

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Blaydon

Croftdale Road, Blaydon-on-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE21 4BG

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 March 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

St Joseph's Catholic Primary is a school where everyone is valued. It is a school that is warm and welcoming to all. Around school, pupils work and collaborate in a calm and purposeful way. Pupils are very proud to attend here. The new leadership team is taking action to improve the school's offer even further. They have high aspirations for all pupils.

Pupils are happy in school. They feel safe and well cared for. Pupils know they have trusted adults and supportive peers who they can trust with worries or concerns. Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils are clear that adults would help them quickly if it did occur. Pupils' behaviour is impressive. They are always well mannered and courteous, both in class and around school. The relationships between pupils and staff are strong.

Pupils' learning beyond the classroom is a high priority for leaders. They benefit from a rich range of experiences. Leadership opportunities for pupils, such as the school council, eco council and 'Mini Vinnies,' are developing pupils' strength of character.

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

Leaders and school staff have steadfast ambition for pupils. New priorities for the curriculum, such as faith, enrichment and learning for life, are shared by the whole staff team. The leaders' review of the curriculum is well under way. Expectations for what pupils need to know and remember are clear. Planning starts in early years so that children are ready for key stage 1. In subjects like science and physical education, pupils are building knowledge and understanding over time. Pupils are beginning to make links between their learning, with confidence. Where curriculum plans are still being developed, some pupils have confusion in key knowledge.

Reading is at the centre of the school curriculum. Pupils have access to a well-researched set of core texts. Leaders use these books to develop a love of reading. This work starts in early years, where adults share books as part of transition work. Older pupils are enthusiastic about the wide range of books they enjoy in class and at home. Pupils at the earliest stages of reading have well-structured phonics lessons. Recent staff training is having an impact. Staff teach pupils with enthusiasm. However, some misconceptions, in the sounds pupils use to read and how they write them, are not always picked up quickly by adults working with pupils at the earliest stages of reading.

The mathematics curriculum is a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons. They are eager to talk about the challenges they face and the chance to 'dive deeper' with their learning. The structure of mathematics teaching gives pupils the chance to revisit and embed learning regularly. Children in early years benefit

from the same high expectations in mathematics teaching. These pupils are making a positive start to their mathematics learning journey.

This is a truly inclusive school. Teachers adapt the curriculum so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can work alongside their peers. The leader for pupils with SEND makes timely use of support from specialist services. Adults working with pupils with SEND receive training and bespoke guidance to meet pupils' needs.

Pupils' behaviour in school is exceptional. Pupils are caring, kind and respectful of each other and the adults they work with. Poor behaviour does not disrupt learning. During breaktimes, pupils play together well. Where issues may arise, adults take action to support pupils. If pupils need reminders to behave positively, they do so quickly. Leaders are proactive in supporting pupils who may need further help. This includes supporting pupils with their mental well-being. Leaders and all school staff lead by example. Relationships across the school community are strong.

The new leadership team has rapidly extended the wider opportunities that pupils have. Pupils enjoy a range of clubs after school and during the school day. The morning running club is held weekly and is a popular example of this. Pupils enjoy the residential visits they go on. They talk with excitement about forthcoming visits. Other educational visits are closely linked to the curriculum, such as fieldwork visits in geography. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is supporting pupils to make healthy choices and understand how to keep themselves safe. Pupils have an emerging understanding of British values.

Staff, governors and representatives from the trust are proud of the school. Governors and the trust, along with leaders, are supportive of staff. Well-being is a high priority. Leaders take account of workload, and staff appreciate this. Staff morale is high. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the education on offer.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are clear policies and procedures in place to safeguard pupils. Record-keeping is more effective due to changes made by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). Staff understand some of the local safeguarding challenges pupils and families may face. All staff and those responsible for governance receive regular safeguarding updates. The DSL addresses local issues with staff and pupils to keep pupils safe. Checks made on adults who work with pupils are thorough.

Pupils feel very safe in school. They have trusted adults they can talk to. Pupils have a sound understanding of how to stay safe online and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils are applying and recording their sounds incorrectly during phonics teaching and during reading with adults. Misconceptions are not being addressed quickly enough to ensure phonic knowledge and understanding are embedded effectively and accurately. Leaders must ensure that strategies to address errors are clear and applied consistently.
- The implementation of the curriculum in some subjects, such as geography, is not consistent. Some pupils are not clear on the subject knowledge they have learned. Some pupils have misconceptions about some subjects. Leaders need to ensure that teachers use planning and training to ensure that pupils connect their learning more effectively and that they address misconceptions in pupils' subject knowledge.

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	148910
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10255589
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 governing body	Lisa Kendal
Headteacher	Paul Naughton
Website	www.stjosephscatholicprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic faith primary school. Its most recent section 48 inspection was in September 2019. The school is part of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.
- Since the inspection of the predecessor school, the school has converted to become an academy school and joined the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust in February 2022. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- A new headteacher took up post in September 2022.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.
- The school does not currently use any alternative education providers.

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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, geography and physical education. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers. They spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors listened to pupils at the early stages of reading with a familiar adult.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to staff, pupils, parents, trustees and governors. Safeguarding documentation was scrutinised, including the safeguarding policies and the single central record. Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed relationships between pupils and adults. Inspectors also met with the designated safeguarding lead and safeguarding team.
- Inspectors gathered views of parents informally in person and formally through responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text responses. The views of staff were considered through the staff survey and through meetings with them. Pupils' views were considered through meetings.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from the local governing body, the board of trustees, the diocese and representatives from the trust.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classes, during breaks and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Emily Stevens, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mark Nugent

Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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