

Inspection of St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Margate

Nash Road, Margate, Kent CT9 4BU

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 February 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is David Walker. This school is part of Kent Catholic School's Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Annmarie Whittle, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Caroline Stockmann.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are polite and courteous. Corridors ring with the friendly greetings they offer each other and adults. All staff develop warm and positive relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils are happy, and they feel safe. The school has clear routines and expectations that start in the early years. They are consistently applied by all staff. This helps pupils to behave well. Pupils' positive conduct is evident in the purposeful classrooms.

Pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds do well because the expectations of what they can achieve are high. They work hard in lessons to meet these ambitions. Pupils' work shows they learn the important skills and knowledge they need over time. Pupils love learning and discuss the subjects they learn excitedly.

Pupils become active and empowered citizens in school and the wider community. They hold a range of important roles. These include house captains, ambassadors or as part of the school chaplaincy team. Pupils take these positions seriously and work hard to support others. For example, pupils raise funds and resources to contribute to local hospitals and foodbanks. In school, ambassadors act as role models for younger pupils. Pupils have selfless attitudes to helping others and understand the importance of this work.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including those in mixed-age classes. The curriculum sets out precisely the skills and knowledge that pupils need to learn. Pupils revisit their prior learning over time. This helps them to deepen their knowledge of the curriculum.

Pupils in the early stages of reading are well supported. Expert staff teach phonics consistently well. The books that pupils read are closely matched to their phonics knowledge. This helps pupils to practise their reading at home. The vast majority of pupils become confident and fluent readers. Teachers identify pupils who fall behind accurately and design support for them to catch-up.

Pupils love reading. The school fosters this through the rich texts that they select for them. Pupils recall the books they have read and discuss them excitedly. They also enjoy the reading challenges the school sets. For example, pupils earn medals for reading abridged stories by Jane Austen or Charles Dickens. Pupils read deeply and widely.

Teachers explain learning clearly and check on pupils' understanding carefully during lessons. This helps them to identify gaps in learning swiftly and support pupils to fill them. In early years, staff model communication clearly. This helps children to develop the vocabulary they need. However, in a small number of subjects, staff's knowledge of the curriculum is not as secure as it could be. As a result, some pupils do not learn this curriculum content accurately enough.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. They have appropriate mathematical knowledge and apply it accurately in their lessons. Pupils recall their learning across the wider curriculum. They build increasingly sophisticated knowledge over time. This starts in early years where children learn important subject-specific vocabulary. Older pupils write accurately in a variety of styles. However, some younger pupils do not write at sufficient length and their letter formation is not accurate enough. As a result, these pupils cannot communicate their learning consistently well.

The school knows its pupils well. This helps them to identify the needs of pupils, including those with SEND accurately. Staff know pupils' barriers to learning. They use this knowledge to plan adaptations to enable all pupils to learn the skills and knowledge they need.

Governors and trustees work well with leaders to ensure that pupils get a high-quality education. They offer help and challenge in equal measure to achieve this. Staff enjoy working at the school. They are positive about the support and training they receive.

Pupils concentrate well and listen intently. This makes the school a calm and orderly place. Children in early years play together kindly and learn important concepts, such as sharing. The school has clear procedures to help pupils attend frequently. It works closely with pupils and their families to offer additional support if needed. However, the school's work has not had enough impact. Consequently, too many pupils, including the most vulnerable, do not attend well enough.

The school has prioritised pupils' personal development. Its ethos of community, diversity and opportunity drive the school's excellent work. Pupils celebrate the difference within the school community and show high levels of respect to all. Pupils thrive as a result of the school's high-quality extra-curricular offer. Pupils enjoy a range of trips and visits that enhance their learning. They also enjoy the ample clubs and activities that the school offers. This ranges from chess club to pupils competing in national biathlon finals.

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, staff's subject knowledge is not always as secure as it could be. As a result, teachers are not always clear about the content they want pupils to learn and, consequently, pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school must ensure that they develop the expertise of teachers in these subjects.
- Some younger pupils have not historically had enough opportunities to practise their writing frequently and consistently. The school has begun to address this, but the

approach is not yet fully embedded. As a result, some pupils in the early stages of writing do not have age-appropriate skills of letter formation or stamina for longer writing. The school should ensure that they continue to embed the programme and develop consistency so that all pupils can write accurately and at length.

- Persistent absence at the school is too high for too many pupils, particularly those who are more disadvantaged. This means that these most vulnerable pupils are missing out on too much of their vital education. The school should refine their work to support these pupils in attending more frequently and learning more over time.

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	140873
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341775
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	298
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Caroline Stockmann
CEO of the trust	Annamarie Whittle
Headteacher	David Walker
Website	www.st-gregorys.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Gregory's Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic school. The most recent inspection of its religious character, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, took place in December 2023. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place within eight school years.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- The school's headteacher and senior leadership team has changed since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of the school's education provision.
- This is the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team met with the headteacher as well as with other leaders and staff. The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with a representative from the diocese.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspection team considered the views of parents and carers through their responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors spoke to staff and pupils during the inspection and took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.

Inspection team

Gavin Thomas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Emma Law

Ofsted Inspector

Cathy Reid

Ofsted Inspector

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