

# Inspection of St Gregory's RC Primary School, A Voluntary Academy

Presto Street, Farnworth, Bolton, Greater Manchester BL4 8AJ

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Inspection dates: 30 April and 1 May 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Kelly Watson. This school is part of St Teresa of Calcutta 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, Chris Foley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Marie Garside CBE.

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

Pupils enjoy being part of this caring school community. Many pupils join the school at different times in the academic year, often from abroad. They are warmly welcomed and quickly become part of the school family. Pupils feel happy and safe in school.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils live up to these expectations. They listen attentively in lessons and work cooperatively together. Pupils achieve well.

Children in the early years thrive. They settle quickly into the school routines. Children benefit from meaningful interactions with adults. They are exceptionally well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils are proud of their school. They said that teachers want them to be the best versions of themselves. Pupils relish the high-quality experiences that the school provides for them. For example, pupils take part in a wide range of visits in the community and residential trips that take them further afield. These help pupils to develop essential life skills, and together these experiences prepare them remarkably well for life outside school.

Pupils behave well. They are typically polite and courteous towards each other and to visitors. Staff know pupils well. There is a strong culture of mutual respect.

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

In the early years, the school has designed an extremely well-thought-through curriculum. Children have plentiful opportunities to explore, take risks and to learn through play. They are excited about their learning. The school places a relentless focus on developing children's early communication skills. Staff ask questions which encourage children to be thoughtful. Staff are also skilled at engaging children in conversations that help them to learn new and important words. Children show increasing levels of independence and are amply prepared for key stage 1.

Across the rest of the school, the curriculum is well designed and captures pupils' interests. On the whole, teachers have been trained to deliver the curriculum well. However, in a small number of subjects, teachers do not revisit learning regularly enough or check on how well pupils know and remember important content. As a result, there are some inconsistencies in how well pupils recall what they have learned.

Reading is prioritised throughout the school. The school's phonics programme is well ordered. Staff have benefited from intensive training and support to ensure that they deliver this programme effectively. Pupils quickly learn the routines of phonics sessions and gain confidence in reading. The school makes sure that any pupils who

need extra help receive effective and timely support. This helps most pupils to become accurate and fluent readers in readiness for key stage 2.

The school actively encourages pupils to read for pleasure. Pupils are exposed to a diverse range of high-quality texts. Older pupils enthused about the books that they had read. Teachers said that they enjoy reading to pupils daily and pupils look forward to stories being shared with them. Pupils benefit from a range of activities that promote a love of reading, such as author visits and reading at a local library.

Pupils with SEND have their additional needs accurately identified. The school puts appropriate support in place to enable these pupils to access the curriculum alongside their peers, whenever this is possible. This includes making sure that staff have the training that they need to support pupils' learning effectively. Where needed, the school uses the expertise of external agencies to strengthen provision for pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond positively to these. Where pupils struggle to meet the school's expectations, appropriate help is put in place. For example, the school makes effective use of the support of external agencies.

The school sets a high priority on supporting pupils to attend well. It analyses attendance records in detail and takes swift but considerate action if a pupil's attendance drops below an acceptable level. The school's tenacious approach has led to attendance improving.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education is exceptionally well designed and expertly delivered. Staff make sure that pupils know how to keep safe and how to maintain good physical and mental health. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to broaden their cultural understanding.

The wider curriculum, which develops pupils' life skills, talents and interests, is exceptional. For example, staff go the extra mile to ensure that pupils can access a wide range of additional clubs.

The school is well led and managed. Those responsible for governance understand and fulfil their statutory duties well. Staff value the high-quality training that both the school and the trust provide. This includes subject leaders, who are supported to develop their leadership roles effectively. Staff, including teachers at the beginning of their careers, are supported well with their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In a small number of subjects, teachers do not revisit learning regularly enough to support pupils to embed key knowledge in their long-term memories. As a result, there are some minor inconsistencies in how well pupils recall what they have been taught. The school should review the way that it supports and helps pupils to remember key learning.

## 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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	147631
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321466
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	191
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Marie Garside CBE
<b>CEO</b>	Chris Foley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kelly Watson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stgregorys.stoccat.org.uk">www.stgregorys.stoccat.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Gregory's RC Primary School is part of the St Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Academy Trust.
- St Gregory's RC Primary School converted to become an academy in 2019. When its predecessor school, St Gregory's RC Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- This school is a Roman Catholic voluntary academy school. The school's last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in January 2024. The next inspection will take place within five years.
- Pupil mobility at St Gregory's RC Primary School is high.

## Information about this inspection

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

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and with other leaders and members of staff. They also spoke with members of the multi-academy trust and the local governing body, and with a representative of the diocese.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record, 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. They talked with curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. They also observed some pupils reading to staff.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculums in other subjects with leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and as they moved around the school. They also observed pupils in the dining hall and playing outside at lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also met with parents before school to find out their views on the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

## Inspection team

Julie Brown, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Rebecca Gough

Ofsted Inspector

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