- Leaders run a breakfast club.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- A section 48 inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Charles Voluntary Catholic Academy as a Catholic school took place in January 2019. The timing of the next section 48 inspection will be determined by guidance in the National Catholic School Inspection Framework. A date has not yet been set.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector held several meetings with the headteacher during the inspection.
- The inspectors also met with the acting early years leader and leaders responsible for pupils' personal development.
- An inspector met with five trustees and an inspector spoke to the diocesan adviser.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art. They met with subject leaders and teachers to talk about the quality of education in these subjects. They visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work. An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school. They looked at pupils' work to see how well staff implement the curriculum.
- Inspectors checked safeguarding documentation and records for behaviour and attendance.
- An inspector spoke with a selection of parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors reviewed the nine responses received through the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, which included five free-text responses. Inspectors considered the 10 responses received through Ofsted's staff questionnaire. Inspectors also considered 33 responses received through the pupil survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson visits and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school.

## Inspection team

Kate Williamson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jenny Thomas

Her Majesty's Inspector

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