

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Agnes' Catholic Primary School, Crawcrook

Rosedale Road, Crawcrook, Ryton, Tyne and Wear NE40 4UN

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 June 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Joanne Woods. The 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?

St Agnes' Catholic Primary School is a special place. All aspects of school life are underpinned by strong values, such as compassion and serving others. The school is highly ambitious for all pupils to succeed. Every pupil is given the opportunity to flourish.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff model behaviour expectations from the start of the early years. The school's 'back-pocket behaviour principles' are woven into daily life. Pupils want to be the 'star of the week'. One pupil commented, 'We behave because we want to understand what we are learning.' Relationships between staff and pupils are incredibly strong. Pupils listen carefully in lessons and want to improve. As a result, they achieve highly, which is reflected in published outcomes. They are happy, kind and courteous. Pupils feel safe and are overwhelmingly positive about the fact that staff listen to their views.

The school ensures that everyone has the opportunity to nurture their talents and interests. From craft to karate clubs and Irish dancing to many other sporting activities, there is something for everyone to be involved in. Pupils look forward to showcasing their talents in the annual summer festival performance. 'Mini Vinnies' regularly visit a local residential home to support their community work.

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

The school has established a very ambitious, high-quality curriculum. Reading is central to the school and trust's curriculum offer. Pupils access a diverse range of engaging books. Staff use stories to enhance the curriculum. Children start learning phonics straight away in the Reception Year. As a result, most pupils become fluent, accurate readers in key stage 1. Any pupils who need to catch up are identified quickly. They are provided with the support they need to help them improve their reading. Year 5 pupils enjoy being librarians and ensure the school library is well used.

Pupils develop exceptionally detailed knowledge across subjects. The curriculum clearly defines what pupils should learn from the Reception Year to the end of Year 6. Staff are precise in how they share what they want pupils to remember. There is a consistent approach to learning in all subjects. Opportunities to make links between learning start in the early years. For example, children learn what makes the earth happy or sad. They independently create their own sentences about beach pictures. Other children, in the outside area, understand the importance of saving animals in the ocean by removing plastic.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Staff adapt the curriculum to ensure that it is fully accessible for pupils. They repeat this information numerous times. This helps pupils to remember more. Staff relentlessly focus on getting the basics right. They expect pupils to speak in clear sentences. They ask precise questions to check pupils' understanding. Staff address misconceptions in the moment. The 'I do, we do, you do' approach is consistent across all subjects. This supports pupils to succeed. Teachers use effective strategies to teach new vocabulary. In Year 4 geography, for example, pupils learn the word 'vegetation' by reading aloud the word and the definition several times. This helped their understanding about the Gobi Desert.

The school has effective processes in place for identifying the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff are skilled at meeting these pupils' individual needs and supporting them to succeed. Expectations of all pupils are high, including pupils with SEND. When required, well-considered adaptations are made.

The school makes its expectations for behaviour clear. Pupils act on these at all times. They attend school consistently. Parents and carers value the close-knit school community. There are many opportunities for the community to come together, for example, through the annual careers fair where Year 5 and Year 6 pupils and parents meet local businesses.

The pupils' personal development offer is remarkable. Pupils across the school have their voices heard in many aspects of the school's work. For example, the 'Green Team' is developing the school grounds, and all pupils can make club suggestions, which staff realise. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about fundamental British values. A pupil created an acronym that allows all pupils to recall each value: 'Don't resist terrific mango ice-cream'. Pupils know about democracy. Recent work about mental health ensures that

pupils learn how to regulate their feelings and emotions. Pupils are respectful. They value others from different faiths and cultures.

The trust and governors understand their statutory responsibilities. They work in tandem to offer supportive challenge to school leaders for the benefit of all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. Staff are proud to work here. They appreciate the training and support they receive. They say leaders are considerate of their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Agnes' Catholic Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2019.

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	149051
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10346811
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	187
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin Gannon
CEO of the trust	Nick Hurn OBE
Headteacher	Joanne Woods
Website	stagnescrawcrook.bwcet.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Agnes' Catholic Primary School, Crawcrook converted to become an academy school in May 2022. When its predecessor school, St Agnes' Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good for overall effectiveness.
- The school joined Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust in June 2022.
- The school is a Catholic school in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. The most recent section 48 inspection for schools with religious character took place in March 2018. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place within the next two academic years.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher to discuss pupils' behaviour and attendance. The inspector also reviewed the school's behaviour and attendance records.
- The inspector spoke with the director of education for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.
- The inspector had a conversation with the vice-chair of the trust, the trust senior director of performance and standards and the chair of the local governance committee.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during lunchtime.
- 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 inspector considered responses to Ofsted's parent survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ian Clennan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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