

Inspection of St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

The Green, Walbottle Village, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE15 8JL

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 June 2022

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

What is it like to attend this school?

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary school is a caring, nurturing and supportive school. Pupils are safe. They are well supported and cared for by staff and other pupils. Bullying rarely happens. Leaders monitor any reports of bullying closely and act decisively should it occur.

Adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Leaders ensure that pupils who need extra help to manage their behaviour get the support they need. Leaders promote and model the Catholic values of the school. They care for staff and families. Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Pupils have a range of responsibilities, such as being house captains, school councillors, eco councillors, or head boy and head girl. Older pupils enjoy being 'buddies' with children in the Reception classes. Pupils are proud of these roles and responsibilities. Charity work is a central part of school life. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about raising money for local causes during the COVID-19 pandemic. They have also fundraised with their local parish to build a well in Africa. These experiences help them to contribute to the caring ethos of the school. Pupils know and live the school motto of 'Love to learn, learn to love'.

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

In subjects such as reading, mathematics, science and modern foreign languages (MFL) the curriculum is strong. Leaders of these subjects have ensured that pupils have the right opportunities to practise what they have learned. They have ensured that pupils' learning builds carefully on what they know already. In these subjects, teaching staff have accessed high-quality training. They use this to support pupils' learning effectively. However, in some subjects, leaders have not had sufficient opportunities to develop staff subject knowledge. This means that the support some staff give to pupils is more varied. They do not always identify where pupils need more targeted support to learn effectively.

Reading has been a high priority at St Cuthbert's. Pupils enjoy reading a wide range of carefully chosen texts. They enjoy listening to stories that adults read to them. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read benefit from reading books carefully matched to the sounds they have learned in the school's chosen phonics scheme. They practise reading new sounds regularly. Pupils who are finding reading difficult are identified and receive additional support. They benefit from this and make rapid progress. However, there are still some inconsistencies in the way phonics is taught. Not all teachers adapt the curriculum precisely enough for pupils.

Mathematics and science are taught well. Leaders have provided teachers with the training they need in these subjects. Well-thought-out plans support teachers to ensure that children build the knowledge that they need in the right order. Teachers prioritise the learning of key vocabulary. Teachers use approaches such as retrieval

practice to help pupils to know and remember what they learn. This is having a positive impact on what pupils remember.

The MFL curriculum is both well designed and carefully implemented. Lessons are exciting and engaging. Pupils learn well as a result. Pupils are highly skilled at being able to read, write and speak in French. In wider curriculum subjects, such as history and music, curriculum plans are not as well designed or sequenced. Leaders are reviewing these.

Leaders quickly identify pupils who need additional support. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) supports teachers to adapt the curriculum when this is needed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given extra opportunities to practise key skills. For example, in reading, pupils' fluency and understanding is developed through extra phonics games and other well-thought-out activities. The school seeks advice and guidance from external sources, such as speech and language therapists, where necessary. As a result, pupils are very well supported with learning.

In the early years, leaders have thoughtfully planned activities, inside the classroom, for children to complete as they learn through play. These activities enable children to practise skills, such as writing newly learned words and numbers. However, not all teaching in the early years is of the same quality. Opportunities for children to learn the curriculum in the outside provision are limited. Activities are not sufficiently well planned, and the role of adults is less precise. Some adults use questioning effectively to identify what children know and understand, however, this is not consistent. Leaders have plans in place to improve the curriculum opportunities outside the classroom.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is prioritised. Stories and books are used to help widen pupils' knowledge of cultures outside of their own experiences. Fundraising opportunities enable pupils to understand the challenges that other people face. Teachers follow the school's chosen curriculum to support the teaching of personal, social and health education. Staff have accessed training about healthy minds and well-being. Meditation is used to help pupils develop positive well-being habits. Counselling is available for those who need it.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that pupils are safe. Leaders work effectively with a range of agencies. Record keeping is detailed and staff have been trained to identify pupils who may need help or support. Genuine care for pupils and families is at the heart of the actions that leaders take.

Leaders ensure that pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. This includes identifying and understanding dangers and risks when online. Pupils are taught to support each other to stay safe. Leaders make certain that pupils can speak to

adults in school at any time. They ensure that pupils get the help and support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some curriculum subjects, such as history, music and design technology, plans are not as well sequenced as others. As a result, pupils' knowledge is not built as securely; they do not all have the knowledge that they need to complete more complex tasks. Leaders need to complete their current review of these subjects, implement high-quality plans and ensure any relevant staff training, to ensure that learning across all subjects is highly effective.
- In early years, opportunities for high-quality, exciting learning are not always on offer outdoors. This means that opportunities are missed to support children to access the curriculum. Leaders need to introduce new ideas, concepts and vocabulary through consistently well-planned opportunities outside, to engage and excite children across the curriculum.

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

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| Unique reference number | 148270 |
| Local authority | Newcastle upon Tyne |
| Inspection number | 10211853 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 194 |
| Appropriate authority | Bishop Bewick Board of trustees |
| Chair of governing body | Beverly Bookless |
| Headteacher | Colette Barrett |
| Website | www.stcuthbertsw.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy in 2020. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school has close links with the parish and the local community of Walbottle.
- The school is part of Bishop Bewick Catholic Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account during this evaluation.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, SENCo and subject leaders.

- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for safeguarding. They looked at logs of actions taken by leaders to keep pupils safe. Inspectors scrutinised the single central record.
- The lead inspector also met with members of the local governing committee and the chief executive officer of the Trust.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and as they moved around school. Inspectors spoke informally with groups of pupils during the inspection.
- Deep dives were carried out in reading, mathematics, science, geography and MFL. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to staff about some other subjects.
- The views of parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View were also considered. This included any free-text comments.
- The inspector met with staff to consider well-being and workload. The inspector considered all responses to staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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|----------------------------|------------------|
| Kate Byrne, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Dom Brown | Ofsted Inspector |

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