

Inspection of St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy

Anne's Crescent, Ashby, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire DN16 2LW

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 May 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	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Mark Strong. This school is part of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-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), James McGeachie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nigel Stevenson.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 11 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Kindness, care and Catholic values are at the heart of St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy. Children get off to a strong start in the early years. Across the school, staff build warm and supportive relationships with the pupils in their care. Pupils feel safe and are well cared for. Clear expectations mean pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school.

Pupils enjoy coming to school to learn. Leaders and staff want pupils to do well. The curriculum prioritises English and mathematics. This focus leads to all pupils, including the disadvantaged, achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics. In the wider curriculum, pupils study a broad range of interesting subjects which are complimented by a wide range of after-school clubs, such as cookery and music.

Pupils build their understanding of Catholic values, in addition to their understanding of other faiths and cultures, well. Older pupils talk positively of the need to respect and understand the beliefs of others. Pupils enthusiastically take on leadership roles, such as Chaplaincy Team and Mini Vinnies.

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

Leaders and staff have worked effectively with colleagues from the trust and local authority to develop an ambitious curriculum. Pupils find this new curriculum relevant and enjoyable. For example, in science, pupils study how exercise makes the heart beat faster. Pupils successfully apply what they have previously learned to new contexts. For example, in art, pupils study artists' work to develop their appreciation of shape, form and colour before designing and making their own pottery. In some lessons, the exact knowledge that staff want pupils to learn is not clear. This means that teaching tasks are not always adapted well to meet the learning needs of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This slows pupils' learning.

The early years curriculum is carefully planned. Children love to learn. They respond well to the expectations of school life. This helps them make progress across the early years curriculum. They benefit from a strong focus on communication and language. Recent improvements mean the learning areas and activities inside are well thought out. However, limitations in the outdoor environment, including the space available, mean that children's physical development is not as well catered for as it could be.

The English and mathematics curriculums are implemented effectively, so that pupils perform well in statutory assessments. Reading is taught well and pupils across school, including those with SEND, develop a love of reading. Phonics is taught effectively from when pupils start in Reception. Staff benefit from effective training, guidance and support. This means that staff skilfully use their strong subject knowledge to help any pupils who fall behind to catch up. As a result, pupils develop secure phonics knowledge and become confident and fluent readers. Pupils enjoy

numerous opportunities to read for pleasure, including regular visits to the school library. They particularly benefit from the 'Snuggle-up with a Book' scheme, where pupils are selected to borrow one of the special books and take-home hot chocolate and biscuits to read before bedtime.

Positive relationships and a culture of care permeate the school. Procedures for identifying pupils' individual needs are thorough. Adults put effective support in place for pupils who need it. Most pupils respond positively to this support. Pupils know what is expected of them and how they should behave. They are eager to learn and come to school enthusiastically. Attendance figures across school are improving. Leaders have put effective strategies in place to reduce persistent absence, which is well below average. The school is aware that there is a more to do to support the regular attendance of some disadvantaged pupils.

The provision for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. The carefully constructed personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education curriculum supports pupils to become confident, independent and resilient. For example, they know the importance of not giving-up when work becomes challenging. Pupils talk confidently about fundamental British values and have a broad understanding of the protected characteristics. They understand these are important if they are to value and respect others.

The trust provides effective support to the school. This support has prioritised and accelerated improvements. However, trust and school leaders know there is still more work to do. Staff feel well supported and believe their workload is considered before any new initiatives are introduced. Parents and carers value the school and its work. A few would welcome more information about their children's learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In lessons, curriculum learning intentions are not consistently precise enough. This means that teachers do not always adapt teaching activities to best meet pupils' learning needs. The school should refine its curriculum plans to ensure that the knowledge that pupils need to learn is outlined precisely so teachers can adapt teaching to meet all pupils' learning needs.
- In the early years, the outdoor learning environment is not sufficiently developed. This limits children's physical development. The school should improve the early years outdoor learning environment.

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 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	138016
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10315568
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	324
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Stevenson
Headteacher	Mark Strong
Website	www.stbernadettesacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 March 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school became an academy in 2012 and joined Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust in July 2022.
- The school uses one alternative provider of education.
- St. Bernadette’s Catholic Voluntary Academy is a Catholic school. The school’s previous section 48 inspection took place in June 2018. The next inspection will be within eight years of this date.

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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, parents and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Procedures for collecting and sharing information about pupils' allergies were sampled.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, and senior leaders responsible for safeguarding, early years, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, art and design, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors reviewed curriculum plans and spoke with curriculum leaders, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. They also talked to pupils about their learning and looked at their work in these subjects.
- Inspectors met with the leaders responsible for reading to discuss the support for pupils at the early stages of reading. Inspectors visited reading lessons and observed pupils reading with familiar adults.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator. Education, health and care plans and other support plans for pupils with SEND were reviewed. Inspectors visited lessons to see how pupils with SEND are supported to learn.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's records of bullying and spoke to several groups of pupils, including some single-gender groups, to understand their experience of school.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the local governing body and a representative of the local authority. They met with the CEO, deputy CEO and a trustee.
- Inspectors scrutinised records relating to attendance and records of pupils who have joined or left the school roll.

Inspection team

Amraz Ali, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Watson	Ofsted Inspector
Vicky Oddy	Ofsted Inspector

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