

# Inspection of a good school: Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Newhouse

Newhouse, Durham Road, Durham DH7 9PA

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Inspection date:

11 December 2019

## **Outcome**

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Newhouse continues to be a good school.

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

Behaviour is a strength of this small, friendly school. There is a strong sense of community. Leaders have created a caring atmosphere. Pupils are polite and helpful. They concentrate well and show an interest in their learning. Pupils are not concerned about bullying. They say that if it did happen adults would quickly deal with it. All pupils say that if they have a worry there are adults they can talk to. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

The headteacher has successfully worked with governors to manage many staffing changes. Leaders have worked hard to ensure that these changes did not affect pupils' learning. Staff work well together and are supportive of each other. Leaders' work across the federation of schools continues to strengthen. This allows staff to share good practice.

Parents are highly supportive of the school. The strong relationships between school and home support pupils' learning. Parents appreciate the care their children receive. Pupils' personal development is central to the life of this nurturing school. Pupils learn strong moral values. Pupils have pride in their school. They enjoy their responsibilities, such as playground buddies, 'Mini Vinnies' and house captains.

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

Governors know the school well. They receive regular information from school leaders and visit the school often. Recent training has supported governors in their roles. The headteacher leads her team successfully. Staff appreciate how leaders are considerate and supportive of their workload. The staff value the training they receive.

Teachers provide a calm learning environment. Pupils focus well in class and do not disrupt the learning of others. Throughout the school, pupils have positive attitudes to learning.

Leaders are keen to promote a love of reading. Teachers ensure that early reading skills are developed well. Daily phonics sessions help children to learn their sounds quickly. Pupils continue to improve their phonics knowledge as they move into key stage 1. The teaching programme for phonics is well structured. Pupils confidently use their phonics skills to sound out new words. Reading books are closely matched to the pupil's needs. Staff are well trained in teaching phonics. Pupils perform well in the phonics screening check at the end of year 1.

Across the school, pupils read well and with confidence. Pupils read regularly and enjoy selecting from a wide range of books. They have a good understanding of what they have read. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading skills. This helps pupils to make strong progress in their reading.

Pupils achieve well in their writing. Leaders plan focused writing opportunities to develop pupils' skill and understanding. Pupils enjoy writing for different purposes. They get the chance to practise their writing skills across different subjects.

Leaders have looked carefully at how the curriculum is organised. A two-year cycle has been designed to help pupils learn about their local area and life outside of Great Britain. Leaders recognise that teachers must now identify curriculum goals for each subject. This will ensure that all pupils are challenged to think hard. Some subjects, such as science and geography, are now well planned and structured. In these subjects, leaders have set out the skills and knowledge that pupils should learn. This helps pupils to remember more. The same planned progression is not established in all other foundation subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. They receive extra support when required. Adults who provide this extra help, encourage and support pupils well.

Children are safe and happy in the early years foundation stage. There are clear routines which allow children to develop their independence. Staff use their skills to develop the vocabulary of the children through talk and play.

Pupils' social and emotional development is carefully considered. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about the cultures and beliefs of other people. For example, pupils in key stage 2 particularly enjoyed their visit to the Gurdwara. Pupils are proud to be members of the wider community. They take part in many fund-raising activities, for example the Macmillan coffee morning. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including multi-skills, drama and French.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make appropriate checks when recruiting staff and volunteers. They ensure that all adults in school are suitable to work with children. They maintain accurate and up-to-date records of these checks.

All policies and procedures are fit for purpose.

Staff maintain detailed records of the action they take to help pupils. This allows them to ensure that pupils get the right support from outside agencies at the right time.

All staff are up to date with the most recent child protection guidance. Staff get regular safeguarding updates.

Leaders plan a curriculum for pupils to learn the knowledge and skills they need to stay safe. Pupils talked with confidence about the risks associated with social media.

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

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

- Work in books demonstrated that depth of learning within the curriculum is often linked to outcome, rather than challenging pupils to think hard. Leaders acknowledge they are still working on the curriculum goals. Ambitious curriculum endpoints need to be developed, across all subject areas. This will encourage pupils to think hard about the concepts they are studying across the full range of curriculum subjects.
- In some foundation subjects, the sequencing and progression of skills and knowledge are not carefully planned. This means pupils find it hard to know more and remember more. Leaders need to ensure that the schemes of work they produce for all foundation subjects are planned coherently. Such schemes of work need to identify precisely the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn in each class. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have taken to plan next year's curriculum and train staff in how to deliver it that they are in the process of bringing this about.

## 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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 13–14 October 2015.

## 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 are 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114269
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10089004
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	89
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Christine Purcell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Keenan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.olqmstj.durham.sch.uk">www.olqmstj.durham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13–14 October 2015

## Information about this school

- The school is designated as having a religious character and received its section 48 inspection in May 2017 when this aspect of the school's work was graded as outstanding.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for support through the pupil premium funding, is above average and has been rising for the last three years.
- The school and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Ushaw Moor, Co Durham are joined in a federation. Both schools have the same governing body and headteacher.

## Information about this inspection

- During this inspection we looked at reading, writing and geography in detail. This included meeting curriculum leaders of these subjects. We examined curriculum planning documents. We visited lessons, talked to teachers and pupils about the lessons we saw and looked at work in pupils' books.
- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the school business manager and members of the governing body. I also spoke with the Educational Development Partner from the local authority in a telephone conversation.

- We spoke to pupils formally and informally throughout the inspection to gain their views. We asked pupils about their views on behaviour and bullying. We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- We examined a range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation and school development plans. We examined published information about the school's performance in national assessments. We studied the information published on the school's website.
- We considered 33 free-text comments sent by parents, 40 responses to the online Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and questionnaires completed by nine staff. Parents also gave their views at the start of the school day during the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Darren Stewart	Ofsted Inspector

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