

St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Address: Boscombe Crescent, BS16 6QR

Unique reference number (URN): 109268

Inspection report: 9 December 2025

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	●
Needs attention	● ● ● ● ● ●
Urgent improvement	

✔ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Early years

Expected standard 

Transition arrangements into the Reception Year are carefully planned to ensure that children begin school with well-understood starting points. Positive working relationships with parents and carers are nurtured to help staff get to know their children well. This information is used to shape the early years curriculum and provision. In the early years, there is a keen focus on developing children's language, early reading and positive behaviours for learning. Opportunities for children to learn and use new vocabulary are regularly promoted by staff. They foster children's love of rhymes and words through carefully selected books. Staff ensure that children develop secure early reading knowledge. Children achieve well in these areas of learning. Leaders have identified where further development is needed to build this success across all 7 areas of learning.

Staff work proactively with children who face any barriers to learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged children are enabled to engage in purposeful learning opportunities. By the end of Reception Year, children typically achieve a good level of development and are well prepared for Year 1.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Many pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils in key stage 2 do not achieve consistently well in national tests and across the wider curriculum. This includes pupils who face additional barriers to learning, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have not ensured that pupils develop the foundational knowledge they need. For example, some pupils do not secure basic spelling and handwriting skills or learn key scientific concepts. These gaps remain and make it difficult for pupils to build on prior learning.

Children in the Reception Year achieve well. Most learn the essential knowledge and skills they need to prepare them well for Year 1. Staff observe children closely and adapt activities to meet individual needs. Learning is carefully sequenced so that children build their understanding step by step. Pupils also achieve well in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to practise decoding words, which helps them recognise sounds quickly and accurately.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Attendance is below national expectations, and has been for some time. Rates for pupils who face additional barriers to learning, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, show that they attend less well than their peers. Consequently, pupils miss important learning and do not achieve as well as they should.

Leaders have recently developed a clear plan to improve attendance. They have shared their expectations with parents. They have also strengthened the way they work with external agencies to support families to build positive attendance habits. However, this work is very recent, and the impact is not yet evident. While there are some individual examples of improved attendance, this is not yet a consistent trend.

Although leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour, these have not yet been realised in practice. Staff do not have consistently high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Some pupils lose focus during lessons. When this happens, it is more difficult for others to concentrate and learn well. Leaders have recently worked with staff and parents to strengthen the behaviour policy. They have introduced successful strategies to better support pupils who need help to regulate their own behaviour. Although this work is at an early stage, it is beginning to make a positive difference for some pupils.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Teaching across the wider curriculum is not consistent. Leaders have not ensured there is enough focus on the most important knowledge pupils need to learn. Consequently, pupils do not build a strong understanding over time. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to revisit and recall prior learning. This means that gaps in their understanding persist. For example, pupils often do not secure important vocabulary or have enough chances to practise using it. As a result, they struggle to explain their ideas clearly. In writing, leaders have not ensured that pupils consistently develop the basic skills they need, such as handwriting and spelling.

Teachers do not consistently adapt lessons for pupils who would benefit from this, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders know that the school needs to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. They have started to take action to remedy this. They have well-considered plans for improvement. Leaders are rightly providing improved training and support for teachers. They have ensured that the curriculum is well organised and meets national requirements. The way the phonics curriculum is taught helps pupils learn and remember important knowledge successfully. However, in many other curriculum subjects, improvements are still at an early stage. Therefore, it is too soon to see their full impact.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Some pupils who face barriers to learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not receive the support they need to make the progress they should. Leaders have not ensured that staff have sufficient expertise to address these barriers effectively. Consequently, the curriculum is not consistently adapted to meet pupils' needs where appropriate. Too often, pupils are given work that is not well matched to their starting points. Leaders have not made effective use of funding. Support for eligible pupils lacks impact. Too many pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leaders have recently strengthened the way they support pupils. Their approach is now based on evidence of what works well to raise achievement. Processes to review the impact of additional funding have also improved. Pupils with SEND have their needs identified

swiftly and accurately. Pupils with an individualised curriculum enjoy spending time in the 'hub' and the 'nurture room' to reflect and learn. Leaders check pupils' progress. However, they do not use this to plan future learning. Leaders recognise that further training and sharper curriculum adaptations are essential to ensure pupils' needs are met effectively.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

The improvements leaders have introduced are very recent. As a result, they have not yet made a measurable difference to the quality of education pupils receive. There has been turbulence in leadership and governance, which has affected the school's capacity to improve. This has now stabilised. Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and take decisions that are in the best interests of all pupils.

Leaders' plans focus on the right priorities. They include developing staff expertise and building stronger relationships with parents. Governors have strengthened their own expertise to better hold leaders to account. They have a clear plan for delivering sustained improvement. The actions of leaders and governors are starting to gain traction and make a difference to pupils' learning.

Staff appreciate leaders' focus on their workload and wellbeing. Teachers value recent opportunities to develop their expertise in line with the school's priorities. Parents also appreciate the improved communication and the school's efforts to work in partnership with them.

