

# Inspection of St Felix Roman Catholic Primary School, Haverhill

School Lane, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 9DE

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Inspection dates: 19 and 20 June 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

The headteacher of this school is Andi Dodds. This school is part of Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Flavio Vettese, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Bergin.

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

Pupils enjoy school. They benefit from the substantial improvements at the school. Pupils work hard to achieve the school's high expectations.

Starting in Nursery class, pupils come to know that learning is important and fun. Children in the early years delight in exploring the world through the high-quality learning activities the school provides. Due to the many positive changes made at the school, pupils become confident learners with wide ranging knowledge and skills. Pupils leave at the end of Year 6 ready for secondary school.

Pupils appreciate the well embedded Catholic ethos where everyone is genuinely, 'valued, nurtured and encouraged to reach their full potential.' During lessons, pupils work well together and celebrate each other's achievements. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom are fully included within the school.

Pupils study the curriculum successfully and build strong relationships with their peers due to the support they receive from staff. On the playground and around the school, older pupils care for younger pupils in the many leadership positions at the school. For example, play helpers in Year 4 support younger pupils on the play equipment at lunch.

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

The school, with the support of the trust, has markedly improved the quality of the curriculum. They have an ambitious curriculum in place that is well organised. The school provides staff the guidance and training they need to teach effectively. Staff aptly put this guidance and training into practice. They plan and deliver effective learning activities. As a result, pupils learn most of what is in the curriculum.

In key stage 1, pupils' achievement is particularly strong in English and mathematics and well above national averages on national assessments. However, there are subjects where some curriculum plans expect pupils to learn too much in a short space of time. As a result, teachers do not give pupils the time they need to gain knowledge thoroughly. When this happens, pupils have a shallow understanding of the curriculum content and forget key knowledge leaders intend them to learn.

The school has been developing the way staff check what pupils have learned. Teachers routinely check what pupils know and understand. When concerns arise, teachers give pupils the help they need to avoid falling behind. However, occasionally these checks do not spot when pupils forget knowledge they studied in previous terms or years. This leads to pupils forgetting some important facts and a lack of understanding of concepts in some areas of the curriculum.

Reading is a strength at the school. Staff consistently follow the school's approach to teaching pupils how to read. In Nursery, staff model the use of sophisticated language for children. They also ensure children learn the sounds of letters accurately in preparation for learning phonics in Reception. As they progress through Reception class and key stage 1, staff support pupils to become fluent readers. Pupils that find reading difficult receive additional help to become capable readers.

The school swiftly identifies the needs of pupils with SEND. Working with external specialists, the school puts in place well-considered guidance and training for staff to support these pupils. Staff provide what these pupils need to help them learn the curriculum effectively. For example, staff adapt learning activities well during lessons to ensure pupils can access what is being taught.

Pupils understand and live up to the school's high expectations of their conduct. Throughout the school, pupils learn in orderly classes with clear routines in place. In the early years, children listen to others well and sustain concentration for long periods of time.

Pupils benefit from a well-developed programme for their personal development. They enjoy the enriching educational visits that enhance what they learn in the classroom, such as trips to an Anglo-Saxon village. Pupils thoughtfully discuss their own beliefs and those of others. They understand the importance of respecting the diverse lifestyles and beliefs in modern society.

Leaders have won the confidence of parents and staff. Many parents comment about how pupils enjoy learning and happily go to school. All staff are proud of the school and enjoy working there. They appreciate the way leaders support staff to maintain reasonable workloads.

The trustees, governors and trust leaders provide the support and challenge needed to ensure the school improves.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- While curriculum plans show ambition, some areas have planned too much knowledge to be taught in a short amount of time. As a result, teachers do not give pupils enough time to study some material thoroughly. This leads to pupils forgetting important knowledge. The school must ensure that all areas of the curriculum are planned so that pupils have enough time to learn the knowledge.
- The school's improvements to assessment have led to teachers routinely checking what pupils know and understand. However, teachers do not check well enough

what knowledge pupils remember from previous terms and years. This leads to teachers not realising when pupils forget key knowledge. The school must ensure teachers check what pupils remember from earlier terms and years and provide the necessary support when gaps are found.

## 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>	143624
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323774
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	261
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Paul Bergin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andi Dodds
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stfelixhaverhill.com">www.stfelixhaverhill.com</a>
<b>Date(s) of previous inspection</b>	13 September 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- St Felix Catholic Primary School is part of Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi Academy Trust.
- The school runs its own before- and after-school care.
- The school has nursery provision for three-year-olds.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- This is a school with a Roman Catholic ethos within the Diocese of East Anglia. The school received its most recent Section 48 inspection in May 2024 and will be reinspected approximately five years from then.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the chief executive officer of the trust, trust leaders, trustees, governors, the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders, teachers, members of support staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: history, mathematics, physical education, reading and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the wider curriculum, looked at a range of curriculum documents, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke with some pupils about their learning in some other subjects.
- 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 observed behaviour of pupils in lessons and during social time.
- Inspectors looked at relevant documents, considered pupils work and held discussions with leaders, staff and pupils about the provision for pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors considered the 15 staff responses, the 47 pupil responses and the 31 parent responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Al Mistrano, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Cassandra Williams	Ofsted Inspector
Craig Avieson	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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