

Inspection of St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

Drovers Lane, St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 9EL

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to St Catherine's Catholic Primary School. They are warmly greeted by their teachers every morning. This helps them to feel safe. Pupils, parents, carers and staff value the 'family feel' of the school. Staff have positive relationships with pupils and know them well. Pupils are friendly and welcoming to each other and to adults. They trust staff to deal with any concerns they have about behaviour and bullying, quickly and effectively.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. They place an emphasis on respect. Staff expect pupils to focus on their learning and to be kind and respectful towards each other. Pupils understand and follow these expectations. As a result, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are committed to their learning and achieve well.

Pupils are proud of their musical performances in a local church. They recently participated in a Platinum Jubilee concert and a singing workshop. Pupils contribute to life in the community. They make prayer cards and gifts for people who are housebound. These activities help pupils to build confidence and to become active citizens.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. They are clear about the knowledge they want pupils to learn and when they should learn it. Leaders have thought carefully about how children's learning in the Reception Year helps to prepare them for Year 1. Leaders have ordered the curriculum in a logical way so that children and pupils build secure knowledge over time. Leaders quickly identify any additional needs that pupils may have. They act to support pupils with SEND. These pupils successfully access the same curriculum as their friends.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have not checked that the curriculums are being delivered well to help pupils to know and remember more. As a result, leaders are unclear about how well pupils are progressing through these curriculums.

Teachers access a range of training and development opportunities to keep their knowledge and expertise up to date. They have the resources they need to create an environment that enables pupils to learn the curriculum well. Teachers check that pupils understand new learning.

Leaders have prioritised reading from the Reception Year to Year 6. They have forged a strong partnership with the local library. Pupils take part in workshops and challenges in the library. Pupils and parents and carers take part in regular book swaps. Pupils have also welcomed authors and poets into school. This helps pupils to develop a love of reading.

Leaders have introduced a new phonics curriculum that starts from the beginning of the Reception Year. Pupils who need help to catch up with their reading are supported well. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 take books home to read. At times, these books do not accurately match the sounds that children and pupils know. This hinders some children and pupils in key stage 1, in being able to read as fluently and confidently as they could.

Pupils behave in a calm and sensible way during lessons, play times and around the school. Staff establish clear routines in the Reception Year and children learn how to follow them well. Pupils are able to listen to their teachers and focus on their learning as lessons are rarely disrupted.

Leaders ensure that they provide experiences for pupils beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils value the opportunity to take part in sporting events and competitions, including for cross country and tag rugby. Pupils learn about healthy eating and how to cook nutritious recipes. These experiences help pupils to lead healthy and active lives. Pupils learn about difference in the world. They understand the importance of treating everyone equally and with respect.

Staff are extremely positive about the support that leaders provide for their workload and well-being. Staff appreciate the care that they are shown by leaders. This helps them to feel valued. Governors know the school well and are ambitious for all pupils. They provide effective support and challenge for leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff have regular training and are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff know pupils well. They are quick to identify signs that pupils may be suffering, or at risk, of harm. Staff know how to report any concerns they have. Leaders keep detailed records of these concerns. They act swiftly to secure help for vulnerable pupils and families.

Leaders have ensured that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, older pupils learn about the dangers associated with smoking and using alcohol and drugs. Pupils of all ages learn how to stay safe when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Children's and pupils' reading books do not always closely match the sounds they are learning. As a result, some pupils do not read as confidently and with as much fluency as they could. Leaders should ensure that reading books closely match the sounds that pupils are learning.

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not checked how well the curriculums are being delivered. In these subjects, leaders are not aware of how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the checks made on the delivery of the curriculum include all subjects.

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.

If you are the school and 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

Unique reference number	112305
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10226328
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	112
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Denis Smith
Headteacher	Angela Hill
Website	www.st-catherines.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Catholic Primary School. The school belongs to the Diocese of Lancaster. The most recent section 48 inspection was in March 2018.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders. They also spoke with a range of staff.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers as they dropped off their children at school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including some free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupils surveys.
- During the inspection, inspectors looked at a range of documentation relating to safeguarding. This included the school's central record of staff and visitors, records of safeguarding and samples of the records kept on individual pupils. They spoke with staff to check how well they understood safeguarding systems in school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes, in lessons and as they moved around the school. They spoke with pupils to gather their views about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in reading, mathematics and music. They met with subject leaders, teachers and visited lessons. The inspectors spoke with pupils and looked at examples of their work. The lead inspector considered the curriculum across some other subject areas. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to trusted adults.

Inspection team

Sally Timmons, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sally Kenyon

Ofsted Inspector

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