

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, Dalton-In-Furness

Address: Crooklands Brow, Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA15 8LB

Unique reference number (URN): 149513

Inspection report: 14 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils enjoy school and want to be here. Leaders share their high expectations with parents and carers when pupils join the school. This helps everyone to understand the impact of absence on pupils' learning and personal development. Attendance rates are high for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders do all they can to support pupils to attend regularly. They carefully check patterns of attendance and provide support to parents when needed to ensure that pupils are in school on a daily basis.

Pupils behave very well. From the early years onwards, pupils understand how to learn and play well together. All staff consistently apply the clear routines and rules that leaders have established. These set high expectations for all pupils. Pupils understand the rules because they are based on the school's values. As a result, pupils respect and care for each other. They treat each other with dignity. Pupils accept and celebrate difference and enjoy spending time together. On the very rare occasions that bullying occurs, it is dealt with quickly and appropriately. Pupils enjoy their learning. They do not distract others or disrupt lessons. If any pupils need extra help to manage their emotions and behaviour, staff do so effectively and sensitively.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children in the early years quickly settle into the routines of school life. They develop highly positive relationships with staff. Children are very well cared for. Their intimate care needs are managed with dignity and respect. Leaders make sure that the welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage are met so that children benefit from a safe and stimulating learning environment in which to play and learn.

From the age of two, children develop their speech, language and communication quickly because staff make the most of every conversation they have with children. The curriculum is thoughtfully designed across the Nursery and Reception Years to build children's knowledge and skills appropriately. Staff are skilled and teach the curriculum confidently. Staff know children very well and are adept in making changes when necessary, so that children learn well.

Leaders make sure that resources in the early years provision are of high quality. Staff prioritise children's language development and early reading, writing and number awareness. They provide the right support and guidance so that children quickly learn from their mistakes. Children make secure progress through the curriculum and are well prepared for learning in Year 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders use highly effective systems to quickly identify any additional needs that pupils may have. Leaders involve parents and carers at all stages of this process. This helps staff to provide the right support to every pupil. When needed, staff make use of specialist advice to

put in place highly effective adjustments so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can achieve well and take part in all activities. Leaders use additional funding effectively to help disadvantaged pupils who need to catch up with their reading, writing or mathematics. Staff are very well trained to support pupils with their learning and wellbeing. They have high expectations for all pupils. This helps pupils strive to achieve despite any difficulties that they face. Staff are adept in helping pupils to manage their emotions and interact well with others. Pupils with barriers to their learning are supported well to make positive progress socially and in their education. Leaders make sure that all vulnerable pupils are given the help that they need, for example by working closely with the local authority. This means that these pupils can be fully involved with every activity the school organises, such as residential visits and after-school clubs.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders have established a highly effective programme for personal development. The personal, social and health education curriculum is skilfully designed so that pupils learn to keep themselves safe and healthy in an age-appropriate way. This includes online safety and relationships and sex education.

Pupils develop a deep understanding of the fundamental British values. They learn how to live well in modern Britain and appreciate diversity. Pupils enjoy being 'ambassadors' and being part of community projects such as providing a lunch for elderly members of the parish. Activities such as these give pupils a sense of pride and responsibility for their local community.

Older pupils value their leadership roles such as being house captains and 'play buddies'. These roles develop pupils' confidence and foster a rich sense of belonging to the school. They talk confidently about the difference that they make to their school.

Pupils learn how to look after their wellbeing. For example, some appreciate attending the 'calm club' to support their readiness to learn. Highly trained staff provide skilled pastoral support for pupils. Pupils learn to be resilient and manage their own emotions well.

Leaders have created a rich programme of opportunities outside the classroom for pupils to widen their experiences. After-school clubs are varied and include crafts, gardening and messy play. The school has close links with local music groups, providing all pupils with the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. Through the school's inclusive and carefully designed offer, pupils become ambitious and want to make a positive difference in society.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils who join the school in the early years achieve well by the end of Year 6 and are generally ready for the next stage in their education. They typically reach age-related expectations in national assessments. Pupils who join later on in their schooling make

secure progress through the curriculum from their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils achieve well because of the precise, personalised support that they receive.

