

# Inspection of St Thomas More Catholic School

Glendale Avenue, Wood Green, London N22 5HN

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Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Alex Rosen. This school is part of The Cardinal Hume Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Martin Tissot, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Meadows. The chief executive officer is also the executive headteacher, who is responsible for this school and two others.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since June 2013. The school received an urgent inspection under section 8 of the Act on 16 January 2019.

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

Staff and pupils are very proud of their school. The school has developed a strong community that provides a nurturing space for pupils to flourish. Pupils develop strong subject knowledge, which results in positive outcomes in public examinations and prepares them well for their next steps.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct, and pupils are highly motivated to learn in lessons. Pupils are confident, courteous and curious learners. They attend school well and the school works successfully with parents and carers, who speak highly of the school. Pupils are safe and happy at this school.

The school provides pupils with an extensive offering of opportunities and experiences to broaden their knowledge. Leaders have made the building of pupils' cultural capital a priority of the school. Pupils take part in an array of clubs and societies, including chess, sewing, rugby, mock trials (law club) and dance, alongside trips to the theatre, museums, author visits and numerous competitions. Pupils also make meaningful contributions to the life of the school and wider community. Sixth-form students take an active role in mentoring younger pupils and endeavour to be role models for their peers.

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

Pupils follow a rich and ambitious curriculum. Knowledge is logically sequenced, so pupils return to, practise and embed key concepts. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), develop a strong understanding and a range of skills in different subjects. There is a sharp focus on making learning memorable and enrichment activities help bring learning to life. For example, pupils visit the Globe theatre, Bletchley Park and the Science Museum to inform their responses and ideas.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They think carefully about what is learned and try to make links to current affairs and wider issues to make pupils think critically. For example, in English pupils consider bias in the media and how different public figures are described by the press. In geography, pupils examine case studies from around the world, including the changing population and economy of Zimbabwe. In all subjects, teachers routinely check that key knowledge is learned before building on this learning. As a result, pupils make excellent progress and produce high-quality work.

Reading is put at the centre of the curriculum. High-quality texts are chosen and teachers ensure technical and complex vocabulary is both understood and can be applied by pupils. Pupils who need further help with their reading are provided with effective support to ensure they can access the full curriculum. Sixth-form students hear younger readers as part of a guided reading programme and the school promotes reading through 'book buzz' events, book clubs and readathons.

The school identifies pupils' needs with precision and shares this information with staff. The school has a range of strategies available to support pupils with SEND, which are used appropriately when needed. Pupils with SEND achieve very well, including in the sixth form. The drive for success and leaders' high aspiration for all is evident throughout the school.

The school is calm and orderly. Behaviour is exemplary. Older students are role models for their peers and their conduct is highly respectful, responsible and compassionate. Pupils' confidence builds quickly, and they embody the values of the school. Sixth-form students lead as prefects, take part in community projects such as 'urban jungle,' lead societies, mentor younger pupils and take part in volunteering. Younger pupils take part in competitions such as 'Jack Petchey Speak Out' competition, athletics and mathematical challenges, and there is high participation in Green Club, the youth club, school council and the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. Pupils take part in numerous trips, including international visits to Rome, Germany and Granada. The school's CREST values are firmly embedded to develop pupils' character and are underpinned by the Catholic ethos.

Leaders prepare pupils and students in the sixth form extremely well for the next stage of education, employment or training. Pupils take part in work experience in both Year 10 and Year 12. The careers provision is strong with talks, advice and workshops on a wide range of pathways and careers. Personal, social, health and economic education is delivered well, and pupils explore fundamental British values and equality of opportunity. The school ensures that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain and taught how to stay safe, including online. The pastoral care and support given by the school is exceptional.

Staff at the school are dedicated to the care of and provision for pupils. Leaders ensure that staff are provided with valuable professional development so they can fulfil their responsibilities, and are working to ensure that their well-being is a priority too. Leaders at all levels are reflective and committed to further improvement. Trustees work together with leaders and have a keen understanding of the school and its wider context.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **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>	139362
<b>Local authority</b>	Haringey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323390
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,297
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	266
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	John Meadows
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Martin Tissot
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alex Rosen
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stthomasmoreschool.org.uk">www.stthomasmoreschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher of this school took up their post in September 2020.
- The school is part of The Cardinal Hume Academies Trust.
- The school has a Roman Catholic religious character and is in the Archdiocese of Westminster. The school's most recent section 48 inspection was carried out in January 2018.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers to support a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and

engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

- The school runs its own breakfast club, after-school and Saturday provision for pupils.

## 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 met with the headteacher and senior leaders. Additionally, discussions were held with representatives from the board of trustees, including the CEO of the trust and the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography, drama and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and visited lessons in some other subjects.
- 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 reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' school evaluation, information about pupils' personal development, records for behaviour and attendance, and reports to those responsible for oversight.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to understand their experience of the school.
- Inspectors took account of survey responses from parents, pupils and staff.

## Inspection team

Sarah Saunders, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Rebecca Drysdale	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Maguire	His Majesty's Inspector

Debbie Lebrecht

Ofsted Inspector

David Radomsky

His Majesty's Inspector

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