

Inspection of a good school: St Benedict's Catholic Primary School - a Catholic voluntary academy

Back Lane, Ampleforth, York, North Yorkshire YO62 4DE

Inspection date:

10 October 2023

Outcome

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School - a Catholic voluntary academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Gerard Eddy. This school is part of Nicholas Postgate 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 (CEO), Hugh Hegarty, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joseph Hughes.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a small, welcoming school at the heart of its community. The school builds trusting relationships with parents and carers. It celebrates pupils for who they are and what they achieve. Pupils develop the confidence and resilience they need to take their next steps in education.

The school has high aspirations for all pupils. It expects them to achieve well. Pupils enjoy their learning. Indeed, many pupils respond with vigour and enthusiasm to teachers' questions. Pupils are proud of the work they produce.

Pupils behave very well. They are attentive to the school's rules and routines. This is a calm and orderly school. It is also a friendly and happy school. Pupils form strong friendships. They cooperate with each other and show kindness and respect to all. As pupils move through the school, they take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour.

The school provides pupils with a range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Pupils take part in school plays. There are several clubs including sports, gardening and capoeira, a Brazilian dance form. Older pupils are reading buddies to younger pupils. Pupils take on roles as eco-warriors and school councillors and raise funds for charitable causes.

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

The school has established a broad and ambitious curriculum. It has identified the essential knowledge it wants pupils to know and remember. The school has also planned for pupils to develop subject-specific skills. It wants pupils to think and work like subject specialists. However, curriculum sequencing in some subjects requires further adaptation. It does not lead to pupils consistently gaining a coherent body of knowledge and understanding.

In the early years, children develop language and communication skills. Children also gain the mathematical knowledge and understanding they need to prepare them for Year 1 and beyond. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They present new information clearly to pupils and check pupils' understanding before moving on to the next stage of learning.

From the start of Reception, pupils learn to read using phonics. Teachers and other adults teach phonics well. They ensure that pupils gain frequent practice in rehearsing and blending sounds. This helps pupils to become accurate and fluent readers. Those pupils who need extra help with their reading get it. This helps them to keep up with their peers. As pupils progress through the school, they develop their reading comprehension skills. They also learn to read with expression. The school prioritises reading. Pupils read a wide range of texts, including poetry. They read often at school, both as part of their studies and for pleasure. The school develops pupils' love for reading through a range of activities. Pupils make book recommendations and enjoy events such as World Book Day.

The school identifies pupils' needs well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same curriculum as their peers. The school provides staff with the training they need to support pupils with SEND. By Year 6, pupils, including pupils with SEND, are well prepared for their studies at secondary school.

From the early years, the school establishes a clear set of routines for behaviour. Children learn to follow instructions. They are attentive and enjoy learning through exploration and play. As they move into key stages 1 and 2, pupils continue to show positive attitudes to their learning. They learn without disruption.

The school promotes pupils' wider development. Pupils learn about relationships and equality and diversity in an age-appropriate way. They also learn about the importance of physical and mental health. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the local community. The school organises trips and visits that enrich pupils' learning. Pupils visit places of cultural interest, such as York Mosque and Eden Camp Modern History Museum. They also enjoy the school's forest school and learn about their locality's heritage and history.

The school is providing pupils with a good education. The trust is providing additional leadership capacity. This is giving the school significant support in key areas of provision, such as curriculum development. Trustees ensure appropriate strategic direction for the school. They perform their statutory duties effectively. They delegate appropriate responsibilities to the local governing body. The local governing body supports and challenges school leaders. All leaders are working together for the benefit of the pupils at

the school. Staff enjoy working at the school. The school prioritises staff well-being and ensures that staff workload is manageable.

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 sequencing of the curriculum does not build as effectively as it could on what pupils already know and can do. This means that pupils are not developing a sufficiently coherent body of knowledge and subject-specific skills. The school should ensure that curriculum sequencing is adapted to ensure that pupils build a progressively deeper and more complex body of substantive and disciplinary knowledge across all subjects.

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 Benedict's Roman Catholic Primary School, to be good in June 2019.

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	147274
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10297472
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	78
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joseph Hughes
CEO of the trust	Hugh Hegarty
Headteacher	Gerard Eddy
Website	www.st-benedicts.n-yorks.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school is a Catholic voluntary academy in the Diocese of Middlesborough. The school received its last section 48 inspection in May 2018.
- St Benedict's Catholic Primary School - a Catholic voluntary academy converted to become an academy school in August 2019. When its predecessor school, St Benedict's Roman Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the CEO of the trust, other trust leaders, the chair of the board of trustees and members of the local governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey, staff survey and the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Ian Rawstorne, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Story

Ofsted Inspector

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