Pupils develop the important knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics. From the early years, pupils learn to communicate confidently. Leaders give high priority to the teaching of phonics so that pupils learn to read and spell with confidence. Across the curriculum, work in pupils' books shows that most pupils make positive progress through the curriculum over time. Well-trained staff provide pupils with extra help when needed.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that helps pupils to learn well in all subjects. Pupils enjoy their learning and are proud of their work. Leaders understand the quality of the school's curriculum well. This has informed some recent changes that they have made to improve teaching. However, some of these changes are not yet fully in place in some classes, meaning that in some subjects pupils find it harder to build on their prior learning. When needed, staff use appropriate resources to help pupils to learn independently. However, on occasion, some teachers do not adapt learning activities as well as they could to support pupils to learn as well as they could.

Staff frequently talk with pupils about their learning, which helps pupils to improve their vocabulary. Phonics is taught consistently well and supports pupils to read and write with accuracy. Teachers give clear feedback to pupils, which helps them to quickly address any mistakes. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and reading the high-quality books in class libraries.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge so that they can teach well. For instance, in science, pupils enthusiastically carry out experiments and write their findings using scientific vocabulary because teachers give them the knowledge and skills they need to do this successfully.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a thorough understanding of the community that the school serves. They work purposefully with parents and carers. Leaders accurately identify the strengths of the school and what needs to improve. Their actions have created a calm and purposeful learning environment where pupils want to learn. Leaders set high expectations for staff and pupils and lead by example. When needed, they make appropriate changes, which have a positive impact. For example, recent changes to the teaching of mathematics have given pupils increased confidence to solve problems independently. However, recent refinements to the curriculum in some other subjects are not consistently embedded in all classes to ensure that all pupils can achieve their best.

Governors know the school very well and provide leaders with appropriate support and challenge. They check the impact of leaders' work carefully. For example, they understand how well resources are used to support disadvantaged pupils to learn successfully. Governors consider the workload and wellbeing of staff. Leaders ensure that professional

development is planned in line with whole-school priorities and equips staff with the skills they need to be confident in delivering the curriculum effectively.

Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively. Trustees provide secure oversight of the school and ensure that those at each level of governance have clearly defined roles and share high expectations for pupils' welfare and education.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

The school is a warm and friendly environment where pupils start each day feeling welcomed and ready to learn. They quickly establish nurturing relationships with staff and with each other. Pupils are kept safe. They quickly get any help that they need from caring staff.

Pupils enjoy a well-designed curriculum that supports them to achieve well, develop personally and thrive in school. These opportunities help to ensure that pupils are ready for the next steps of their education.

Children in the early years benefit from high-quality provision and care that sets them up well for future learning. The school is highly inclusive. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive skilled support to help them to do their best and take a full part in school life. Pupils value being part of a 'school family' where everyone feels that they belong. Pupils are ambassadors for change and make a tangible difference to the school and its community. For example, pupils helped to organise a 'book nook' on the playground so their peers can enjoy reading at breaktimes. Older pupils are positive role models for younger children and are proud to be playtime buddies.

Pupils take an active part in the many opportunities the school offers to enrich their learning, develop their interests and broaden their understanding of the wider world. These include residential visits, playing a musical instrument, sporting events and befriending residents at a local hospice.

Pupils behave extremely well. Bullying is rare and staff deal with it quickly and appropriately should it happen. Pupils appreciate that they can talk to trusted adults about their worries. Pupils care for each other and are proud to be part of the school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the recent refinements made to the curriculum are consistently embedded across the school so that pupils learn and achieve equally well in all subjects.
 - Leaders should support staff to ensure that adaptations to learning are appropriate and highly effective in supporting pupils to learn well.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Neil McLaughlin Cook.

This school is part of the 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 Liz Mallinson.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the CEO, headteacher and other school leaders. They also spoke to representatives of the governing body, some trustees, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Lancaster.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This is the first inspection of the school since it joined the multi-academy trust.

The headteacher was appointed in January 2023.

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. The school's previous section 48 inspection of schools with a religious character took place in May 2024.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Bernadette Charnley

Lead inspector:

Kathryn Pym, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Sue Bowman, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.



This data is from 14 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

102

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

105

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

28.21%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

10.78%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

9.80%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	78%	62%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	53%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	62%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	81%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	78%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	92%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	70%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	78%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	67%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	69%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	76%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	78%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	77%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	50%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	70%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	50%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	70%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	50%	68%	-18 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	70%	80%	-10 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	50%	78%	-28 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	70%	80%	-10 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

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Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	5.2%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.6%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	7.0%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	15.4%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.9%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	32.9%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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