Inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Costessey

Westend, Old Costessey, Norwich, Norfolk NR8 5AG

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 June 2025
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Rachel Swindell. This school is part of St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer (CEO), Kim Payne, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mary Sparrow.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this caring and inclusive school. They feel safe and valued here. This is because staff know pupils well. They respond to their needs with warmth and compassion. Pupils radiate the Augustine's standard through the kindness, respect and care they show to one another. It is lived out by staff and pupils alike, shaping the school's nurturing ethos.

The school sets high expectations for pupils. Pupils rise to these expectations and achieve well. They are curious, enjoy their learning, and take pride in their work. The curriculum is ambitious and well structured, helping pupils to broaden their knowledge over time.

The school has a clear and consistent approach to behaviour. As a result, pupils are friendly and polite to each other. Pupils understand the school's rules. They live them out through their daily actions. Pupils play and learn well together. Bullying is rare. When it does occur, the school deals with it effectively. Older pupils enjoy being role models to younger children.

The school has established a strong school community. Pupils benefit from staff and parents working together. Through trips, clubs, and leadership roles, pupils develop confidence and character. This helps to prepare them well for secondary school and life beyond.

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

The school has established a well-structured and ambitious curriculum. It is designed to ensure that pupils learn the knowledge they need in a logical order. Leaders ensure that teachers have the subject knowledge and guidance they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. The trust provides effective and relevant staff training. Consequently, staff have gained the knowledge and skills they need to teach the curriculum successfully.

Across subjects, teachers check pupils' understanding and address misconceptions. However, they do not always use checks on pupils' learning precisely enough to inform future teaching. As a result, some pupils complete work that is not well matched to what they already know or need next. This means that some pupils do not build on prior learning as securely or effectively as they could.

The school supports pupils well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This starts with staff establishing positive relationships with pupils when they join the school. Individual pupils' needs are quickly identified. Staff provide tailored support that meets the needs of each pupil with SEND. Lessons are adapted well, enabling pupils to be successful. For example, various extra resources are used appropriately to support some pupils with their learning.

The school prioritises reading. Older pupils enjoy reading and speak enthusiastically about the books they read at school. They receive a reading curriculum that enables them to use their reading skills in different subjects. Children in the early years quickly learn

phonics through a structured programme. Pupils who fall behind are identified swiftly. They receive extra help to catch up. However, this support is not consistently implemented across the school. As a result, some pupils do not develop their reading fluency as well as they could.

Children in the early years enjoy exploring the well-organised learning environment. Staff know the children well and build strong, caring relationships with them. Activities are carefully designed to develop children's knowledge and skills step by step. There is a strong focus on developing their communication and language. As a result, children are confident and well-prepared for their transition to Year 1.

Pupils behave well. They understand and follow the school's values of 'wisdom, love, might, let there be light'. They are respectful and courteous towards staff and one another. In lessons, pupils show positive attitudes and focus well on their learning. The school is calm and orderly throughout the day. Staff apply behaviour routines consistently and fairly. Leaders monitor attendance carefully and act quickly if concerns arise. They work effectively with families where attendance has been an issue.

The school's wider curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn about various beliefs and traditions. They discuss moral questions, such as fairness and justice, and show a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils take on responsibilities confidently. Pupil leadership roles include pupil chaplains, school councillors and reading buddies. These help to develop pupils' teamwork, determination and compassion.

Those responsible for governance understand their roles well. They appropriately support and challenge leaders to ensure statutory duties are met. Trust leaders have provided meaningful support, particularly around curriculum development and staff training. This has strengthened the quality of education across the school. Leaders consider staff workload carefully. Staff feel supported and valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not always check pupils' understanding precisely enough to inform future teaching. This means that sometimes pupils complete work that is not well matched to their understanding. Therefore, they do not make as much progress as they could. The school should ensure that staff check what pupils know and understand more precisely when planning and recapping future curriculum activities.
- The school does not use a consistent approach to support those pupils at the early stages of learning to read. Consequently, some pupils do not catch up as quickly as they might. The school should ensure that all staff are appropriately guided and supported so that all pupils can become confident and 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' 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	142730
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10378545
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Mary Sparrow
CEO of the trust	Kim Payne (Interim CEO)
Headteacher	Rachel Swindell
Website	www.st-augustines.norfolk.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 May 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust.
- St Augustine's Catholic Primary School is a Catholic school within the Diocese of East Anglia.
- The most recent section 48 inspection, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in May 2018.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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.
- This was the first graded inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the diocese, the local governing body, trustees and trust leaders, including the CEO.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, school leaders, staff, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and science. 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 pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 read to a familiar adult.
- The lead inspector looked at records of pupils' attendance and behaviour. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. They talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 considered responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys. They also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Benjamin Axon, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Craig Avieson	Ofsted Inspector
Jessie Linsley	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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