

Inspection of St Oswald's Catholic Primary School, Gosforth

Hartford Road, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE3 5LE

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 December 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Oswald's are caring, resilient and eager to learn. Positive relationships, excellent behaviour and leaders' commitment to pupils' personal development have created an exceptional school community. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. Bullying is hardly ever seen. Pupils respect those who are different from themselves, and exemplify the school ethos of 'living, learning, loving together with Christ'.

Staff expect the very best from all pupils. Pupils celebrate each other's achievements. They work well together to overcome difficulties. Pupils listen respectfully to the views of their peers. Enthusiastic discussions in classrooms help pupils develop a deeper understanding of the subjects they study. Pupils take pride in their work. Staff identify and develop pupils' talents and interests. They ensure that every opportunity is provided for pupils to thrive.

Pupils are proud of their school. They enthusiastically undertake a range of leadership roles, such as being school councillors, art ambassadors and 'Sports Crew' members. There are many opportunities for pupils to learn outside of the classroom. These include educational visits, residential trips and a wide range of after-school clubs. Leaders make sure that all pupils have access to new experiences beyond the classroom that educate and inspire them.

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

Pupils' behaviour inside and outside of lessons is exemplary. Older pupils are role models for those just starting out at school. Pupils work and play alongside one another exceptionally well. Leaders have created a culture of high expectations. This includes pupils' attendance.

Leaders are strongly committed to pupils' wider development and well-being. Pupils' personal development at the school is outstanding. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is of a high quality. Pupils understand how to stay safe, be healthy and overcome challenges. Pupils respect other faiths alongside their own. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Children receive an extremely strong foundation to their education in the early years. They are engaged in their learning and are resilient. Leaders have developed a curriculum that meets the needs of the children well. It is ambitious. There are planned opportunities to improve children's physical development, reading and mathematical knowledge. Both the indoor and outdoor spaces are thoughtfully designed. They have a range of resources which support children's learning and development. For example, children are encouraged to use increasingly complex written and spoken language in each activity they do. Staff have a deep understanding of how children learn best. They know the importance of developing children's language and communication. Children experience high-quality interactions with one another and with adults.

The curriculum is broad and well balanced. Pupils study a carefully chosen range of topics in each subject. Leaders have considered what pupils need to learn and when. There are many opportunities for pupils to make links between their learning in school and the wider world. This helps to make each stage of pupils' education meaningful.

Teachers regularly check on what pupils know and remember. There are planned opportunities to revisit previous learning. Pupils remember much of what they have been taught. They are enthusiastic to share their ideas with others. This leads to high-quality discussion and debate. When pupils make mistakes, staff quickly address them. Pupils respond well to suggested improvements to their work. They are proud of what they achieve.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is too variable. Teachers know pupils well and make some adjustments to meet their needs. However, formal plans to support pupils with SEND do not always contain specific targets that best match their needs. This means some pupils with SEND do not receive the support they require in lessons. As a result, pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they might in all lessons.

Leaders prioritise pupils' ability to read and use high-quality vocabulary. The teaching of phonics begins at the start of Reception and continues until pupils are confident readers. Staff quickly identify when pupils have gaps in their phonic knowledge or are struggling to understand the text. Additional support for these pupils is highly effective. The majority of pupils are able to read at an age-appropriate standard. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to read and develop a passion for books. These include regular class reading sessions, book fairs, visiting speakers and student librarians, who help others choose books to take home.

Leaders at all levels are ambitious, and committed to a high-quality education for all pupils at the school. They understand the strengths and areas for development of the school well. Governors have the skills and knowledge to enable them to challenge and support leaders effectively. Governors understand their statutory duties and regularly visit the school to seek staff's and pupils' opinions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A strong culture of safeguarding has been created by leaders at the school. They ensure all staff receive regular training on safeguarding matters. Staff have a good understanding of potential risks to pupils' safety. They know the signs that may indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff report their concerns quickly so that leaders can act to safeguard pupils. Leaders pursue all safeguarding matters with determination to ensure no pupil is at risk.

Leaders work with parents, governors and external agencies to ensure that important messages about safeguarding are communicated to all stakeholders. The appropriate checks are made on all adults employed by or entering the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Plans to support pupils with SEND lack clarity. Targets for some pupils are not well matched to their needs. As a result, pupils with SEND do not access the curriculum as well as they might. Leaders should review and monitor plans for pupils with SEND to ensure targets are precise and match their needs.

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	148811
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10242439
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	209
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Harrison
Headteacher	Paul Marley
Website	www.stoswaldsnewcastle.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school has undergone significant change since the last inspection. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and several other leaders are new to post.
- The school became part of the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust in 2021.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and representatives of the trust. Inspectors spoke to teaching and non-teaching staff, in addition to representatives of the local governing body.
- To evaluate the quality of education, deep dives were carried out in early reading, mathematics, history and geography. Inspectors spoke with curriculum leaders,

visited lessons, looked at books and spoke to both pupils and staff. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read.

- Inspectors visited the early years provision and observed children in the setting, spoke to staff and checked that the early years welfare requirements were met.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including checks made on all adults who come onto the school site. Inspectors spoke with pupils and staff to ensure their understanding of safeguarding procedures. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to check on their work to keep pupils safe in school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff surveys, including free-text responses.

Inspection team

John Linkins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nichola Irving

Ofsted Inspector

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