

Inspection of St George's Catholic Primary School

Eagle Way, Shoeburyness, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS3 9RN

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 January 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly school where pupils flourish and achieve well. They come happily through the gates every day and feel safe in the nurturing environment staff have created.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They have beautiful manners and treat each other kindly. Pupils have thoroughly understood the school's message of 'we give respect, and we get respect'. This, along with the strong Catholic ethos, results in a calm, caring school where pupils rise to the adults' high expectations.

Unkindness is extremely rare. Pupils are adamant that bullying does not happen. They say if it did, the adults would sort it out straight away. Similarly, lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. If this arises, it is dealt with swiftly.

The school's cultural capital programme enables all pupils to take part in carefully considered enrichment experiences. These range from spending an afternoon paddling and building sandcastles on the beach in Year 1, to learning to play the clarinet in Year 6.

With each step they take at St George's, pupils are prepared for the next stage in their education. A careers programme, introduced as early as Year 1, ensures that they are also well set up for their future lives.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. They have thought carefully about what is taught and the order in which it should be taught. The curriculum enables pupils to make links across subjects, as well as connections with their local area. For example, Year 4 pupils' learning in history comes to life thanks to a visit to the nearby Anglo-Saxon burial site.

The curriculum begins in early years, where children learn the skills and knowledge they need to be successful as they move through the school. There is a sharp focus on learning vocabulary. Highly skilled early years staff take every opportunity to develop children's communication skills so they may access the curriculum.

In one or two subjects, new plans have been introduced. Leaders are still assessing the impact of these, and more time is needed before leaders can fully realise their effect on pupils' achievement.

Teachers know the subjects they teach well. They explain new concepts clearly. Pupils say they appreciate the opportunities they get to practise and apply their learning. These help them to remember it. Pupils learn the vocabulary associated with each subject and use it comfortably. For example, following a Year 5 art lesson

on using different sketching techniques, pupils explained the effects created by stippling, scumbling and cross-hatching.

Teachers use skilful questioning to check pupils' progress. They give pupils feedback in the moment, to correct errors and address misconceptions. Any pupils who are struggling are quickly spotted and get the help they need.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Leaders identify their needs quickly and provide appropriate support for them. This involves external professionals when needed. These pupils usually access the same curriculum as their peers, sometimes with adapted activities that enable them to achieve well.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils read widely and choose books from their well-stocked class libraries. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and genres. A newly introduced phonics programme is having a positive impact on pupils' learning in early years and key stage 1. Pupils learn letters and the sounds letters make as soon as they start school. This enables them to quickly become fluent readers.

Older pupils who are still in the early stages of learning to read get extra help. Daily reading sessions target the gaps in their phonic knowledge. However, the new phonics scheme is not used to support these pupils, and the books they read are not always matched to their needs. This means they do not progress as rapidly as they might.

Pupils throughout the school take great pride in their achievements. This includes those in early years. Pupils are highly motivated by the school's system of rewards, for example artist of the month or star of the day. Older pupils make a significant contribution to the life of the school. They relish the jobs they do, such as being buddies, litter pickers or house captains. The culture of respect in the school is so strong that pupils' understanding of equality, diversity and tolerance of others' beliefs comes naturally to them.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel valued and well supported by leaders, and all are united in their determination to give pupils the best possible experience. Dedicated governors and trustees support senior leaders' vision and drive for continuous improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a culture of vigilance around keeping pupils safe at school. All staff know the pupils well and are alert to any signs they might be at risk of harm. Staff report their concerns quickly and are confident that leaders will act upon them. Leaders responsible for safeguarding liaise with external agencies where

appropriate. They are quick to put support in place for any pupils or families in need.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They look out for each other and speak to the adults who work with them if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The phonics programme is not used in key stage 2 to support pupils who still need to learn phonics. Older pupils who are still in the early stages of learning to read are not progressing as rapidly as they could. Leaders should prioritise training of key stage 2 staff in use of the new programme and its resources, so that these pupils get the best possible support to become fluent readers.

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

Unique reference number	146016
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	10255139
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Nina Nathan
Headteacher	Annabelle Delgado
Website	www.sgcps.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Assisi Catholic Trust in September 2018.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last section 48 inspection of this school took place in June 2017.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, one early career teacher and five members of the local governing committee. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone to two representatives of the trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors looked at curriculum plans from other subjects, including history, geography, music, and relationships and health education.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and the deputy designated safeguarding lead. The team inspector scrutinised the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. Inspectors also spoke to governors, staff and pupils to evaluate safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of other school documentation and policies, including the school development plan and minutes of governor meetings.
- To gather pupils' views, inspectors spent time observing and speaking to pupils. There were 15 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- To gather parents' views, the lead inspector reviewed the 68 responses and 54 free-text responses submitted to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors gathered staff members' views by speaking to several of them and reviewing the 21 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Caroline Crozier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Suzanne Thrower

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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