

Inspection of a good school: Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Ostley Bank, Newbarns, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA13 9LR

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

Holy Family Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are safe and secure here. Children in the early years cannot wait to find their favourite activities when they arrive each day. Older pupils play and chat happily together at break times. Pupils said that everyone is welcome in this school, no matter what their differences are.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils know that they must listen carefully and work hard. They try their best, even when new learning is difficult. Pupils know that they can ask for help if they need it. Children and pupils of all ages achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Teachers expect pupils to behave well. Pupils live up to these high standards. They are extremely polite and respectful, including to visitors. They move around school quietly and with consideration for others. Even the youngest children walk sensibly to the hall, for example, for their nativity performance. Leaders address any bullying swiftly, should it ever occur.

Pupils appreciate the wide range of activities that leaders provide for their personal development. They can sing in the school choir or take part in a variety of sports after school. Pupils enjoy being part of their church community. Older pupils especially look forward to their residential stays at outdoor education centres. All pupils can participate in these activities, including those with SEND.

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

Leaders have made improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection. Pupils learn from an exciting and ambitious curriculum that covers a broad range of subjects. All pupils learn this curriculum from the early years to Year 6.

In most subjects, the curriculum is well organised. Leaders have identified the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn by the time that they leave the school. This key

knowledge has been broken down into smaller steps that pupils learn in a logical order. This ensures that pupils build up their knowledge and deepen their understanding over time. In these subjects, pupils in each year group are well prepared for the next one. In a very small number of subjects, leaders' work to identify some of the smaller steps of learning is at an earlier stage. This makes it more difficult for teachers to make sure that pupils learn everything that they need to know in these subjects in readiness for the next class.

Leaders have made reading a priority. Right from the start, children in the early years learn about phonics. They build up their knowledge of letters and sounds quickly and learn to read more and more words. This continues into key stage 1. Pupils develop fluency in their reading through regular practice. Staff are experts at recognising when pupils are not keeping up. Staff provide prompt support to enable these pupils to catch up quickly. Older pupils develop their love of reading through a wide range of texts. They particularly enjoy the books that their teachers read to them each day. Pupils achieve well in reading, including those with SEND.

Teachers know how to make learning engaging for pupils. This helps pupils to enjoy their lessons and to stay focused. Pupils do not disturb each other with chatter or silly behaviour. Their positive, responsible attitudes contribute well to their learning.

Teachers check regularly in lessons to make sure that pupils' understanding is secure. They provide extra help if pupils find anything difficult. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to keep revisiting earlier learning, so that they do not forget it over time.

Leaders and staff quickly identify pupils who may have SEND. Staff work together to make any necessary adjustments, so that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum with their classmates. Leaders work effectively with a range of other professionals, such as psychologists or occupational therapists. This ensures that these pupils receive expert support if it is needed. Parents are fully involved in this process. Pupils with SEND achieve as well as other pupils.

Pupils have opportunities to carry out roles of responsibility. For example, some act as play leaders at lunchtimes. Older pupils lead worship for younger pupils. Pupils learn about difference and diversity within their own community and in the wider world. Through the curriculum, they learn about a range of faiths and cultures. Pupils learn to listen to others' views and to express their own respectfully. They develop a strong sense of right and wrong. For example, pupils expressed their disapproval of discriminatory behaviour, such as racism. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governors provide leaders with an appropriate level of challenge about their work to improve the school. Leaders take account of the well-being and workload of staff in the decisions that they make. Staff feel well supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide staff with a range of safeguarding training. This training is updated on a regular basis and follows the most recent guidance. Staff know how to recognise and report any concerns that they have about a pupil's welfare.

Leaders communicate effectively with professionals from a range of agencies, such as local authority children's services. They know what action to take in order to secure support for pupils and families who need it.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when they use the internet. Pupils know who to speak to if they encounter anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum does not contain enough information about some smaller components of knowledge that pupils need to learn, and about the order in which pupils should learn these components. This prevents teachers from making sure that pupils learn everything that they need to know in these subjects. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum in all subjects provides staff with enough information, so that they can teach pupils all of the important knowledge that they need.

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 school to be good in June 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	112366
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10256173
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Antony Rooney
Headteacher	Rachel Porter
Website	www.holyfamily.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Lancaster. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other leaders and with members of the governing body. The inspector also spoke on the telephone to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. The inspector also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe.
- The inspector considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments.
- The inspector spoke with some pupils about school life. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspector spoke with staff to discuss leaders' support for their workload and well-being. The inspector took account of the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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