

Inspection of Our Lady and St Joseph Brooms Catholic Primary School, Leadgate

St Ives Road, Leadgate, Consett, County Durham DH8 7SN

Inspection dates:	5 and 6 November 2024
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 Joanne Cruise. 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 Matthew Gannon.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a strong sense of community at this school. The school promotes its Catholic ethos clearly and with pride. Pupils start their day with a calm and settled routine. Adults are welcoming and engage pupils in conversation. The learning environment is calm with clear expectations. Pupils follow well-established routines sensibly. Strong relationships support pupils' well-being, ensuring they are comfortable and safe.

The school has high expectations for learning and behaviour. Pupils are polite and respectful to adults and each other. They are happy to engage in conversation with trusted adults and share their news. Pupils care for each other by showing kindness and friendship. They respect difference and understand equality. One pupil said, 'We are all unique and all as special as each other.'

The programme to support pupils' wider development is firmly built on the school's Catholic ethos. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. The school council shares ideas to improve the school. 'Mini Vinnies' gives pupils the opportunity to actively support the community. They visit the local care home to decorate cakes, sing carols and make cards. Pupils enjoy after-school clubs in football, art and multi-sports. The football team, open to both boys and girls, competes weekly. Pupils enjoy learning to play musical instruments. These activities foster a strong sense of teamwork and responsibility.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum that carefully builds knowledge logically across all subjects. Clear endpoints have been identified and take account of mixed-age classes. In lessons, teachers introduce new ideas and check understanding before moving on. Teachers prioritise oracy and vocabulary in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have tailored support that enables them to access the same curriculum and achieve well.

The school has put clear actions in place to improve mathematics outcomes. This includes support from trust leaders and training for staff. The school identifies gaps in learning and organises targeted support for pupils. The school implements daily practice to build pupils' knowledge of number bonds and multiplication facts. Though some gaps remain for older pupils, the school has clear strategies in place to continue these changes to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential by the end of key stage 2.

Pupils achieve well in reading, with support for those who need extra help. Phonics is taught consistently by well-trained staff through daily phonics lessons. Pupils follow clear routines, read on their own and correct mistakes. Misconceptions are addressed straight away. Teachers make regular checks in lessons to build in further repetition. Pupils discuss stories with enthusiasm. This develops their understanding of the stories that they read. Books are precisely matched to pupils' reading ability. This improves their confidence and fluency. The school involves parents and carers in reading through workshops, newsletters and a reading café.

The school has identified the specific knowledge pupils need to learn in the writing curriculum. However, specific methods for teaching handwriting are not as detailed. Pupils improve their letter formation in the early years and key stage 1 and start using joined-up handwriting. Older pupils show inconsistency in handwriting. Mistakes are not always corrected and some pupils struggle to write fluently.

The early years curriculum builds essential skills and knowledge to ensure children are ready for Year 1. The school provides activities so that children are familiar with the school before they start. Children settle quickly into school life. Language and number are threaded through carefully thought-out activities. Adults guide children's learning through conversations that encourage their thinking and language. Children sustain their concentration, follow routines and play well with others. They manage their learning and tidy up without help.

Behaviour expectations are embedded through daily routines. Positive behaviour is rewarded with house points, class rewards and in celebration assemblies. The school has improved attendance, including for pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, by setting high expectations and engaging well with parents.

The school's relationships and health education curriculum is closely aligned with the Catholic ethos and the wider curriculum. For example, pupils learn about important issues such as immigration and diversity in geography. Pupils learn about different faiths and understand the fundamental British values. They know how to keep themselves safe online and in the local community. Educational visits focus on the curriculum. For example, pupils visit museums to embed their learning in history. Other visits support pupils' personal growth, including the whole-school visit to the pantomime, tree planting and residential trips.

The school has made carefully considered improvements over time. Leaders, including governors and trust leaders, have built capacity to improve the school further. Staff feel well supported with workload. The trust provides resources and ongoing professional development. Staff value working together in subject leader networks.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils have gaps in their mathematical knowledge. This means that some older pupils have not achieved as well as they could in mathematics at the end of key stage 2. The school should continue to review and refine the curriculum in mathematics to ensure that pupils gain and retain the important mathematical knowledge they need.

- There is inconsistency in the formation of older pupils' handwriting. This means that some pupils struggle to present their work neatly and write fluently. The school should ensure that there is a detailed and structured approach to teaching handwriting to enable pupils to write with greater fluency.

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	148820
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10346783
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	65
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin Gannon
CEO of the trust	Nick Hurn OBE
Headteacher	Joanne Cruise (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.ourladyandstjosephsbrooms.bwcet.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust.
- The school converted to become an academy on 1 November 2021. When its predecessor school, Our Lady and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Brooms, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged as requires improvement for overall effectiveness.
- The school is a Catholic primary school within the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in March 2017. The next section 48 inspection will be within eight years of the previous section 48 inspection.
- The school provides on-site breakfast and after-school care run by the school.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The substantive headteacher, named in the report, was not present when inspectors visited the school.

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 and/or sixth form provision). 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 the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the assistant headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors met with leaders from the trust, including the senior director of performance and standards. They met with the vice-chair of the trust and members of the local governing body. They also met with a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. 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. Inspectors heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with leaders to sample other subjects in the curriculum, including computing and physical education.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school, at playtime and at lunchtime. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their views of the school, their learning, behaviour and safety.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils. They also took into account the views of parents and carers using Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View. These included comments received via the free-text facility. Inspectors also talked to parents in the school playground.

Inspection team

Nicola Beaumont, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Natalie Fountain

Ofsted Inspector

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