

Inspection of The Catholic School of Saint Gregory the Great

St James' Square, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL50 3QG

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempt by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

The Catholic School of St Gregory the Great is an inclusive school. Pupils get the care and support they need to overcome challenges and 'dream big' for the future. The school places a high priority on pupils' personal development. Staff know each pupil extremely well, because time is invested in forming positive and respectful relationships. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe and to have a strong sense of belonging.

Pupils demonstrate the motivation to work hard and are keen to do well. In most subjects, pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need to achieve well.

Pupils' behaviour is positive. Most behave well in lessons. Where there is minor disruption, staff act promptly so that learning can continue. Children in Reception Year are beginning to learn how they should behave, and routines are in place to support them. Pupils proudly take on responsibilities, such as being eco-monitors, digital leaders and restorative stars.

Pupils value the diverse range of opportunities the school offers. These support them to develop their skills and interests in many areas, such as music, sports and the arts. For example, older pupils spoke eloquently about the recent careers fair that the school ran.

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

The school is ambitious for pupils to receive a high-quality education. Typically, the curriculum is well organised and identifies the knowledge pupils need in order to learn well. Teachers revisit prior learning to help pupils remember the most important knowledge. A carefully constructed and ambitious curriculum is in place. Staff have identified the knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to learn. Teachers have thought about how they develop pupils' knowledge and skills over time. For example, in science, they help pupils understand more by building on concepts they have learned before and ensure that pupils master key skills, such as working scientifically. Similarly, in mathematics, pupils confidently recall number facts and times tables through daily practice. However, in a few subjects, improvements to the curriculum are recent. In these subjects, pupils do not develop the same depth of knowledge as they do in others.

The school has the aspiration that every pupil will become a fluent reader. Children begin phonics as soon as they start in Reception Year. The school ensures that staff have the knowledge and skills to teach phonics with precision and confidence. Staff make sure that books match the phonics knowledge of each pupil. However, some pupils in the early stages of reading do not get sufficient support to practise the sounds they are learning. This limits their reading fluency and accuracy.

Pupils are enthusiastic learners and eager to do their best. Pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning, which are linked to the St Gregory's learner tree.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive high-quality provision. The school identifies pupils' needs quickly. Staff make adaptations to support pupils to learn effectively. This ensures that pupils with SEND can learn successfully and achieve well. This work begins before children start school. School leaders work closely with pre-school providers. They ensure that the right provision is in place as children start in Reception Year. The school works directly with other agencies, such as health and social care, to make sure that the right support is in place at the right time. This pastoral support is integral to the work of the school.

Pupils' wider personal development is exceptional. They immerse themselves in opportunities to understand how to be responsible, active citizens. Pupils go out of their way to look after each other and speak up against injustice.

Pupils live up to the school's motto of 'believe and achieve'. No matter what their beliefs or culture, they treat each other with respect and celebrate diversity equally. This makes them well prepared for their future.

Pupils have a wealth of additional activities available to them. Extra-curricular clubs include those for cheerleading, street dance and 'mini medics'. Clubs are on offer to all pupils and are well attended. These opportunities develop pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem.

Parents and carers are thrilled with the school. They appreciate the way in which the schools support both pupils and families. Many commented on how the school goes 'above and beyond' to support their child. As a result, parents are confident that their children receive a good education and are well looked after.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school is not clear enough about the knowledge it wants pupils to learn and remember. This means that pupils do not gain the depth of knowledge needed to help them make links with new learning. The school must ensure that all components needed to build and deepen pupils' knowledge and skills over time are clearly identified.
- Some pupils at the early stages of reading do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their phonics and reading. This hinders these pupils from becoming fluent readers. The school must ensure that these pupils practise their reading enough to enable them to develop their fluency and confidence.

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	115731
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10288152
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	418
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anna Elliott
Headteacher	Charlotte Blanch
Website	www.st-gregorygreat.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 June 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Clifton. At the school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character, carried out in June 2023, the school was judged to be good.
- The school uses one registered and one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, senior leaders, other staff and members of the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education. For each deep dive, the 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 pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to an adult.
- The lead inspector spoke with an education adviser from Gloucestershire local authority and the Director of Schools and Colleges for the Diocese of Clifton.
- 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 key documentation, including school development plans and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. An inspector met with school leaders to discuss and scrutinise how they respond to behavioural incidents and pupils' attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff and pupil questionnaires and to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors spoke with parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Jen Southall, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Steve Wigley	Ofsted Inspector
Lorna Buchanan	Ofsted Inspector

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