

Inspection of a good school: St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Boscombe Crescent, Downend, Bristol BS16 6QR

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 September 2021

Outcome

St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is warm, inviting and friendly. The headteacher is committed to being visible and approachable to parents. Leaders, including governors, and staff are ambitious for all pupils to become confident, successful learners. They work closely together to achieve this aim.

Adults have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils understand these expectations, because adults explain things carefully. As a result, pupils move about the school sensibly and purposefully, ready to listen and learn.

The school's Catholic ethos underpins the work of the school. Adults model the school's values such as respect, responsibility and compassion. The vast majority of pupils follow their lead. Pupils feel safe at school and say there is always someone to turn to if they are worried or upset.

Pupils are well-mannered and talk proudly about their school. They say they are happy here and love learning, because adults 'make it fun'. Pupils confirm that adults support pupils who need extra help with their learning.

A small minority of pupils struggle to manage their behaviour, but adults deal with this fairly and consistently. Pupils say that adults quickly sort out any problems.

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

The headteacher leads the school well, ably supported by all staff. They are acutely aware of the impact of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic and have worked hard to support pupils and families during this time.

Leaders and staff inspire pupils to achieve their best through a demanding, rich curriculum. Pupils' curiosity is sparked by stimulating activities. For example, in the early years, children ladle water to fill saucepans and build large blocks to make a spaceship.

They delight in sharing their knowledge about dinosaurs and confidently explain what they know. Pupils across the school follow routines well and listen carefully to adults.

Leaders are keen for pupils to develop a love of reading. Pupils, including in the early years, are taught to read as soon as they start school. Children enjoy joining in with songs like 'Silly Soup' to develop their understanding of rhyme. Pupils in the early stages of reading have regular phonics lessons. However, although the school provided remote learning during the periods of lockdown, a few pupils missed vital opportunities to practise phonics regularly. As a result, they have fallen behind in their learning and their reading has not developed as well as it should.

Teachers plan effective sequences of lessons in mathematics. This prepares pupils well for what comes next. Pupils work hard to use and apply their mathematical knowledge. For example, children in the early years search for matching objects when learning about pairs. Pupils in the mixed class of Years 3 and 4 pupils convert measurements and solve problems.

Leaders provide training for staff to improve their teaching and staff feel well supported. Leaders have improved the curriculum in several subjects, such as history and geography. Teaching plans outline the building blocks of knowledge that the school expects pupils to learn. However, it will take time to fully embed these plans so that pupils consistently know and remember more.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn the same ambitious curriculum as other pupils. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) knows pupils well. She works closely with parents and seeks help from specialist agencies. This ensures that pupils are provided with sharply focused additional support, so that learning meets their needs.

Most parents praise the work of the school. However, some parents, including parents of pupils with SEND, raised concerns that their children were not well supported and said communication with parents and carers could be much better.

Low-level disruption and bullying are rare. However, when they do occur, leaders take decisive action to eliminate them. Additional adults provide pupils with highly effective support to explain what behaviour is acceptable and what is not. Pupils are helped to manage their emotions and develop their social skills. For example, pupils can go to the sensory room to help them to become calm, when they feel angry or upset.

Leaders and staff carefully consider pupils' wider development. They are keen to nurture pupils' talents and interests, in order to give them the chance to shine. The school enhances the curriculum by offering experiences such as multi-sports, circus skills and trips to the theatre. Pupils can join clubs, such as dance, drama and Lego. Pupils are encouraged to care for others and think about those less fortunate than themselves when they raise money for the homeless.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding procedures are thorough. The headteacher and staff care deeply for the pupils in their care and understand the need to be vigilant. They know pupils and families well and act quickly when pupils need help. Leaders work closely with specialists to make sure that pupils receive the support they need.

Leaders make appropriate checks to assure themselves that adults are safe to work with children. Staff receive regular training and know what to do when they believe a pupil is at risk. Safeguarding concerns are recorded and regularly followed up.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of pupils missed opportunities to practise phonics regularly during the periods of lockdown. As a result, they have fallen behind in their learning and are not able to read as well as they should. Leaders must act swiftly to provide sharply focused additional support to help them to catch up quickly.
- Some subject curriculums are relatively new. Leaders must ensure that these plans are fully embedded, so that teaching helps pupils to know and remember more and so that pupils are well prepared for what comes next.
- A minority of parents, including parents of pupils with SEND, have concerns about the way the school supports their children. As a result, they have lost confidence in the school. Leaders must continue to improve communication and work closely with parents to gain their trust.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	109268
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10199793
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jenefer Morgan
Headteacher	Mark Hilliam
Website	www.staugustinedownend.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided Catholic school.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2019.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held several meetings with the headteacher, two assistant headteachers and the SENCo. One assistant headteacher is the early years leader and is also responsible for leading English, including phonics. The other assistant headteacher is responsible for leading mathematics.
- The inspector had an online meeting, which was attended by a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.

- The inspector held a meeting with a group of governors, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector did deep dives in these subjects: reading, history and mathematics. She held discussions with subject leaders, reviewed pupils' work and visited several lessons. She carried out some of these visits jointly with the headteacher or assistant headteachers. She talked to pupils about their learning and spoke with teachers.
- The inspector reviewed the school's single central record and a sample of the school's safeguarding records. She discussed safeguarding arrangements with the headteacher and other staff, including the SENCo.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktime and lunchtime.
- The inspector spoke to pupils, staff and parents in order to gather their views of the school. She reviewed 82 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with 58 additional free-text comments. She took account of eight responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Catherine Beeks, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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