

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

Queens Road, Hull HU5 2QR

---

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 June 2022

## Outcome

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

## What is it like to attend this school?

St Vincent's is an inclusive academy. It regularly welcomes families who are new to the country into its setting. Parents and staff who completed Ofsted's questionnaires describe the academy as having a 'family feel'. Pupils say everyone is treated equally and fairly.

Pupils are well-behaved in lessons and at lunchtime. There is a clear behaviour policy that pupils can explain. They think it is fair because the first warning adults give offers them time to change their behaviour. Pupils can define bullying and say that if they tell a teacher, they speak to the alleged bully. There is a calm and purposeful start to the day for the pupils who join breakfast club.

The academy has strong parish links. Members of the parish volunteer and support the academy with charity work, special events and Holy Communion preparation. However, leaders recognise that because of their diverse community, pupils of all faiths attend the academy.

Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) spend some of the day in the 'hub' to support their learning needs. Pupils use visual timetables, have positive relationships and individual workstations. They behave well, are safe and engage in personalised work. Adults recognise that pupils with SEND have additional vulnerabilities, and use different approaches to ensure they can communicate their needs.

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

Leaders started work on their academy curriculum in 2019. It focuses on the needs of the pupils, alongside their core Catholic and academy values. The curriculum structure for each subject begins in the early years. This curriculum thinking outlines the key vocabulary, key learning and lesson design for each class and unit of work. This ensures the curriculum builds on what pupils already know. Work in pupils' books shows that the sequence of lessons taught links to the curriculum structure.

Leaders have an assessment system that aligns with the key knowledge identified in the curriculum. Assessment also happens at the start and end of a unit, with a pre-quiz at the start and 'double page spread' at the end. The 'double page spread' assesses if pupils have remembered the key knowledge leaders have identified. This means teachers have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas of the unit they need to revisit.

Leaders have a vision that all children will develop a love of reading. Teachers read to pupils every day. Leaders have invested in new books for each classroom that link to the curriculum and pupils' interests. Leaders have ensured these books are age-appropriate and contain ambitious vocabulary. Pupils are grouped according to their phonics knowledge for the daily lesson. This ensures pupils are appropriately challenged. Reading books match the sounds pupils know. Pupils are using their phonics to sound out new words and are astute at recognising the 'special friends' within words. For example, pupils were able to spot the 'special friends' 'ch' and 'th' in unfamiliar words. Adults need to pay more attention to handwriting presentation. Some pupils in key stage 1 are incorrectly placing ascenders and descenders on lined paper. For example, letters such as 'y' and 'g' were sitting on the line rather than descending below.

There is high ambition for all pupils in mathematics, supported by the academy's mastery programme. The programme sets out the small steps of mathematical learning from early years to Year 6. As a result, pupils' key fluency skills have improved. Pupils are confident they can succeed in mathematics. Teachers mark pupils' work live during the lesson. This helps to ensure any gaps in pupils' mathematical knowledge are addressed. Pupils who are new to the country begin the 'Racing to English' programme. This covers key mathematical language they need to access the curriculum.

Leaders offer opportunities for pupils to be leaders. For example, there are play leaders, sports leaders, digital leaders and podcast leaders. This allows pupils to be role models and act with responsibility. Pupils have a chance to perform their own interests and talents at the 'St Vincent's Got Talent' show. This helps to build pupils' confidence and resilience. Children in the early years are engaged and respectful during focused teaching, free flow and their family group time.

Pastoral care for pupils experiencing mental health or well-being issues is a strength of the academy. The well-being leader works with individual pupils to tackle their specific need. Some pupils struggled to express their understanding of British values. Leaders should ensure this is explicitly taught to help prepare pupils for life in Britain.

Members of the trust recognise that the academy has been on a journey and now has many strengths. These include strong leadership, nursery provision, high-quality pastoral support for families and a bespoke curriculum.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure all staff have comprehensive safeguarding training. Leaders identified key stage 2 pupils visiting a local park after school as a specific risk. As a result, the police community support officer spoke to pupils about staying safe. Leaders also engaged with individual parents to discuss safety concerns. Leaders use Road Safety Week and Safer Internet Day to share extra safety information.

Pupils report any concerns to a trusted adult. They are often reminded whom they can talk to. All incident logs are detailed. They include actions to inform parents and reflection with the pupils involved.

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

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

- Some younger pupils' letter placement is not accurate. Pupils are not placing ascenders above and descenders below the spaced horizontal lines in their books. This means their handwriting is not accurately presented. Teachers should routinely check presentation. This will help pupils make rapid improvement to correctly present letters.
- Pupils found it difficult to talk with confidence about British values. Leaders should review their curriculum to ensure it includes more lessons about British values. This will help to prepare pupils more effectively for life in Britain.

## 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 school to be good in May 2017.

## 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>	140848
<b>Local authority</b>	Kingston Upon Hull City Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10228117
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	243
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Peter Fearnley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Philippa Donnelly
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stvhull.org">www.stvhull.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	3 and 4 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The academy joined St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust in June 2014.
- As the academy is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last section 48 inspection of the academy was in June 2019. The timescales for reinspection have been extended because of COVID-19.
- The academy does not use any alternative providers.
- The academy has its own hub to support some pupils with SEND.
- The academy has a high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

## Information about this inspection

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

- The inspector met with the head of school, curriculum leaders, staff and pupils. Meetings were also held with representatives of the trust, the cluster board, the directors, the chief executive and the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with curriculum leaders, spoke to pupils and teachers, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. The inspector heard pupils read.
- The inspector examined safeguarding records, attendance figures, curriculum plans and policies.
- The views of parents were considered from the 16 responses to Ofsted's parent questionnaire.
- The views of staff were considered from meeting with them and from the seven responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- The views of pupils were considered from meetings with them and from their response to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022