

Inspection of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Catholic Academy

Rievaulx Avenue, Billingham TS23 2BS

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 March 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Lucy Flaherty. This school is part of Bishop Hogarth 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), Stuart McGhee, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Yvonne Coates.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They are polite, respectful and articulate. The school introduced a behaviour strategy last academic year. Pupils understand the new behaviour expectations. They are clear about what behaviours to demonstrate when teachers refer to 'good to be green'. Pupils agree that the school applies rewards and sanctions consistently and fairly. Pupils behave well.

The school has reviewed its curriculum. This is in response to the 2024 key stage 2 outcomes. Some pupils did not meet the national expectations in mathematics or grammar, punctuation and spelling. This year, pupils benefit from an ambitious curriculum that meets their needs effectively.

Pupils embody the trust's virtues to develop aspects of their character, such as independence and resilience. Each week, the school focuses on a virtue, rewarding pupils who model this well. Pupils strive to exemplify these virtues in all that they do.

The school prioritises its engagement with families. For example, parents and pupils enjoy reading together at reading breakfasts or tackling mathematical problems in the maths café.

The school teaches pupils about life in modern Britain and how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils benefit from visits from the police who talk to them about road, water and online safety.

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

The school uses a curriculum structure created by the trust. It has considered the needs of the community and adapted this curriculum to ensure that it is relevant to its pupils. For example, the history curriculum focuses on local figures like George Stephenson. Enrichment visits connected to the curriculum are purposeful and carefully planned to contribute to pupils' learning. For example, a visit to Lindisfarne offers pupils experience of a contrasting historical locality to Billingham.

The school has a consistent approach to promoting effective learning. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of lesson structures and routines. Pupils 'activate' their prior knowledge by revisiting learning regularly. This consistent approach has been instrumental in improving what pupils know and remember.

The school checks what pupils know throughout the lesson. For example, staff rapidly identify when pupils need extra practice or support. The school proactively responds to pupils' knowledge gaps, supporting them to be successful. The school swiftly identifies pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and provides them with additional support as necessary. Teachers have a clear understanding of the barriers to learning for pupils with SEND in their class. Pupils are provided with appropriate tasks and support to access the same broad and balanced curriculum as their peers.

The school ensures that there is consistency in the implementation of their phonics scheme. In the early years, children learn songs, rhymes and poems. However, some phonics activities in the early years are not as well matched to children's phonics knowledge as they could be. Reading books match the phonic sounds that pupils know. Pupils sustain concentration and use their phonics knowledge to read unfamiliar words. There is a catch-up programme in place for those pupils the school identifies are not keeping up with their peers. This means that by the end of Year 2 most pupils are confident and fluent readers.

The school has recently introduced a handwriting programme. However, this is not implemented consistently across the school. This means that some pupils do not learn to form letters correctly as well as they should. In response to pupil outcomes at key stage 2, the school has strengthened its approach to teaching grammar punctuation and spelling. The impact of this work is beginning to show in pupils' work across the curriculum.

There is a whole school approach to teaching about healthy relationships and consent. This builds progressively from Nursery. Pupils know what to do if they consider a friendship to be unhealthy. Pupils speak positively about equality. The school promotes issues such as recycling, climate change and caring for God's world, to shape pupils into active, responsible citizens. In the early years, children play cooperatively both indoors and outdoors. They help each other to put their coats on, demonstrating resilience when a task is tricky.

The school resolves to ensure that pupils receive the highest quality education. Leaders have invested time in analysing the 2024 key stage 2 outcomes, acting decisively to change the curriculum. The trust provides the school with specialist support to continue to make improvements. The trust, local governing committee and diocese have a comprehensive oversight of the strengths and areas for development in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not routinely address pupils' incorrect letter formation. This means that some pupils do not learn to form letters accurately as well as they could. The school should ensure that letter formation is a focus, so that pupils are supported effectively to improve their handwriting.
- Some aspects of pupils' foundational writing skills, such as grammar, spelling and punctuation, are not developed as well as they could be. This prevents some pupils from expressing themselves accurately and makes their writing difficult to understand. The school should take further action to ensure that pupils' writing improves.

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	146709
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10346718
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Yvonne Coates
CEO of the trust	Stuart McGhee
Headteacher	Lucy Flaherty
Website	www.holyrosary.bhcet.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 May 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust in January 2019.
- As the school is designated as Roman Catholic, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The school was last inspected in May 2019. Inspections are usually every five years. However, the timescales for reinspection have been extended because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2023.
- The school has nursery provision for three-year-old children.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders from the school.
- Inspectors also met with representatives of the local governing committee, the CEO of the trust, some trustees and a representative of the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: 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 also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. Inspectors spoke with groups of staff and pupils to gain their views about the school.

Inspection team

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Ashworth

Ofsted Inspector

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