

Inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Kesteven Road, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 1SR

Inspection dates:	28 and 29 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Tina Cox. This school is part of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-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, James McGeachie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nigel Stevenson.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy is a warm and welcoming school. Pupils are happy here. They feel safe and well-cared for by dedicated staff.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. This includes a large number of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school provides caring, individualised support when it is needed so that all pupils can achieve well. Pupils with SEND flourish, alongside their peers.

Children in the early years get off to the best possible start. Staff make every effort to get to know the children and their families well. Activities are planned meticulously to match children's interests, while supporting them to develop the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for the next stage.

The school provides well for pupils' wider personal development. The twelve school virtues inspire pupils to develop good learning behaviours and prepare them to be good citizens of the future. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their character. This includes leadership responsibilities with the school council or acting as playground leaders, for example. Through daily assemblies, pupils learn to respect equality and understand different faiths and cultures.

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

This school has improved over recent years. Since the previous inspection, staff have worked hard to refine the curriculum. They continually reflect on, and develop, their practice to make sure that all pupils can be successful. The school quickly, and accurately, identifies when pupils have SEND. Well-trained staff carefully adapt learning activities and routines. They provide extra support, when necessary, to meet the needs of all.

Reading is a priority for the school. Staff deliver phonics lessons consistently well. They check pupils' reading knowledge regularly. Staff make sure that pupils practise reading often from books that match their stage of reading. As a result, pupils quickly learn to read. Those who fall behind are well supported to catch up. As they progress through the school, pupils enjoy reading daily from challenging and interesting texts.

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. It identifies precisely what pupils will learn. Learning is sequenced well so that pupils build on what they know and deepen their understanding over time. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain concepts clearly. Well-considered activities help pupils to secure their knowledge. Teachers often revisit prior learning. This helps pupils to make connections to new knowledge and remember what they have learned before. However, on some occasions, teachers do not check pupils' understanding carefully enough. This means that learning activities are not always adapted to correct misconceptions or to provide greater challenge.

In Reception, children engage eagerly with all of the activities in the well-planned learning environment. They quickly learn routines and demonstrate high levels of focus and

determination in their work and play. Staff expertly support children to develop their social and communication skills. They keep a careful eye on each child's stage of development and design activities to meet their particular needs. Children thrive. They talk confidently about what they have learned and express their opinions with enthusiasm.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education teaches pupils how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Pupils learn how to maintain positive relationships and look after their physical and mental health. Pupils benefit further from a range of enrichment opportunities. These include a variety of clubs that develop pupils' sporting and artistic talents, as well as memorable trips and visits. The school is aspirational for all. It makes sure that all pupils can benefit from these opportunities.

Pupils are polite and courteous. They behave well in lessons and around school. When pupils do not behave as well as they should, staff calmly help them to reflect on, and correct, their behaviour. Pupils who struggle to regulate their behaviour, or manage their emotions, receive excellent support.

Attendance has improved. The school provides support for pupils who are absent too often to help them attend school regularly. However, too many pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds frequently miss school. This means that they do not benefit from the opportunities that the school provides as well as they could.

The multi-academy trust and the local governing body know the school well. They have provided strong leadership, as well as robust support and challenge, to help the school improve. Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the support that leaders give them to manage their workload and well-being, as they continue to develop the school's provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On some occasions, staff do not check pupils' understanding carefully enough. As a result, learning activities are sometimes not adapted to correct misconceptions or to challenge pupils to think more deeply. This means that pupils do not always achieve as well as they might. The school needs to ensure that staff check pupils' understanding accurately and adapt activities appropriately.
- Too many pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, are frequently absent from school. These pupils do not benefit fully from the curriculum or achieve as well as they could. The school needs to continue its work to improve attendance so that all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, attend school frequently.

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	139626
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10347569
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	116
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Stevenson
CEO of the trust	James McGeachie
Headteacher	Tina Cox
Website	www.st-augustine.lincs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 September 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- St Augustine's is a Catholic voluntary academy. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2024. 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. 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 a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the acting deputy headteachers and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer, the director of performance standards and another representative of the multi-academy trust. The lead inspector also met with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 lead inspector listened to some pupils read to a member of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 held meetings and looked at records relating to attendance, behaviour and personal development.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and pupils. They considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, as well as Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Evans

Ofsted Inspector

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