

Inspection of Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Primary School - a Catholic Voluntary Academy

Hamilton Drive, York, North Yorkshire YO24 4JW

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Emma Barrs. 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 school is at the heart of the local community. It is a place where pupils thrive. Parents talk about their children flourishing in this nurturing environment. Pupils and parents are proud to be part of this school family.

There is a sense of calm which resonates throughout the school. Pupils work in class with sustained focus. When working together, there is a 'low buzz' of discussion. Pupils debate and discuss with each other and adults. They are respectful and interested in opinions different to their own. When moving around school, pupils show high levels of self-control throughout the day. Outdoor sports' leaders promote collaborative play. When gentle reminders for behaviour are needed, pupils respond positively. Pupils are considerate and rise to meet the high expectations set by the school.

The school has created a curriculum that is ambitious. It is designed to support the school mission, 'Living, Loving, Learning – Christ at the centre'. It goes beyond academic knowledge and incorporates pupils' excellent personal development. Pupils demonstrate the school's key characteristics and qualities, such as integrity, in lessons and at breaktimes. These are the positive qualities pupils need to demonstrate to achieve the characteristics. Pupils live this out in their daily school life.

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

The well-sequenced curriculum begins in early years. The school has created an engaging environment. There is a balance between direct teacher input and well-planned play. Adults model appropriate responses for children in discussions. Adults support children with how to negotiate. Children grow in independence, which is taught and encouraged.

In mathematics, there is a clear structure and consistent teaching approach. In early years, children learn about doubling using resources such as ten frames. Throughout school, there is a strong focus on vocabulary, problem-solving and reasoning. Pupils confidently show and explain their thinking. This ambition includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve well.

In some foundation subjects, such as physical education (PE), pupils connect key knowledge appropriately. For example, they talk about learning the skill of 'pivot' and how this knowledge helps in netball. Pupils work as peer mentors in PE, sensitively giving and receiving feedback. Areas that need extra practice are identified. Sports leaders provide this practice at breaktimes. Some foundation subjects, such as history and art, are taught through an ambitious cross-curricular approach. In some of these subjects, teaching choices about how to deliver the key knowledge identified in the curriculum are not precise enough. This causes confusion for pupils. They struggle to recall and connect key subject knowledge.

Carefully chosen books are an essential part of the school's curriculum. Teachers explain how pupils enjoy being left on a 'cliffhanger' when sharing stories for pleasure. Pupils talk about the books they choose and read from their class reading corners. They love taking books outside to read at lunchtimes. Pupils look forward to personal reading times, which happen throughout the day. They occasionally visit the school library. Pupils are keen to start regular class visits to this enticing area of the school.

Learning to read is a priority. Teachers follow a phonics teaching sequence. Pupils learn to read words before moving on to develop fluency and comprehension. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they know. Pupils read books with accuracy and growing fluency. Learning to read starts at the beginning of Reception. Children who struggle are identified quickly. Staff provide extra practice to help these children to catch up.

In English, there is a new curriculum for teaching handwriting. This curriculum is at an early stage of development. This means that some pupils have gaps in this foundational knowledge that have persisted over time.

All pupils have access to a wide range of rich experiences. These include educational visits that the school maps out across the year groups. Pupils take on positions of responsibility willingly. These include being class monitors, school councillors and worship buddies during Mass. Year 5 pupils are part of the 'Mini Vinnies' society. They work within the local community, for example reaching out to the housebound. These opportunities build pupils' character.

Pupils have a deep understanding of fundamental British values. In early years, children learn that 'everyone has an opinion'. Older pupils articulate what it means to be part of a democracy very well. They explain thoroughly how the democratic process influences their lives. Pupils are inquisitive and keen to understand life issues such as taxes and careers. They are active citizens and are extremely well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Senior leaders, the diocese and those responsible for governance know the school well. They provide appropriate support and challenge. They act to improve the educational and wider experiences for all pupils. Teachers at the early stages of their career are well supported.

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 foundation subjects, teachers' pedagogical choices are confusing pupils. This means that the key subject knowledge leaders intend pupils to learn is not

remembered and connected. The school should support teachers to improve their pedagogical decisions to enhance the teaching of their subject, so that pupils remember and connect key subject knowledge.

- The curriculum for handwriting is at an early stage of implementation. This means that pupils have not secured accurate letter formation and fluency as soon as they should have. Inaccuracies have become embedded for older pupils. The school should check that staff are implementing the new curriculum effectively to make sure that pupils who are struggling with handwriting catch up as quickly as possible.

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	147436
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10297484
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	427
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joseph Hughes
Headteacher	Emma Barrs
Website	www.olqm.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Primary School – a Catholic Voluntary Academy converted to become an academy in September 2019. When its predecessor school, Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- This is a larger-than-average size school.
- The school is part of Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust.
- The school is a member of the Catholic Diocese of Middlesbrough and has a Christian character.
- Its last section 48 inspection took place in June 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the inclusion leader and the trust's leaders responsible for safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics history, science and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, listened to pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the development of the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the school gate. The lead inspector took account of the views of staff, parents and pupils through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.
- The lead inspector held separate meetings with the representatives of the school's local governing body, representatives of the board of trustees, the CEO, the deputy director for standards, the chair of trustees and representative from the diocese.

Inspection team

Lesley Sullivan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Helen Hussey	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Story	Ofsted Inspector

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