

Inspection of Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy

The Drove, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 7AT

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve well, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupil outcomes in 2022 were below the national average. This is partially due to the high rates of pupil mobility in some year groups. However, the current position is much more positive. Leaders swiftly provided stability following a short period of upheaval.

Pupils behave well and enjoy coming to school. Pupils get on well with each other, and there is a calm atmosphere. They are respectful of difference and proud of their school. Pupils are caring and look after each other. Trained 'mini first-aiders' help pupils with their mental health. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but staff deal with it well should it occur. Because pupils enjoy school and behave well, they attend regularly.

Pupils learn to be responsible citizens. The school council takes its work seriously. Its members know that their role is, as one pupil stated, 'to be the pupil voice of the school'. 'Mini Vinnies' collect litter and contribute to the wider community. For example, 'Shining Stars' placed decorated stones around the town with messages of support for the local community. Pupils are also aware of their responsibilities beyond their local community. They recently raised money to buy farming tools for people in developing countries.

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

Children learn to read as soon as they start in Reception Year. Leaders ensure that books match the needs of pupils. Staff swiftly identify when pupils fall behind. Pupils receive the support they need to catch up. There is a consistent approach to delivering the phonics programme. As a consequence, pupils remain focused and engaged in their learning. The school shares information with parents and carers so that they can support their child to read at home. Beyond the phonics programme, leaders ensure that pupils develop a love of reading. Teachers create 'hooks' for pupils to become excited about books. For example, they take pupils on 'Gruffalo hunts' or treasure trails based on the books adults read in class. Pupils talk positively about books. As one typically stated, 'Reading books helps my mind relax and takes me to another universe.'

Leaders have established an ambitious and well-structured curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to revisit recent learning. They make connections with what they have learned already. However, in a few subjects, some staff are not checking what pupils remember of what they have learned in the past. As a consequence, there are gaps in what some pupils know and remember.

Teachers' subject knowledge is good. This is because leaders identify the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Teachers ensure that pupils understand the importance of what they are learning. They make tangible

connections with big concepts. For instance, in geography, pupils learn about the complexities of global warming balanced against protecting jobs in the local community. However, in a few subjects, subject leaders have not checked on the implementation of their curriculum. This means that there are some inconsistencies in what teachers are delivering.

The early years foundation stage is a vibrant place. Children engage in their learning. They interact well with each other. This is because the curriculum is well planned, and learning activities are organised well. Learning 'nooks' ensure that children focus for long periods of time. Adults understand their role and facilitate children's learning effectively. Leaders place a strong emphasis on developing children's communication knowledge and skills. Leaders make sure that all staff know the children well. This means that staff adapt learning to ensure that children achieve.

Leaders swiftly identify the needs of pupils with SEND. There are clear targets for these pupils. As a consequence, staff typically meet these pupils' needs. Leaders regularly check on the progress of pupils with SEND. Staff work in partnership with parents to support their child's needs.

Pupils behave well in and around school. Recent changes to the behaviour policy have improved behaviour further still. The introduction of 'ticks' motivates pupils. Pupils state that this approach has reduced incidents of low-level disruption. Pupils understand the school's 'OLGC rule', which stands for, 'one voice speaks, listen carefully, give 100%, caring hands, feet and lips'.

Pupils enjoy taking responsibility in school. The 'Shining Stars' support Catholic life in school by leading liturgical prayers. This time is well used to explore topics such as bullying, equality and diversity, and how pupils can keep themselves safe. Leaders ensure that there is a wide range of activities on offer, both sporting and academic. Leaders make sure that visits add depth to the curriculum. For example, a magistrates' court workshop enabled pupils to learn about the rule of law.

Leaders know their school well. They adapt swiftly to any needed change. Support from the multi-academy trust has been effective.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The culture for safeguarding in this school is strong. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that pupils are safe. Staff understand their responsibilities for safeguarding. They report any potential safeguarding concerns systematically. Leaders review these records regularly. Leaders ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need. Where agencies are slow to respond, leaders provide appropriate challenge. Relevant checks are made so that only appropriate adults work in the school. Governors and the trust make regular checks on safeguarding systems.

Pupils say that they feel safe. They learn how to keep themselves safe when online and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, some staff are not checking what pupils remember of what they have learned in the past. As a consequence, there are gaps in what some pupils know and remember. Leaders should ensure that there are systems in place so that teachers check precisely what pupils remember and use this information to plan lessons to resolve those gaps.
- In a few subjects, subject leaders have not checked on the implementation of their curriculum. This means that there are some inconsistencies in what teachers are delivering. Senior leaders should ensure that they put in place a system of checks so they can identify how they can improve the curriculum even further.

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	139621
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10240980
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	166
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Stevenson
Headteacher	Nicola Malthouse
Website	www.our-lady.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 and 11 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.
- The school's most recent inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 for schools of a religious character was in January 2017.

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 held meetings with the headteacher and the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, geography, and art and design. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked

at pupils' work, listened to pupils read, and met with teachers and pupils. They also looked at curriculum documentation for history, science, physical education and religious education.

- The lead inspector met with one member and the chair of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust and the deputy chief executive officer.
- The lead inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupils surveys. An inspector spoke informally to parents outside the school.
- Records of attendance, behaviour and safeguarding were scrutinised. This included the school's single central record. Inspectors also conducted meetings with leaders to discuss the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors considered pupils' behaviour at various times of day, including in lessons, around the school site and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Mark Anderson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

George Huthart

Ofsted Inspector

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