

Inspection of St Gregory's Catholic High School

Cromwell Avenue, Westbrook, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 1HG

Inspection dates: 26–27 November 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Gregory's are happy, confident and welcoming to visitors. They like each other. There is a strong sense of community across the school. This reflects the school vision, 'One family inspired to learn'. One pupil said: 'We are cared about as individuals but, because everyone cares, that makes us all one.'

Pupils are safe in school. They say that there are many people that they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Bullying is not tolerated. Leaders and teachers deal quickly with any bullying incidents that occur.

Pupils enjoy their learning and work hard. They listen to each other and work well together. In most subjects, teachers have high expectations for pupils. However, in English, leaders do not have as high expectations for all pupils. Some pupils do not access a curriculum that has enough depth and breadth.

Pupils enjoy the extra-curricular activities that are on offer in the school. They enjoy a range of clubs, including performing arts and sports opportunities. They value the leadership opportunities that they can take part in. They help each other through the anti-bullying and mental health ambassadors.

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

The school has improved considerably since the last inspection. Leaders and governors have worked together with other schools within the archdiocese to improve the curriculum. Teachers say that they are proud to work in the school. They value the links with other schools. However, some teachers feel that leaders have not taken their workload into consideration when making changes.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in their learning. The special educational needs coordinator helps all staff to understand the best way to help these pupils during learning. Teachers have high expectations of these pupils. They make sure that this group of pupils accesses an ambitious curriculum. As a result, these pupils do well in their learning.

Across almost all subjects, the curriculum is well planned to provide aspiration for all pupils. There are opportunities for pupils to revisit previous learning to help them to remember more. Learning is planned in the right order. Pupils are able to build new learning on what they already know.

Despite this, the curriculum in English lacks the aspiration of other subjects. Some pupils in Years 7 and 8 spend too much time in their English lessons reading their own books instead of working through the English curriculum. Also, pupils start the learning for their GCSE examinations in Year 9. This leaves many pupils with gaps in their English learning. Leaders have recognised these concerns. They are taking steps to ensure that all pupils access the full English curriculum.

The school library is an exciting place to be. Pupils use it to complete homework and engage in lunchtime activities, such as the chess tournament. There are a range of competitions and rewards to encourage pupils to read. Many pupils access the library regularly. They read widely and write reviews to encourage others to share their favourite books.

Behaviour has improved considerably. Teachers deal effectively with pupils that misbehave. Attendance rates are above the national average. However, there are still too many disadvantaged pupils that are regularly absent from school.

There is a well-planned curriculum for pupils' development. Pupils are taught about the dangers that they face while online. There are pupil mental health ambassadors to help pupils understand how to keep themselves healthy. Leaders also provide a comprehensive curriculum around British values.

Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well catered for. Pupils are actively encouraged to understand, appreciate and respect difference in the world and its people. For example, the work the school is doing to promote awareness around hate crime and leaving a 'positive footprint' is well developed. Pupils work side by side with staff leading on these initiatives. They are rightly very proud of the work they are doing.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all appropriate checks are made on staff that work in the school. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil. Leaders act promptly to ensure that pupils get the help and support that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In English, at key stage 3, some pupils do not have access to a curriculum with the depth and breadth of the national curriculum. As a result, these pupils develop gaps in their learning of English. Leaders should continue to implement their early action plan to improve the curriculum so that all pupils have access to a curriculum with the depth and breadth of the English national curriculum.
- There is a group of disadvantaged pupils that continues to be regularly absent from school. Due to their absence, these pupils do not have the opportunity to study the full curriculum. Leaders must continue to support these pupils in improving their attendance.
- Leaders have introduced a range of strategies to bring about improvement in the school. Some staff have not felt consulted about all these developments. This has led to some increase in their workload. In future, it is important that leaders consider teachers' workload when bringing about change.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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	111454
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10087937
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1070
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rodger Harrison
Headteacher	Edward McGlinchey
Website	www.stgregoryshigh.com
Date of previous inspection	3–4 May 2017

Information about this school

- The Archdiocese of Liverpool undertook a section 48 inspection of the school in February 2019.
- There are currently no pupils attending alternative provision. However, there are a small number of pupils being provided with home tuition through the local authority.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- During the inspection, we spoke with pupils about their work and school life. We held meetings with senior leaders, governors, subject leaders and the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- We reviewed documentation, which included leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and the school development plan. We scrutinised information about attendance and behaviour.
- We considered the views expressed by parents and carers in the 142 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as parents' comments received via the

free-text facility on Parent View. We considered the 171 responses to a questionnaire for pupils and the 50 responses to a questionnaire for staff.

- We reviewed a range of documentation about the school. This included information about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff and support for pupils. We also spoke to representatives of the alternative provision used by the school.
- We focused deeply on English, languages, science and performing arts during the inspection. We met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, met with teaching staff and looked at pupils' work. We also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

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