

# Inspection of a good school: St Gregory's Catholic High School

Cromwell Avenue, Great Sankey, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 1HG

---

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2024

## **Outcome**

St Gregory's Catholic High School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to attend this school. They value the strong relationships that they have with their teachers. Pupils, including those who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) (specially resourced provision), are well supported. This helps them to feel safe and happy.

Pupils positively embrace the school's values. For example, they are respectful and empathetic towards other people regardless of their culture or background. At social times, pupils get along well together. Typically, pupils are polite and behave well.

Pupils appreciate the high aspirations that the school has set for their academic achievement. This motivates them to do well. Pupils, including those who attend the specially resourced provision, benefit from a strong curriculum. Most pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well.

Pupils value the opportunities that the school provides to promote their personal development. They relish the leadership roles that enable them to represent their peers, for example, by working as form advocates. This helps them to make positive changes to pupils' experiences of school. For instance, they have successfully organised a culture day. In addition, pupils enjoy the responsibility of being a young leader where they act as positive role models to help younger pupils to quickly settle into school.

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

The school has designed a curriculum which is ambitious and broad for all pupils. It has identified the key knowledge and concepts that pupils should learn. The curriculum is carefully ordered to ensure that pupils have the prior knowledge that is needed to successfully grasp new subject content.

In most subjects, teachers adeptly deliver the curriculum. They present subject matter clearly and effectively. Most pupils understand what is asked of them, and they retain their knowledge well over time. This helps most pupils to achieve well.

Most teachers check that pupils have grasped the subject content before moving on to new learning. They use a wide range of assessment strategies to check that pupils are progressing well through the curriculum. Nonetheless, from time to time, in a small number of subjects, some teachers' choice of learning activities does not enable pupils to grasp the subject content securely and meaningfully. This prevents a small number of pupils from achieving as well as they should.

The school has responded well to the increased number of pupils that have joined the school with an education health and care (EHC) plan. The additional needs of pupils with SEND are identified swiftly. However, at times, some teachers do not adapt the teaching activities well enough to meet the needs of these pupils. This limits how well some pupils with SEND can access the curriculum.

Reading has a high priority at the school. The school assesses pupils' reading ability rigorously. This helps staff to design bespoke support for those pupils who need it. As a result, pupils become confident and fluent readers. The school uses its well-stocked learning resource centre to encourage pupils to read. Most pupils enjoy reading. Furthermore, reading is widely promoted throughout the curriculum.

Pupils respond well to the school's 'ambition for all' mantra. Most pupils engage positively with their learning and take pride in their work. Learning is rarely disrupted due to poor behaviour. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils who are vulnerable are supported well to attend school. For instance, the school uses its 'Augustine's Centre' successfully to help pupils to overcome any emotional challenges. This means that pupils miss school less frequently and absence rates are low.

Pupils benefit from a plethora of extra-curricular activities that promote pupils' wider development. For example, they widen their knowledge of the world through a range of local and international trips. Pupils enjoyed organising a 'culture day' to celebrate and learn about different cultures. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education, employment and training. They receive specific support and guidance from careers advisors and external organisations. Pupils are well informed to make decisions about their future career pathway.

Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively. They hold the school to account and provide appropriate challenge. Managing staff workload is of high importance to the school. Changes to practices are communicated well and the school ensures that these are manageable for staff. This boosts staff morale and strengthens their commitment to improving the quality of education for pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasions, some teachers do not deliver the curriculum consistently well. This means that some learning activities do not help pupils to understand the subject content securely and this limits how well they achieve. The school should ensure that teachers are equipped to routinely design learning activities which allow pupils to build on what they already know.
- Some teachers do not adapt their teaching as well as they could to meet the additional needs of pupils. This means that, from time to time, some pupils with SEND do not learn the curriculum as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers receive further guidance about how to support pupils with SEND so that they achieve consistently well across the curriculum.

## 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2019.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111454
<b>Local authority</b>	Warrington
<b>Inspection number</b>	10348078
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Roger Harrison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Edward McGlinchey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stgregoryshigh.com">www.stgregoryshigh.com</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	26 and 27 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a Roman Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in February 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place before February 2026.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. This provision caters for 16 pupils with autism.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection that 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.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other school leaders. Inspectors also met with a range of other staff.
- Inspectors spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. They also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the archdiocese.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour across the school, including at social times.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, English, geography and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed samples of pupils' work and spoke with some pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with the leaders responsible for pupils' personal development, behaviour and attendance, careers, the provision for SEND and reading.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and records relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Amina Modan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Niamh Howlett

Ofsted Inspector

David Roberts

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024