

Inspection of a good school: Our Lady of Lincoln Catholic Primary School A Voluntary Academy

Laughton Way, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN2 2HE

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a nurturing school. Pupils are happy. They are well looked after and cared for. As one pupil said: 'This is a great school. Teachers are very caring and treat us fairly. We learn new things and have fun.'

Pupils behave well. They appreciate the rewards that they can earn in their classes and around the school. They enjoy earning house tokens, being selected for achievement assembly, having the tidiest classroom and earning 'the heart that sees' award. Pupils understand the consequences of poor behaviour, including the possible use of detention. However, they recognise that this is rarely required. Pupils who need help to live up to the schools' expectations are supported well.

Pupils carry out many roles around the school. They take these seriously and are eager to play their part. Roles such as school councillors, house captains, 'Mini-Vinnies', the chaplaincy team, the assembly squad and the eco-council contribute to the smooth day-to-day running of the school. Pupils are proud of their contribution.

Pupils are eager to live up to leaders' high expectations. They work hard in lessons. However, the provision in the school is compromised by some weaknesses in the curriculum.

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

Leaders have introduced a new phonics programme. On the whole, it is working well because it is taught consistently. Pupils are enthusiastic in lessons. They remember the sounds that they have learned. Most pupils have books that are closely matched to the

sounds that they know. However, too many younger pupils have books that contain few words. This means that they are unable to apply and practise the sounds that they have been taught in lessons.

Leaders ensure that pupils develop a love of reading. They study a wide range of texts. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about different books and authors, including William Shakespeare. Regular reading lessons help them to experience new and more challenging texts. Pupils enjoy listening to their teachers read.

The curriculum for key stages 1 and 2 is fully planned and sequenced. It makes clear what pupils will study at each stage of their education, across all subjects. The curriculum is ambitious. However, it does not yet consistently make clear the most important things that pupils are expected to know and remember. To address this, leaders are developing plans to make it crystal clear what the key knowledge is that they want pupils to learn. This approach is starting to bring clarity for teachers and staff. They are now beginning to support pupils more to remember what they have learned. However, this work is not yet complete.

Relationships are positive between adults and children in the early years. Children are looked after and cared for well. They are happy and work cooperatively. Staff provide a wide range of engaging learning activities. Adults help children to develop their communication and language skills appropriate for their age. However, the early years curriculum is not fully sequenced. It does not build incrementally on what children know and should be able to do at each point during the Reception Year. This means that children do not learn as systematically as they could.

Adults ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported in lessons. However, plans that set out the help that these pupils should receive are inconsistently applied. In some cases, the help that should be in place is not clearly presented.

Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. They learn to be respectful and inclusive citizens. They know that everyone should be treated fairly and equally. They do not tolerate any form of discrimination. Older pupils know what protected characteristics are and what these mean in law.

Following the three national lockdowns, rates of pupil absence and persistent absenteeism have increased. They are too high. Leaders have recognised this and have put in place a strategy to tackle it. The strategy is fit for purpose. However, it is at an early stage of implementation. While there are 'green shoots', it has not yet resulted in sustained improvements.

Senior leaders are ambitious for pupils. They are passionate about the community that they serve. The majority of staff say that they are proud of the school and enjoy working there. They say that senior leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

The new trust knows the school well and has an accurate understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve. The trust's support makes a positive contribution to the schools' capacity for sustained improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping pupils safe is the school's highest priority. Any concerns, regardless of how minor they might appear, are recorded. Leaders use these to build detailed pictures of concerns over time. Records are comprehensive. Information about pupils is communicated well with those who need it. The actions that leaders take to keep pupils safe are robust and proportionate.

Pupils know how to stay safe in a range of situations. They know who to talk to if they have a worry or concern. They know what to do if they become lost. Pupils understand what 'a trusted adult' means.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is fully planned and sequenced. However, it does not consistently make clear the most important things that pupils are expected to know and remember. This means that leaders cannot check closely how well pupils learn and remember content. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum consistently makes clear the most important things that pupils should know and remember at each stage of their education.
- Too many younger pupils have books that do not contain many or any words. This means that they are unable to apply and practise the sounds that they have been taught in lessons. Leaders should ensure that pupils have books that allow them to practise the sounds that they have learned in class.
- The early years curriculum is not fully sequenced. It does not build incrementally on what children know and should be able to do at each point during the Reception Year. This means that children in the early years do not learn as systematically as they should. Leaders should ensure that the early years curriculum is well planned and sequenced.
- Plans that set out the support that pupils with SEND should receive are inconsistently applied. In a small number of cases, the support that should be in place is not present. This means that these pupils do not get on as well as they should. Leaders should carry out regular and robust checks to ensure that the planned provision for pupils with SEND is being implemented consistently.
- Rates of pupil absence and persistent absenteeism are high. This means that too many pupils miss too much of their education. Leaders have developed a strategy to address this. It is at an early stage of implementation. While there are 'green shoots', it has not

yet resulted in sustained improvements. Leaders should ensure that absence and persistent absence are reduced.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Our Lady of Lincoln Catholic Primary School, to be good in February 2013.

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](#)' 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	139622
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10199908
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	208
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Stevenson
Headteacher	Ann Desforges
Website	http://www.ourladylincoln.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school was previously part of St Therese of Lisieux Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. The trust, along with the school, became part of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust with effect from 1 September 2022.
- The school is part of the Catholic Diocese of Nottingham. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place on 19 March 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative education providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and curriculum leaders.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in three subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons,

looked at pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. The inspector listened to pupils read.

- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair. He spoke with a trustee of the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. He took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The inspector met with safeguarding leaders. He reviewed school documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and governance.
- The inspector visited the dining hall, the playground during breaktimes and spoke informally to parents outside the school.
- The inspector met with the deputy chief executive officer of the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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