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

The impact of the school's work on personal development and wellbeing is inconsistent. For example, pupils have opportunities to take on leadership roles. These include serving on the school council, acting as chaplains or becoming house captains. However, these roles are not yet fully developed. Consequently, pupils do not benefit from meaningful responsibilities.

The school offers a variety of clubs. These include choir, football and gymnastics. Opportunities such as these help pupils develop their talents and interests. However, while some pupils take part in these, leaders have not fully explored how best to promote engagement and inclusivity in enrichment activities. Pupils visit some places of worship as part of their learning. However, their overall understanding of the wide range of cultures, faiths and communities that make up modern Britain is limited. Pupils are not prepared well for life beyond school.

There are some areas of effective practice. In the early years, for instance, learning helps children get ready for Year 1. Older pupils support younger children by acting as 'buddies', helping them to feel safe, settled and cared for in school. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and in the wider world. However, leaders have not yet evaluated how their work affects pupils' personal development in its widest context.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils at St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School do not benefit from the quality of education they should. Many do not achieve as well as they could. This is because teaching does not consistently help them to know and remember important knowledge and skills. Some pupils who are disadvantaged, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those facing other barriers to learning do not receive the support they need to progress well from their starting points. Staff expectations of behaviour are not consistently high. Consequently, not all pupils remain focused on learning. Leaders have only recently started to improve attendance and punctuality. Currently, not enough pupils attend regularly. The school's programme for personal development and wellbeing does not prepare pupils well enough for life in modern Britain.

There has been significant turbulence in leadership and governance, which has affected pupils' experiences. This has now stabilised and leaders have an accurate view of the school. They have begun to strengthen weaker areas. However, this work is very recent and has not yet improved pupils' learning.

Despite these weaknesses, pupils are happy and feel valued. Many join at different points in the school year. Whenever they arrive, staff help them settle swiftly so that they feel part of the school community. Pupils are safe and know that staff will help them if they have any worries. Staff and pupils are proud to belong to a close-knit school. Pupils enjoy opportunities to socialise at playtimes. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that any instances are dealt with promptly and effectively. The school's distinctive values underpin its caring, compassionate atmosphere. For example, pupils raise money for local charities and take part in civic events. These experiences help pupils develop a sense of citizenship.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff understand the range of barriers pupils may face to their learning and wellbeing so that they can ensure that the curriculum is well matched to their needs.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers make important knowledge sufficiently explicit and check pupils' understanding systematically so that pupils can build on previous learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers use what they know about pupils' learning to identify and address gaps so that all pupils develop the foundational knowledge, language and communication skills they need.
 - Leaders should ensure that the strengthened attendance policy is implemented consistently to raise pupils' attendance rates.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff establish appropriate routines and explicitly teach and model the behaviour they expect from pupils so that these are well understood.
 - Leaders should ensure that they understand the impact of the personal development and welfare programme so that all pupils benefit from high-quality personal development opportunities.
 - Those responsible for governance should ensure that they continue to develop their expertise so that they can support and challenge leaders effectively.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Janine McCann.

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

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the acting headteacher, other senior leaders, the chair of the local governing board, a representative of the diocese and a local authority adviser during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. The last section 48 inspection took place in October 2022.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. School stability has decreased, with many pupils either leaving or joining.

The school makes use of one alternative provider, which is an unregistered provider of alternative provision.

Headteacher : Mr Mark Hilliam

Lead inspector:

Liz Geller, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Marie Thomas, His Majesty's Inspector

Sandy Hayes, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 9 December 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

184

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

210

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

17.93%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.72%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

17.93%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	49%	61%	Below
2024/25	46%	62%	Below
2023/24	60%	61%	Close to average
2022/23	43%	60%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	74%	74%	Close to average
2024/25	62%	75%	Below
2023/24	100%	74%	Above
2022/23	68%	73%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	72%	Below
2024/25	62%	72%	Below
2023/24	65%	72%	Close to average
2022/23	61%	71%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	73%	Close to average
2024/25	54%	74%	Below
2023/24	90%	73%	Above
2022/23	68%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	31%	46%	Below
2024/25	33%	47%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24	S	46%	S
2022/23	S	44%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	38%	62%	Below
2024/25	33%	63%	Below
2023/24	S	62%	S
2022/23	S	60%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	31%	59%	Below
2024/25	33%	59%	Below
2023/24	S	58%	S
2022/23	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	46%	60%	Below
2024/25	33%	61%	Below
2023/24	S	59%	S
2022/23	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	31%	68%	-37 pp
2024/25	33%	69%	-36 pp
2023/24	S	67%	S
2022/23	S	66%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	38%	80%	-41 pp
2024/25	33%	81%	-47 pp
2023/24	S	80%	S
2022/23	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	31%	78%	-47 pp
2024/25	33%	78%	-45 pp
2023/24	S	78%	S
2022/23	S	77%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	46%	80%	-34 pp
2024/25	33%	81%	-47 pp
2023/24	S	79%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 terms)	7.2%	5.2%	Above
2023/24	6.3%	5.5%	Above
2022/23	6.1%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 terms)	18.7%	13.3%	Above
2023/24	15.8%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23	19.0%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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