

Inspection of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Byermoor

Byermoor, Burnopfield, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE16 6NU

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 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	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Sean Woods. This school is part of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education 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), Nick Hurn OBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Martin Gannon.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 nine 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. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 6 and 7 October 2021. 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?

Happy, polite and inquisitive pupils abound at Sacred Heart. They love coming to school. Pupils talk with pride to visitors about their learning and the school. Pupils are cared for well by staff who put children first in all they do. Pupils are kept safe by these well-trained staff. Pupils are exceptionally well mannered and courteous. They look after one other. One pupil summed up the thoughts of many by saying, 'When you join Sacred Heart, it's like getting a new family and you've been adopted by the school.'

Leaders establish high expectations for all in this school. Pupils strive to meet these high expectations. Positive learning environments are evident across the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils achieve well as a result of knowledgeable staff. Pupils develop a secure bank of knowledge in lessons. The school realises its aim of developing and nurturing pupils 'spiritually, socially, emotionally and academically'.

Pupils have many opportunities to have their voice heard in school. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously. These include fundraising, organising new school clubs and flower planting in the local area. Leaders engage effectively with parents. One parent captured the comments of others by saying her children 'feel safe, secure and supported each day and are challenged to be the best possible versions of themselves'.

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

The school has developed subject curriculums that are exciting and engaging for pupils. These curriculums ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), get every opportunity to succeed. Pupils' needs are identified quickly. Effective support is put in place to meet these needs.

Since the previous inspection in 2021, leaders have introduced a new phonics curriculum. This has had a significant positive impact on pupils' achievement in phonics. There is a clear focus on children in early years developing the necessary skills in early reading. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Effective teaching of phonics ensures that older pupils become confident and fluent readers. Leaders constantly review these ambitious curriculums. As a result of this review process, some curriculums are new and only recently introduced across the school, including in early years. These need more time to become securely embedded in practice so that the ambition of these curriculums is fully realised.

Children in Reception enjoy a well-resourced and engaging learning environment. Talented staff model adventurous vocabulary for children to use independently. A love of books is tangible across the provision. Children link their learning from stories to their play. They make boats to 'travel across the sea to the desert'. They understand that boats should float, but also what might make their boat sink.

Effective curriculum implementation is a hallmark of provision in other subject areas. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They ensure that leaders' high expectations are consistent across school. Pupils enjoy their learning. They talk with understanding about the knowledge and skills they have developed. For example, older pupils talk about the parallels between the civil rights movement in America and the experiences of the Windrush generation in the United Kingdom. In geography, pupils talk about what mushroom rocks are, where they might be found and their formation process.

Behaviour and attitudes in school are exemplary. This contributes to the exceptional learning environment across school. Lessons take place without disruption. Pupils have a keen understanding of each other's needs. The buddy system between the youngest and oldest pupils allows children in Reception to model their own behaviours on very positive role models. Attendance is not an issue at Sacred Heart. Leaders have taken effective action to reduce persistent absence. They engage well with families to promote good attendance.

The school's provision for pupils' wider development is exceptional. Pupils develop substantial knowledge of safety, tolerance, equality and diversity. Staff immerse pupils in a wealth of opportunities to appreciate other faiths, religions and beliefs. These extend well beyond the expected. Pupils talk with understanding about numerous and diverse world religions, including Shintoism, Taoism and Raëlism. They know the importance of British values and the protected characteristics. They enjoy opportunities for debate. Pupils enjoy a wide range of educational visits and visitors to school to enhance the curriculums in school. Pupils take on responsibilities across school, including as worship leaders, reading ambassadors, school councillors and eco-councillors. They see the impact these roles have. Their voice is heard.

Leaders' unswerving focus is on pupils. Rigorous systems for continual improvement are in place. Governors are well informed and use this information to challenge and hold leaders to account for the benefit of pupils. Trustees have clear oversight of the school. The trust provides effective support and challenge to the school. Leaders at all levels fulfil their roles with diligence.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject curriculums have been reviewed and introduced recently. This means that they are not yet embedded securely in the school's practice. The school should continue to ensure that these curriculums are embedded securely and that the impact of these curriculums on pupils is evaluated.

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	140638
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10240531
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	234
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin Gannon
CEO of the trust	Nick Hurn OBE
Headteacher	Sean Woods
Website	http://www.sacredheartgateshead.org/
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 October 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is one of 47 schools in the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust.
- The deputy headteacher took up post in January 2022.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school does not have nursery provision. Children enter school in Reception.
- A separately registered nursery provision operates from a separate building on the school site.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club. This is managed by the governing body.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last diocesan inspection was in November 2017. The school is due its next section 48 inspection before November 2025.

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 second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the continuing 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, other school leaders, other school staff, representatives of the governing body, a representative of the trust board, a representative from the trust central team and a representative of the diocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and geography. 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 and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- An inspector listened to some pupils from Reception and Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central register; met with those responsible for safeguarding; 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 the staff and pupil online surveys and Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- An inspector met with some parents.

Inspection team

Richard Beadnall, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Olie Flitcroft

Ofsted Inspector

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