

Inspection of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, Shotton

Fleming Field, Shotton, Durham, County Durham DH6 2JQ

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The executive headteacher of this school is Lisa Ashton. This school is part of Bishop Chadwick 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, Brendan Tapping, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Daniel O'Mahoney.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary to be good in 2012, before it opened as an academy.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's Catholic foundation permeates throughout school life. There are caring relationships between pupils and staff. These relationships are underpinned by kindness and mutual respect. Staff know their pupils well and work successfully to help them. Pupils support each other to love, learn and grow as one family.

The school is ambitious for pupils to achieve well in their academic studies and personal lives. In national assessments in 2023, pupils generally performed well, particularly in reading and writing. Great emphasis is placed on pupils' personal and character development. Pupils take on leadership roles, support in the local community and participate in a range of activities to extend their learning beyond the classroom.

The school is fully inclusive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have the same valuable opportunities as their friends. The school promotes a range of different career opportunities. These build pupils' aspirations and help them understand the contribution they can make to the wider world. Pupils are keen to learn. They enjoy their time in school.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They demonstrate excellent behaviour in lessons and on the playground. They work hard and enjoy their learning. Pupils are friendly and courteous to everyone. They are welcoming to visitors and are eager to share what is special about their school.

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

The school's ambitious and broad curriculum is designed to inspire and motivate pupils. This curriculum is progressive and well sequenced. Essential knowledge, skills and vocabulary are carefully considered for each subject. The school has set out what pupils will learn and when they should learn it.

The school's approach to teaching phonics helps pupils to become confident readers. Reading is a priority across the school. Staff are well trained. They deliver the school's phonics programme effectively. Pupils practise reading using books that are carefully matched to the sounds they know. This helps them to build fluency and confidence in reading. Pupils who fall behind in reading are provided with extra help. This is effective in enabling pupils to catch up quickly.

Teachers have strong knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They regularly revisit learning so that pupils remember it. Staff frequently check what pupils know and remember. They adapt future teaching to address gaps in pupils' knowledge. For example, in art and design, pupils build on prior learning to develop as artists and to evaluate their own work.

The school uses carefully chosen activities in reading and mathematics to help pupils to learn well. However, sometimes in a few foundation subjects, the chosen activities

are not as well selected and do not fully support the intended learning. As a result, pupils sometimes find it harder to learn new information or achieve as well as they could.

The curriculum in early years is coherently planned and sequenced. The school has thought carefully about what children need to know to ensure that they are ready for Year 1. There is a clear focus on vocabulary, communication, language and literacy. Children develop a range of important skills, such as listening to others and speaking with confidence. Children are well prepared for key stage 1.

The additional needs of pupils with SEND are accurately identified. Effective training has helped staff to support pupils with SEND. There is strong collaboration with external agencies and the school to ensure that specialist, professional support is available for those pupils who require it. This helps pupils with SEND to achieve well.

Behaviour across the school is exemplary. There is a calm and friendly atmosphere. Pupils are engaged and attentive during lessons. Strong routines are taught explicitly. Pupils know what is expected of them and rise to the high expectations that staff have of them.

Attendance is a priority. There are robust procedures in place to monitor pupils' absence. Leaders support families well when barriers to attending school arise. This valuable work is helping to improve attendance.

Pupils' personal development is central to the curriculum. The school provides a range of opportunities to broaden pupils' horizons, these enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils enjoy sports clubs, trips and the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. The school has strong links with the police and fire brigade, who often lead workshops in school to help pupils understand how to stay safe in the local area.

The school places a high priority on pupils' personal development. The school successfully supports pupils to build their resilience, independence and confidence. Pupils are keen to take on positions of responsibility. This includes being members of the school council, Mini Vinnies or buddies. Pupils feel listened to and say that their ideas are taken seriously.

Staff are dedicated to, and passionate about their school community. They work with the trust to continuously improve in order to enhance the life chances of pupils.

Staff have forged strong relationships across the federation. The new subject leadership model means that staff expertise can be shared more widely. Staff value and appreciate these changes. All staff are proud to work at the school. They believe that school leaders care about their workload and well-being.

Those responsible for governance show dedication and passion to their role. They are highly ambitious and effectively support school leaders' work. .

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, the learning activities provided for pupils and children, including those in the early years, do not match the intended learning. This does not always enable some pupils to learn key knowledge and skills securely. The school should ensure that tasks are well matched to the intended learning and help pupils' knowledge and skills to securely build over time.

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	148788
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10346777
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	162
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Daniel O'Mahoney
Headteacher	Lisa Ashton (Executive headteacher)
Website	http://www.ourladyoflourdes.durham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School is part of the Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust, which consists of 30 schools in total. The school converted to become an academy in October 2021.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. The last Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection took place in March 2017.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

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 first routine inspection the school received since the COVID19 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 headteacher, deputy headteacher, and other school leaders. They also talked with the trust director of standards, a representative from the diocese, the school improvement partner and the board of governors, including the chair.
- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum by looking at work samples in other subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed school documentation, spoke to staff with different responsibilities and had discussions with pupils about aspects of school life.
- The inspector reviewed the responses to Ofsted's parent surveys, Parent View, and spoke with a range of staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Suzanne Connolly	Ofsted Inspector

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