

Inspection of a good school: St George's Catholic Primary School – a Catholic Voluntary Academy

1 Winterscale Street, Fishergate, York, North Yorkshire YO10 4BT

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 September 2023

Outcome

St George's Catholic Primary School – a Catholic Voluntary Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Deirdre Patton-Statham. This school is part of Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Hugh Hegarty, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joseph Hughes.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils describe their school as safe, kind and happy. It is a place that regularly offers a warm welcome to new pupils, including those who are new to the country. All staff help pupils to feel that they belong and are valued through positive interactions and targeted praise.

Pupils strive to display the school's three virtues of being kind, curious and courageous. Pupils behave well, and the school is calm. Pupils and families are confident that any incidents, including any bullying, are dealt with quickly and effectively.

Reading is a key focus at St George's. Pupils read widely and often. They are keen to share who their favourite authors are.

Pupils like to contribute to their school community. They take great pride in their roles as playground leaders or members of the faith in action team. Pupils know that school is important and that they are important to the school.

Leaders have high expectations for what all pupils should achieve. They ensure that children who are new to the English language get the extra help they need. Children achieve well. Leaders also offer a range of pastoral provision and character education to help prepare pupils to find their place in society.

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

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum that all pupils access. This enables all pupils to succeed. Leaders have thought carefully about what they want children to learn and the order in which it is taught. For example, pupils can clearly articulate how their learning in mathematics builds over time. In a small number of subjects, however, the order in which knowledge is taught does not help pupils to remember as much as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who are new to the English language are well supported. Their needs are identified quickly. All pupils are seen as individuals, with bespoke, well-considered support put in place for those who need extra help. This means that pupils are able to catch up and keep up successfully.

Teachers use the school's assessment processes well. This helps teachers to identify gaps in knowledge and plan for pupils' next steps. In the majority of subjects, teachers identify and address pupils' misconceptions quickly.

Leaders prioritise reading. A sharp focus on reading begins as soon as children join early years. Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics programme. This includes staff who provide additional sessions for pupils who have fallen behind or who are learning the English language. However, on occasion, pupils make phonic errors that are not corrected by staff.

The books that pupils read accurately match the sounds they are learning. Pupils regularly read to an adult, both at home and in school. Teachers check that this is the case through diligently updated reading records. Pupils enjoy reading. They benefit from access to a wide range of good-quality texts. Teachers select books that are representative of the diversity of the school.

Pupils report that everyone is welcome at their school. They respect and celebrate diversity in every sense. Pupils, including those who are new to the country, are given everything they need to succeed in school. This includes equipment, uniform and wider family support. Parents and carers are grateful for the support that the school gives to families.

Leaders and staff help pupils to develop strong learning behaviours through positive approaches. These systems and routines are embedded right from the start in early years, where children are effectively taught to manage their feelings and behaviour. Pupils are clear about leaders' expectations of behaviour. They value receiving 'praise postcards' at home when they have done well. Pupils are also clear what the consequences of poor behaviour are. Pupils who need more help to regulate their emotions are given bespoke support. As a result, the school and classroom environments are purposeful and calm.

Pupils benefit from a range of clubs, trips and visits that enhance the curriculum and develop their character. Leaders have carefully matched the learning opportunities that are available in the locality to the curriculum. This means that pupils' learning is regularly

supported with tangible links and first-hand experiences, such as museum trips and workshops.

Leaders are mindful of teachers' workload. The systems and policies they implement focus on the impact on pupils. Where practices do not have the desired impact, they are reviewed. Teachers are key stakeholders in this process and are able to provide feedback to leaders. As a result, teachers feel well supported.

Trustees and governors know the school well. They provide highly effective support and challenge to the school's leadership. They are aware of and undertake their statutory duties with diligence. They demonstrate due regard for the well-being of staff, including the school's leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum does not break knowledge down clearly enough. The school should ensure that knowledge is identified and ordered consistently well across all subjects.
- On occasion, staff do not identify and correct pupils' phonic errors. The school should ensure that staff prioritise the correct application of the phonics programme, particularly pupils' use of 'pure sounds'.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St George's Catholic Primary School, to be good in February 2018.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#) pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	147417
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10297481
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	214
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joseph Hughes
Headteacher	Deirdre Patton-Statham
Website	www.stgeorgesrc-york.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school has been part of Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust since September 2022.
- There is a daily breakfast and after-school club at the school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

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 the school and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For these subjects, the inspector spoke with senior leaders and met with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils. The inspector also carried out a review of pupils' work and visited a sample of lessons and intervention sessions.

- The inspector heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils at lunchtime, in the dining hall and outside. He spoke with several groups of pupils about behaviour. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record of recruitment checks; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- The inspector spoke with a range of staff during the inspection and took account of the responses to Ofsted’s survey for staff.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the end of the school day. He considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- The inspector met with, and spoke to, the headteacher and senior leaders throughout the inspection.
- The inspector visited the on-site breakfast and after-school club.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documents, including leaders’ self-evaluation, their improvement plans and the information contained on the school’s website.
- The inspector met with local governors and representatives of the multi-academy trust. He also spoke to the chair of the trust board.

Inspection team

Alex Reed, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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