

# Inspection of a good school: St Cuthberts Catholic Primary School, Carlisle

Victoria Road, Botcherby, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 2UE

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Inspection date: 30 March 2023

## **Outcome**

St Cuthberts Catholic Primary School, Carlisle continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils feel happy and safe in this nurturing school. They appreciate the care, guidance and support that staff give to them. Pupils said that they enjoy coming to school. They value the many extra opportunities that staff provide which widen their horizons. For example, pupils experience a broad range of clubs, trips and visitors to school which enrich the curriculum.

Pupils enjoy taking on leadership responsibilities, for example as members of the school council. The school council has been instrumental in the design of the new school motto. Pupils also pride themselves in taking part in eco-events. Older pupils act as role models and mentors to younger pupils. Overall, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff have high aspirations for pupils' conduct. Pupils behave very well. They are polite and kind to each other. Pupils treat each other with respect and appreciate the diversity of their school community. Leaders deal with any bullying effectively. Typically, pupils said that their school is a kind place where people look after each other.

Pupils focus during lessons and engage well in learning activities. Pupils enjoy putting into practice what they have learned. Overall, pupils achieve well. They respond well to their teachers' high expectations of their learning and achievement. Pupils, including children in the early years, are well prepared for the next steps in their learning.

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

Leaders have taken decisive action to implement an effective curriculum which is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have successfully constructed the curriculum to ensure that pupils have a secure foundation on which to build future learning. Leaders have also built in opportunities for pupils to explore the local area, and local history, as part of their learning journey. These opportunities help pupils to understand the relevance of their

learning and to bring it to life. Overall, the curriculum is well thought out. This includes the curriculum in the early years.

Leaders have ensured that teachers have strong subject knowledge to deliver the curriculum well. Overall, teachers explain new information clearly to pupils. Typically, teachers also select activities that enable pupils to develop their knowledge of different subjects in a logical and coherent way. However, in one or two subjects, teachers do not ensure that pupils develop the depth of subject knowledge that they are capable of learning. This is because, on occasion, some teachers do not design learning activities that systematically deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of more complex topics and concepts.

Leaders have appropriate systems in place to assess pupils' learning. Teachers use questions well to establish any misunderstandings and to address pupils' misconceptions. Most teachers use a range of appropriate techniques in lessons to monitor how well pupils know and remember what they have learned.

There are effective systems in place to identify and assess pupils who may have SEND. Teachers have been suitably trained to make sure that they can adapt the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND. Leaders work with appropriate professionals to provide timely support to pupils with SEND who require additional help. Overall, these pupils learn and achieve well.

Leaders have recently implemented a new reading scheme. All staff have been well trained to deliver the reading curriculum consistently well. Pupils are successfully developing their reading knowledge. Leaders have put in place a range of strategies to ensure that pupils catch up and keep up with their reading. This is particularly true for the large number of pupils who join the school who speak English as an additional language. There is effective support in place to help these pupils to read quickly and confidently. This means that most pupils are fluent and confident readers by the end of key stage 2.

Children begin to learn sounds and letters in the Nursery Year. Children in the Reception Year embark on a phonics programme that is delivered consistently well by staff. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they are learning. Staff foster a love of reading in pupils, from the early years through to Year 6. For example, older pupils enjoy reading a wide range of authors and genres of books.

Leaders have created a culture of positive behaviour in school. Learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour. Children in the early years follow the clearly established routines. They learn to share and take turns.

Leaders have designed a comprehensive personal development programme. This is a strength of leaders' work. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND, or those who are disadvantaged, participate fully in all aspects of wider personal development. They ensure that opportunities are accessible to all pupils.

Governors are committed to continually developing and improving the quality of education that pupils receive. They understand the key priorities required to move the school forward. They work closely with leaders and trustees to enact change.

Staff appreciate the way that leaders listen to their views. Leaders take staff's workload and well-being into account when making decisions in school. There is a strong focus on ensuring that all tasks that staff are requested to complete are for the benefit of pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an effective culture of safeguarding in this school. Leaders have ensured that staff have a secure understanding of how to report any potential concerns that they have about pupils. These concerns are recorded effectively, and leaders follow up on any concerns quickly and effectively.

Leaders focus on building effective relationships with families. They use this detailed knowledge to support pupils effectively and to connect them with appropriate external agencies, when required.

Pupils talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe online and in other potentially dangerous situations in which they may find themselves, for example near open water.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In one or two subjects, teachers do not design learning activities that enable pupils to develop a sufficiently deep and rich body of subject-specific knowledge. This prevents some pupils from achieving all that they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers know how to design learning activities that systematically deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of more complex topics and concepts.

## **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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Cuthbert's Catholic Community School, to be good in November 2017.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	148700
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	10275149
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	133
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	John Murray
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Hutchinson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.st-cuthberts-carlisle.co.uk">https://www.st-cuthberts-carlisle.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Cuthberts Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy school in September 2021. When its predecessor school, St Cuthbert's Catholic Community School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the Mater Christi Multi-Academy Trust.
- The headteacher has been appointed to the role since the last inspection.
- This is a Roman Catholic school in the Diocese of Lancaster. The last section 48 inspection was in June 2019.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- As part of this inspection, the inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the

curriculum with subject leaders, visited some lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspectors met with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the headteacher, other senior leaders, the special educational needs team, subject leaders and teachers. The inspectors also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the Diocese of Lancaster.
- The inspectors met with governors, including the chair of the local governing body. They also spoke on the telephone to the chair of the board of trustees.
- The inspectors checked safeguarding procedures, including the recruitment checks made on staff. The inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, as well as staff and pupils, to discuss the wider aspects of safeguarding. They scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding.
- The inspectors considered a range of documentation, including that relating to the curriculum, pupils' behaviour, improvement plans and leaders' self-evaluation.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at breaktimes, at lunchtimes and in lessons. The inspectors also spoke with pupils about behaviour and bullying.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils about their programme of wider personal development.
- The inspectors considered the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments submitted via the free-text facility.
- The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Elaine Mawson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Cleo Cunningham

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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