

Inspection of Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School, Penshaw

Station Road, Penshaw, Houghton le Spring, Tyne, and Wear DH4 7JZ

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 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	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Claire Garbutt. 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 Martin Gannon.

What is it like to attend this school?

Attending Our Lady Queen of Peace Primary School is a happy experience for pupils. They are eager to learn and proud of their success. Pupils enjoy learning, feel happy and build good relationships.

The school's rules 'ready, respectful, safe' are clear in daily life. Staff and pupils share warm, caring relationships. The school's inclusive environment makes every child feel welcome and valued.

After a time of leadership changes, the school has grown stronger. It has improved its curriculum, helping pupils to do well. High expectations are in place for every pupil, and they often meet these goals. Most pupils achieve well.

Learning at the school is exciting and memorable. Pupils have the chance to meet inspiring authors, explore museums and local landmarks and take part in a wide range of events and clubs. These experiences make lessons come alive, sparking curiosity and a love for learning. From creative writing workshops to after-school activities, there is something for everyone to enjoy and grow their skills.

Pupils behave very well. They show respect and politeness in their interactions. Learning happens in a calm, focused setting with few disruptions. Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly. Staff listen to pupils, making them feel safe and cared for.

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

The school provides a broad and ambitious curriculum that prepares pupils for success in all subjects. The school has identified the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. Pupils progress well, mastering increasingly complex knowledge and skills. For example, they confidently discuss their own work and show an understanding of themes and artistic influences, like those of Banksy.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly and accurately. Staff are skilled in meeting these pupils' needs and supporting them to succeed. Pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers and, when required, the school puts well-considered adaptations in place to help them to do so.

Lessons follow a clearly defined approach, with a focus on building knowledge and skills over time. Most teachers confidently use these newly defined teaching techniques, but this is not yet consistent across the school. On occasion, teachers do not routinely check what pupils have understood and give them helpful feedback. Where this is the case, some pupils lose concentration, which means they do not learn as well as they could.

Reading is a high priority in the school. From early years, children have many opportunities to enjoy stories, rhymes, and songs. The school has developed a culture of reading for pleasure that is clearly evident throughout the school. High-quality texts are at the heart of the school's curriculum. The school has ensured that the phonics programme

is taught consistently well. Trained staff quickly identify any pupil who struggles to learn to read. They put in place effective support so that pupils catch up rapidly.

Children in the early years learn to work and play well together. Children engage with each other, share equipment, and take turns. The curriculum is planned well and builds on what children can do. Teachers lead whole-class and group sessions effectively. Indoor and outdoor learning areas are shared by the Nursery and Reception classes. Some parts of the learning areas are not well developed. Where this is the case, there are insufficient opportunities for children, at all stages of development, to practise and embed new learning through adult-supported and independent play. This means that some children do not achieve as well as they could. However, the school and trust have recently begun working together to develop these areas.

Pupils have good rates of attendance. The school provides effective support for any families who may need it. This ensures that there are no barriers to attending school.

Personal, social, health and economic education is organised well. Pupils learn about relationships, cultures, and faiths. They are taught how to stay healthy both mentally and physically. They understand how to keep themselves safe, including online. The school has a wide programme of events, including performances, workshops, and residential trips. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Pupils recognise the importance of tolerance. They know that people should be treated equally and with respect regardless of their background. Pupils are proud of their work in the community. They enjoy their visits to the local care home and raise money for several different charities.

Staff feel valued and respected. They enjoy working at the school and with each other. They are grateful for the workload and well-being support they receive. Trustees, governors, and leaders have a shared vision for the school. They know the school well and fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively. They work effectively in partnership to further develop and strengthen the quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of lessons, some aspects of the school's effective approach to learning are not consistently applied. Some teachers do not always engage pupils with learning and sometimes do not fully check pupils' understanding or provide the precise feedback pupils need. Pupils do not learn as well as they should in these lessons. The school needs to ensure that it continues to train and support staff to enable the consistent implementation of the school's curriculum across all lessons to maximise pupil engagement, understanding and achievement.
- Some parts of the early years environment lack rich and meaningful learning

opportunities, especially for reception-age children. Some children are not using these areas to learn more and practise new skills. The school needs to ensure that all areas of early years provision support effective learning and development for all children.

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	147139
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10346726
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	307
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin Gannon
CEO of the trust	Nick Hurn OBE
Headteacher	Claire Garbutt
Website	ourladyqueenofpeacepenshaw.bwcet.com
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 May 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative provisions.
- This is Catholic primary school in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. The school received a section 48 inspection in June 2019. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place within eight school years.

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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, school staff, members of the local governing body, trustees, and representatives of the trust leadership team.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education, and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, 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, the inspector 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils and spoke to some staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Tracy Duffy, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jacqueline Mowat	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Murray	Ofsted Inspector

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