

Inspection of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Junior School

Dollis Hill Lane, London NW2 6HS

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Steve McGrath. This school is part of All Saints' Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Andy Prindiville, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alloysius Frederick.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Our Lady of Grace Catholic Junior School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Our Lady of Grace Catholic Junior School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a caring and friendly school. Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils, and teachers work collaboratively to support pupils to succeed. Through the close links with the infant school, leaders know pupils and their families well. Pupils are happy and kept safe. They thrive in this nurturing environment.

The school develops pupils' knowledge and confidence through a rich curriculum and thought-provoking experiences. Pupils excel in their learning. They work hard, achieve consistently well and are articulate learners. They are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They listen attentively, are highly motivated and show respect and kindness to adults and each other. They adopt a mindset where they see challenges or setbacks as opportunities for improvement.

The school goes beyond the expected to provide pupils with a diverse set of experiences to develop their talents and interests. For example, pupil sports leaders take on the role of instructors during playtime, teaching their peers and younger children a variety of games and activities. Pupils regularly participate in after-school clubs, such as art and drama. Woven through the curriculum are purposefully planned educational trips, visits and workshops. For instance, the school invites in external speakers to address topics related to inclusion and disabilities.

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

The school's curriculum thinking is highly developed and ambitious for all, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is because leaders have pinpointed the specific knowledge that pupils need to acquire, and identified how this will build over time in each subject. For example, in mathematics, Year 3 pupils learn to use angles for position and direction so that, by Year 6, they can confidently compare complex geometric concepts. In art, pupils revisit and deepen their understanding of drawing in a logical sequence, developing a secure grasp of concepts, including shading, perspective and composition. Across the curriculum, the school's work to make sure that pupils achieve highly is consistently effective.

The school's focus on early reading is at the heart of curriculum planning. Pupils read a range of high-quality texts with enthusiasm. Teachers model reading aloud with confidence and clarity. They choose non-fiction books that draw on pupils' prior knowledge from other curriculum areas. For example, pupils read books about the human body which link to what they have learned in science. Leaders have ensured that a well-structured phonics programme builds effectively from the infant school's programme. This provides a smooth transition between Years 2 and 3 and enables pupils who are struggling to read to catch up quickly.

The school identifies pupils with SEND with precision. It uses a range of well-chosen strategies to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well. Leaders swiftly identify any additional needs that pupils may have and ensure that bespoke support is put in place, including in lessons.

Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning. They are highly focused and engaged during lessons. Teachers prioritise the most important subject knowledge that pupils need to learn. They check pupils' understanding carefully, addressing any gaps in knowledge.

Leaders ensure that attendance is high. They have effective systems in place to support pupils to attend school regularly and on time. The school works closely with other agencies to ensure that pupils' welfare is carefully monitored. This ensures that the school takes timely and appropriate action if there are patterns of concern.

The school has developed a thoughtful and well-planned personal development programme that is rooted in the values of the school. Pupils are supported to contribute positively to both the local and wider community. For example, the choir visits a care home and pupils raise money for charities. Through weekly assemblies, teachers regularly reward pupils for their achievements and kindness. Pupils learn about important topics, such as online safety, healthy relationships and equality.

Staff are overwhelmingly happy and proud to work here. The priority given to high-quality professional development for all staff plays a key role in the school's success. Leaders listen to staff and work with them to ensure that workload is manageable.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school and the education that their children receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	146116
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10296674
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alloysius Frederick
CEO of trust	Andy Prindiville
Headteacher	Steve McGrath
Website	www.ourladyofgracejuniors.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school became an academy in September 2019.
- Our Lady of Grace Catholic Junior School is part of a multi-academy trust, the All Saints' Trust. The trust delegates all responsibilities and decisions to the school's governing body.
- The school federated with the Our Lady of Grace Catholic Infant School in September 2023.
- This is a Catholic school. The last section 48 inspection took place in March 2018.
- The school runs its own after-school club. This is held in Our Lady of Grace Catholic Infant School.
- The school uses one registered 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 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 all senior leaders, a number of teaching and support staff, governors and a school improvement partner.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. 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. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for school improvement.
- 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 took account of the views of pupils, parents and staff, as gathered through discussions and Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Karen Kent, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alan McDougall

Ofsted Inspector

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