

Inspection of St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Newcastle

Howlett Hall Road, Denton Burn, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE15 7HS

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Leigh-anne Young. This school is part of the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by chief executive officer, Anita Bath, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Harrison.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school strives to make all pupils and families feel welcome as valued members of the school community. Staff look after pupils well. They respond to pupils' needs effectively. Pupils trust staff to help them with their problems. This contributes to pupils feeling safe and happy.

A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Many pupils and their families face wider challenges in everyday life. The school is ambitious in their expectations of what pupils should achieve. The school supports pupils well, so that most pupils meet the high expectations set by the school. Pupils typically achieve well in most subjects. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

In Reception, children quickly learn to play and learn together. As pupils move through school, staff build on this strong early start. They remind pupils of the behaviour expectations, so that pupils behave well in lessons. Pupils are effectively supported to resolve friendship issues at play times. The high levels of respect between pupils and staff are clear to see.

Pupils enjoy the many leadership opportunities that the school offers. These include older pupils acting as buddies to help younger pupils. The school ensures that pupils develop positive character traits through charity work such as raising funds to support a church project in Kenya.

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

Recently, the school has improved many aspects of provision, including the curriculum for some foundation subjects. The school's revised subject curriculums set out the important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils must learn from Reception to Year 6. The school's approach to developing language through reading, enables pupils who speak English as an additional language to access the ambitious curriculum. For instance, teachers ensure that pupils remember and understand new words that they read in reading lessons. In these lessons, teachers check pupils' understanding of vocabulary often.

Some foundation subject curriculums are newer than others. The impact of the new curriculum for art and design can already be seen. For example, children in Year 5 apply a range of techniques to draw high-quality sketches of fruit. However, in a small number of foundation subjects, there are gaps in what pupils know and remember as they move into the school's revised and more challenging curriculum. Assessment of pupils' long-term knowledge is not developed well enough to help teachers to address this through careful identification of any misconceptions or gaps in pupils' long-term knowledge.

In mathematics, teaching helps pupils to revisit and practise prior learning. Pupils develop fluency in their knowledge of number through frequent practise of multiplication tables, for example. Despite this, the current lesson structure does not support pupils to apply what they know and remember in maths to support them with problem solving and reasoning. Leaders have rightly identified this as an area for development.

Pupils learn to read confidently and fluently as they progress through the school. This includes pupils with SEND. Phonics begins as soon as children start in Reception. The school's programme for teaching phonics is taught consistently well. Pupils' knowledge of phonics is carefully assessed to identify any gaps as they learn to read. Pupils regularly practise reading from books that are matched to the sounds that they know. This includes pupils who speak English as an additional language who are new to phonics. Pupils develop a love of reading through exciting daily story sessions and 'virtual visits' from authors such as Simon Bartram.

The school accurately identifies the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders understand that pupils' support plans need to contain precise information about the support and resources pupils require. Many pupils' support plans have recently been revised to reflect these improvements. The revised plans contain detailed information about the best way to support pupils. However, some resources and adaptations to provision are not fully implemented.

Pupils are proud of their high attendance. The school ensures that parents and children understand the importance of coming to school every day. Leaders do all they can to support parents and carers to ensure pupils attend school. Most pupils behave appropriately in lessons and at break times. Rare instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with swiftly. Staff expertly support pupils with how to manage any strong emotions.

The school's work to enhance pupils' personal development is strong. Pupils enjoy learning about different faiths and cultures. The school provides opportunities for pupils to care for their local community through 'Mini Vinnies': a group of pupils who meet regularly to plan activities they can undertake as part of their role in helping others. Pupils learn how to stay safe both online and in the local community. Pupils benefit from a range of clubs and experiences such as badminton, gardening and breakfast clubs where pupils participate in activities to boost their physical fitness.

Dedicated governors know the school well. They fulfil their statutory duties. Leaders ensure that new governors receive helpful training. Staff feel incredibly well supported. Leaders on all levels provide teachers with effective training and guidance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In mathematics, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to apply their knowledge of mathematics through reasoning and problem solving. Pupils struggle to use what they know to work out what they do not know. The school must ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to use and apply mathematical knowledge across a range of purposeful contexts.
- In some foundation subjects, the school is unclear how well pupils remember important knowledge and vocabulary over time. This means that teachers are unable to identify and address any gaps in pupils' learning before they introduce new knowledge. The school needs to ensure that assessment effectively identifies any misconceptions or gaps in pupils' knowledge so that these can be quickly resolved.
- Some pupils' SEND support plans lack precise detail. They do not specify the exact support that these pupils need. This means that the needs of these pupils are not catered for as well as they could be in all aspects of provision. The school should ensure that the revised support plans are sufficiently detailed and implemented effectively for all pupils with SEND.

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	148446
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10297527
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	210
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Harrison
Headteacher	Leigh-anne Young
Website	www.stbcps.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Bede's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy school in April 2021. When its predecessor school, St Bede's RC Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged good overall.
- The school is one of 39 schools in Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust.
- The school's last inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 for schools of a religious character took place in January 2019. The next inspection will be within eight years of this date.
- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher (who is also the acting special educational needs coordinator), acting deputy headteacher, members of the local governing committee, including the chair and vice chair; representatives from the trust, including the CEO and director of primary standards. The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with the acting director of education for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in other subjects, including music and physical education.
- 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 and considered the views of staff and parents through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Annalei Bartlett	Ofsted Inspector
Deb Ward	Ofsted Inspector

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