

Inspection of Our Lady and St Brendan's Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy

The Bank, Idle, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD10 0QA

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

The acting headteacher of this school is Sarah Delany. This school is part of Blessed Christopher Wharton Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Andrew Morley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joe McDonnell.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has embraced the Diocese of Leeds's, 'Virtues to Live By' programme. Pupils explore themes such as respect, courtesy and thankfulness. Adults live out these virtues in their relationships with pupils and each other. Pupils follow their example and treat each other with kindness and respect. The vast majority of pupils behave well most of the time. When they struggle to manage their emotions, adults help them to get back on track. Leaders have created an inclusive culture that helps pupils to feel happy and safe.

The recently established leadership team has begun to build an ambitious curriculum for pupils. Many subjects are in the early stages of development. Too often, the knowledge that pupils learn does not help them to build on the facts that they already know. Pupils do not learn well enough across some areas of the curriculum.

The school makes sure that pupils have opportunities to explore their interests and talents. Many pupils take part in the wide variety of clubs on offer. Some pupils work as 'Stewards of the Earth' as part of the school's focus on global citizenship. These opportunities are helping to prepare pupils well for their future lives.

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

Over time, the curriculum has not been well sequenced. Pupils have not developed sufficient depth of understanding. Pupils have many gaps in their knowledge. Too often, these gaps are not addressed. This makes it more difficult for pupils to learn new content. Sometimes, the tasks that pupils are given do not help them to deepen their knowledge sufficiently. Currently, pupils are not learning well enough in some subjects across the curriculum.

In some subjects, the school is beginning to develop the curriculum to make sure that pupils build on what they already know. In areas such as mathematics, this process is gaining traction. Pupils are learning more of the important knowledge and skills that they need. Teachers help pupils to build their mathematical knowledge step by step. In early years, children quickly develop their understanding of number. For example, they confidently explore many different ways of representing numbers to 10. Across the school, pupils are becoming confident mathematicians.

Reading is a priority in this school. Staff have accessed the training that they need to help pupils to learn to read. From Reception onwards, children quickly develop their phonic knowledge to become confident readers. The books that children read are matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils throughout school are given lots of practise to read. When pupils struggle with reading, skilled staff give them the right support to catch up. The school has invested in new books for pupils to read. This is beginning to motivate pupils to read more widely and often. Most pupils enjoy reading.

In early years, staff help children to cooperate well and build positive relationships with each other. They encourage children to use new vocabulary, help them to extend their talk and explain their thinking. Children become independent quickly and show resilience when trying new things. Children are enthralled by the interesting activities that they are given to do. For example, children showed impressive concentration when matching the form and colour of repeated patterns.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support that they need. Leaders make sure that the support that pupils receive helps to remove the barriers that pupils might face to their learning. They do this by making sure that staff have the expertise to help pupils with SEND.

The school has established a well-structured offer to support pupils' personal development. Pupils have an impressive understanding of democracy and the importance of tolerance and respect. They talk with maturity about issues, such as staying safe in and out of school. Pupils develop their interests through the many school clubs on offer. These include choir, chess and coding clubs. Some pupils also take part in a weekly ballet club. If pupils cannot attend, leaders find out why. They remove barriers so that all pupils have the chance to take part. This work reflects the inclusive culture that leaders have established.

Those responsible for governance challenge and support leaders to improve the school. The recently established leadership team is relentlessly focused on improving the quality of education for pupils. Staff are well supported, listened to and valued. They appreciate the positive improvements leaders have made. Staff are proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not made sure that the knowledge that pupils learn builds on the facts that they already know. This means that pupils are not able to connect new knowledge to develop a secure understanding of the subjects that they study. The school should ensure that the knowledge they want pupils to learn builds on the facts that they already know.
- On occasions, the tasks that pupils are given to complete are not focused precisely enough on the knowledge and skills that they need to acquire. This means that pupils are not getting the right tasks to help them to secure the important things that they need to know. The school should make sure that teachers receive the support that they need to choose tasks that help pupils to secure the intended learning.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148256
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10290378
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	193
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joe McDonnell
Acting Headteacher	Sarah Delany
Website	www.ourladyandstbrendans.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Our Lady and St Brendan's Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy, converted to become an academy in November 2020. When its predecessor school, Our Lady and St Brendan's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement.
- The school is a smaller than average primary school.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- 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 have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers.
- An inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator, and the lead inspector met with the early years leader.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the local academy council and the chair of the trust board. The lead inspector held a separate meeting with the trust chief executive officer and the director of Catholic education for the trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of other documentation, including records of pupils' behaviour and leaders' evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life.
- To gather parents' views, inspectors took account of the views of parents from Ofsted Parent View survey, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including free-text comments. The lead inspector also talked to parents at the start of the school day.
- To gather the views of staff, inspectors took account of the staff survey.

Jen Sloan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rowena Sykes

Ofsted Inspector

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