

Inspection of Our Lady and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Maryport

Ennerdale Road, Maryport, Cumbria CA15 8HN

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 April 2025
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 Suzanne Smith. This school is part of Mater Christi 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), Jacky Kennedy, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Elisabeth Anne Mallinson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this vibrant and nurturing school. They know that staff care for them and will support them when needed. This is reflected in the school's strong ethos. Pupils enjoy seeing their friends and their teachers each day. They understand and accept that people have many differences.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils achieve well, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They are keen to showcase their learning. The school celebrates pupils' successes with a variety of assemblies, certificates, prizes and 'VIP' awards.

Pupils enjoy a range of interesting activities at lunchtimes, such as active sports and clay modelling. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils typically conduct themselves well during lessons and around the school. They know how staff expect them to behave.

The school offers plentiful opportunities that pupils might not otherwise experience. For example, they visit museums, theatres and places further afield, such as castles and cities. After-school clubs include sports, cooking, singing and football. Pupils take part in sports tournaments with other schools. They also learn to play musical instruments. These rich activities help to enhance pupils' social awareness and their academic learning.

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

There have been several changes to the school's leadership and curriculum during recent times. The trust has worked effectively with the local governing body and the school to ensure that pupils continue to benefit from a high-quality education. The trust and the local governing body support and challenge the school in equal measure.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. It includes pertinent references to the history and geography of the local area. The knowledge that the school intends for pupils to learn is ordered logically. Staff develop their subject expertise through ongoing training and support. This enables them to implement the curriculum well and to check pupils' understanding effectively. Typically, pupils learn well. However, where subject curriculums have been more recently established, staff have not had time to sufficiently address some of the existing gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Pupils with SEND learn well alongside their classmates. The school ensures that pupils' additional needs are identified early. Staff work closely with parents and carers and with external professionals to enable pupils with SEND to be fully included in school life.

A love of reading is fostered. The school has chosen texts carefully to include representation of the diverse population of modern Britain. Books are prominent across the school. Pupils enjoy visiting the outdoor library 'pod', where reading ambassadors recommend books and support their peers' reading. Parents come into school weekly to share books with their children. Pupils look forward to taking story sacks home and visiting the local library.

Children in the early years hear a multitude of stories, songs and rhymes. This prepares them well for the phonics programme that begins at the start of the Reception Year. Staff are trained to deliver this programme well. Pupils read from books that match their current phonics knowledge. Staff provide targeted support that helps pupils with their early reading development.

The school's focus on developing pupils' spoken language has been mostly successful. Pupils engage in articulate and purposeful discussions about a range of topics. However, the school has been less effective in supporting some pupils' writing skills. These pupils make repeated mistakes in their writing, some of which go undetected over time.

Pupils are kind and respectful towards others. Staff foster these attitudes from the start, in the provision for two-year-old children. These children learn quickly how to play and learn together.

Pupils attend school regularly. The school works tenaciously to improve pupils' levels of attendance. Well-coordinated and robust strategies have had a markedly positive impact on reducing pupils' absence. This is especially so for some pupils with previously high levels of persistent absence.

The school provides well for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn how to be safe outside of school, for example while online and when crossing roads. They develop an insight into how to be responsible citizens through their roles as school councillors, well-being champions and 'guardian angels'. Pupils raise money for charities and support the local community, including by litter-picking and by bag-packing at a local shop.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They are supported to fulfil their roles well. Staff appreciate the steps that the school takes for their well-being. For example, the school follows a 'staff charter' to make sure that staff feel valued and well cared for.

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 subjects, particularly where curriculums have been more recently established, staff have not had the time to fully address any shortfalls in pupils' prior learning. Because of this, some pupils have some gaps in the knowledge that they need to build future learning on. In these subjects, the school should ensure that these gaps are identified and addressed promptly, so that pupils can build future learning on a secure body of knowledge.

- The school's approach to supporting the accuracy of pupils' writing has not been as focused as it could be. Some pupils make regular mistakes in their written work. These errors are not consistently picked up on or remedied. The school should ensure that there is a consistent approach to the development of pupils' written fluency and accuracy.

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	149245
Local authority	Cumberland
Inspection number	10294430
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Elisabeth Anne Mallinson
CEO of the trust	Jacky Kennedy
Headteacher	Suzanne Smith (executive headteacher)
Website	www.st-pat-maryport.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Mater Christi Multi-Academy Trust. An interim executive headteacher took up post in September 2024.
- Our Lady and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Maryport converted to become an academy in September 2022. When its predecessor school, Our Lady and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.
- This Roman Catholic school is in the Diocese of Lancaster. The school's last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, was in November 2023. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place within five years of that date.
- The school provides educational provision for two-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. In each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and visited a sample of lessons. They spoke with teachers and with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work. They also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult. He discussed reading with a group of older pupils.
- Inspectors met with school leaders. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the academy trust, including the CEO and the chair of the trust. He also met with members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school, including at breakfast club and during lunchtime. They spoke with several groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. They considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, minutes of local governing body meetings and documents about pupils' behaviour and levels of attendance.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and their well-being. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors met with some parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

David Lobodzinski, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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