

# Inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Kesteven Road, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 1SR

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Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

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

Pupils like learning and spending time together at this warm and welcoming school. They told inspectors that it is easy to make friends and fit in at St Augustine's.

The dedicated leaders are ambitious for all pupils. Staff care for pupils and get to know them all as individuals. There is always someone on hand for pupils to talk to if anything is worrying them.

Pupils are considerate and well-mannered. They hold doors open for each other and share play equipment. There are many opportunities for them to exercise and play sports at breaktimes. Pupils report that bullying is not something that happens at their school.

Story time is a favourite part of the day for many pupils. They listen in awe as adults adopt different voices to make the story in the book come alive. As one pupil said, 'My teacher reads with so much expression. It makes me want to read a lot more.'

Parents and carers, staff and pupils are very positive about the changes that have taken place at St Augustine's recently. They can see the improvements that have been brought about by the new headteacher. However, there is still work to do to make sure the school's new curriculum has the impact that leaders want it to have.

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

The new headteacher has provided dynamic leadership since taking up her post. This has led to significant improvements across the school. New systems for safeguarding and behaviour are clear and effective. New procedures for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensure that these pupils receive high-quality support as soon as possible.

The curriculum has been completely redesigned in the last 12 months. New plans have been put into place for every subject. These precisely set out the things that pupils are expected to know and do.

The new curriculum is yet to have the impact that leaders want it to. This is because teachers do not systematically revisit the important knowledge that pupils have gained before. An approach to helping pupils retrieve and use what they have learned in the past has not been put into place. Pupils do not remember what they have been taught in sufficient detail. In mathematics, for example, some older pupils struggle to solve problems because they cannot recall the calculation methods they need.

Some leaders have an accurate understanding of what is working well and what needs to be developed next in their subject. However, the impact of the new curriculum has not yet been fully evaluated in all subjects.

Children get off to a good start when they join the Reception class. The new leader for the early years has planned the small steps of knowledge they will be taught in all areas of learning. Adults take every opportunity to hold conversations with children to develop their language skills. Children learn the routines of school life through songs and rhymes.

Reading is prioritised at St Augustine's. The new leader with responsibility for phonics has high expectations of all pupils. Support is quickly provided for any pupil who falls behind in the school's phonics programme. The books that pupils read are closely matched to the letter sounds they know. The new 'reading shed' has been set up on the playground so that children can read as much as possible. However, recent phonics training has not had the widespread impact that leaders wanted. Some staff do not teach phonics accurately. This means that some pupils are not taught the correct pronunciation for some letter sounds. The school's method to sound out and blend words is not taught consistently.

The 'virtues tree' is a very important part of school life at St Augustine's. Every pupil has a leaf on the tree. Pupils know the 12 virtues and most pupils behave well. When they show these values, they add to their 'virtues passport.' Classrooms are calm places where pupils can focus on learning.

Pupils are open-minded and respectful. They are knowledgeable about British values and how these link to the virtues at their school. Pupils enjoy talking about their own faith, as well as other religions they have studied. They know how to keep themselves safe online. They offered inspectors lots of useful tips on how to do so. Pastoral care is on hand for whenever pupils need extra support.

The trust is very ambitious for St Augustine's. The support that it provides is helping the headteacher make rapid improvements. Staff enjoy working at the school and they feel well supported by leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise keeping pupils safe. They work well with other agencies and they are persistent in making sure pupils get the right support quickly. Staff are well trained. They look out for signs that a pupil may be in need of help. Staff report concerns using the school's new recording system. The trust carries out checks to make sure safeguarding procedures are working as they should. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They know they can report any worries to any member of staff or the pastoral leader.

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

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

- The school's approach to revisiting prior learning has not been set out in many subjects. As a result, teachers do not routinely review important knowledge from the past or help pupils make connections to what they are learning now. This means that pupils do not remember what they have been taught in sufficient detail in some subjects. Leaders need to establish consistent systems and expectations for the retention of knowledge and skills, so that pupils make better progress through the planned curriculum.
- While all long-term plans have been set out clearly, in some subjects leaders have not checked whether the new plans are having the impact they intend. Senior leaders need to support all subject leaders – and particularly those who are new to the school – to develop the skills they need to carry out their roles. Subject leaders need to ensure the new curriculum is taught consistently well and leads to pupils knowing what is expected.
- Phonics is not taught consistently well. Some staff do not teach phonics in line with the school's phonics programme. This means that some pupils hear sounds pronounced incorrectly. The school's method for reading and spelling words is not taught consistently. Leaders need to ensure that all staff who teach children to read have the expertise to do so.

## 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](#)' 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>	139626
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241097
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	94
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair</b>	Nigel Stevenson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tina Cox
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-augustine.lincs.sch.uk">www.st-augustine.lincs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 and 6 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school appointed the current headteacher a year ago. A number of teachers have recently joined the school.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- St Augustine's is a Catholic voluntary academy. It is part of the Our Lady of Lourdes Multi-Academy Trust. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in February 2017. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.

## Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For the deep dives, inspectors discussed the curriculum with

subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also spoke to subject leaders, discussed the curriculum and viewed pupils' work for art, geography and personal, social and health education.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, curriculum leaders and a sample of teaching and support staff. Inspectors met with the leaders responsible for the early years, pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- The lead inspector met with the designated leader for safeguarding to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of governance, and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the local governing body and the deputy chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Shaun Carter, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mark Westmoreland

Ofsted Inspector

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