

Inspection of St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

Greystoke Gardens, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE2 1PS

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 June 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The headteacher of this school is Lisa Hoey. This school is part of Bishop Bewick 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), Anita Bath, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Harrison.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a fully inclusive school with pupils at the centre. Pupils experience a compassionate and friendly environment in which they feel safe and can learn effectively. The school has created a culture in which pupils grow to develop their character well and settle into the school community quickly.

Pupils work together in lessons. They display positive attitudes to their learning and the subjects they study. Pupils enjoy breaktimes, play together well and know the routines. Children in the Nursery and Reception Years show sustained interest in what they do. They enjoy engaging in a variety of activities that help them get ready for further learning.

Pupils live up to the high expectations that the staff have of them. They know if things go wrong, staff will be there to support them. Pupils speak confidently of the help they receive from adults. They have a variety of opportunities to contribute to the life of the school. Pupils enjoy the trips, clubs and activities on offer. For example, the writing club produce the regular 'St Catherine's Chronicle' as a way of sharing what is going on. Pupils of all ages contribute as members of the school council and engage in a variety of sports.

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

Strong, positive relationships are the distinctive thread in all that this school does so well. There are high aspirations for all pupils. The school has spent time improving the adaptations in place for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This has improved the experience for these pupils. Teachers receive detailed information on how to help pupils with SEND and put effective support in place for them.

Pupils do well in English and mathematics. For example, in mathematics, they can make links to their prior knowledge and use this to help them to learn new concepts. Pupils experience a rich curriculum, and it has developed positively since the last inspection. Teachers check carefully on pupils' progress in their learning. They give pupils opportunities to revisit what they have learned and demonstrate what they can now do. In a few subjects, it is not always clear enough exactly what the school wants pupils to have learned. This is also the case within parts of the early years curriculum.

Children in the Nursery and Reception Years benefit from the carefully considered environment, both outdoors and indoors. This has developed well in the last year. They enjoy the songs and rhymes that help them learn and develop their confidence. Pupils make a good start in learning to read. They read books that are matched to the sounds they know. This helps them learn to read quickly and fluently. Teachers deliver the phonics programme with consistency. When pupils struggle with reading, they receive extra support, and this helps them catch up quickly. Teachers model reading with expression very well with pupils. Pupils have access to a wide variety of texts and enjoy reading, which demonstrates the strength in the reading culture in all year groups.

Staff work effectively with pupils and families to help them understand the importance of being in school and to remove barriers to attendance. Pupils' attendance is high. The school makes effective use of attendance information. Staff share a strong set of values that help focus on learning in lessons. Classrooms are respectful and purposeful spaces in which learning can thrive. Pupils benefit from the opportunities they have to discuss ideas. However, the support for parts of pupils' writing is not sufficiently consistent. This means that some pupils are not able to communicate their learning as well as they could.

Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. They learn how to keep themselves safe. This includes understanding risks they may face beyond their own home, particularly online. Pupils' wider development is threaded through the curriculum, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects. Pupils know and display fundamental British values and enjoy their opportunities to take a lead. They demonstrate this, for example, through their support for each other at play time or their community fundraising activities. Pupils feel listened to and know that they have a voice.

The trust supports and checks on the work of the school well. Leaders at all levels are reflective and clear in their drive for improvement. Staff enjoy working in a close-knit team and know their workload and well-being is carefully considered by leaders. The school and governors work together to support the wider community, which includes engaging effectively with a range of external agencies to support pupils and their families.

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 few subjects, and in aspects of the early years curriculum, the key knowledge that pupils need to learn is not as coherently planned as it could be. This means that some pupils do not acquire the knowledge they need. The school should ensure that the curriculum is refined to allow pupils to know and remember more over time, particularly in foundation subjects.
- Support for pupils developing elements of their writing is not sufficiently consistent across the curriculum. As a result, the transcription and accuracy of some pupils' written work is not as good as it could be. The school should ensure that pupils receive the support they need to develop their writing and record their learning effectively.

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	148271
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10346759
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	168
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Harrison
CEO of the trust	Anita Bath
Headteacher	Lisa Hoey
Website	www.stcatherinesnewcastle.org
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 December 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Catherine's Catholic Primary School is part of Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust.
- The school has a Roman Catholic character. The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle carried out a section 48 inspection in November 2017.
- The school does not currently use 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 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors held discussions with the chair of the trust and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and with a representative from the diocese.
- 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 visited some lessons and discussed with subject leaders the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors looked at records and spoke with staff in relation to behaviour, bullying, attendance and safeguarding.
- 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 took account of responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff survey, as well as Ofsted's parent survey, Parent View, including free-text responses.

Inspection team

Richard Wakefield, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Annalei Bartlett

Ofsted Inspector

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