

Inspection of St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Washington

Hampshire Place, Usworth, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE37 2NP

Inspection dates: 30 April and 1 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Jonathan Anderson. 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, Nick Hurn OBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Angela Boyle.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff have created a welcoming, nurturing and friendly environment. Pupils are happy and feel safe. The school motto 'in Christ's kindness...we learn, we pray, we belong' prevails throughout the life of the school. Pupils are kind to one another and get along well. Older pupils act as role models and support younger pupils through the 'special friend' system. Pupils show respect for each other. They say the best thing about their school is the support they get if they need it.

The school is ambitious for what pupils can achieve. The school's well-thought-out curriculum reflects these high expectations. Pupils work hard in lessons and achieve well.

Staff have high expectations of behaviour and model the behaviour that they expect from pupils. Pupils behave well at all times of the school day. Classrooms are calm and orderly.

The school ensures that pupils have access to a range of opportunities outside the classroom so that they develop in the wider sense. Pupils take part in a range of clubs such as creative writing, karate, Lego and multi-skills. They also contribute to school and community through raising money for charity and supporting the local food bank. Pupils enjoy school.

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

The school has designed a new curriculum, which is ambitious for all, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Curricular thinking, planning and sequencing start in the early years. It identifies specific knowledge to be learned and is sequenced well. In some curriculum areas, the legacy of the previous curriculum continues to have a negative impact on pupils' current achievement. This is because some pupils have some remaining gaps in their knowledge. The current, highly ambitious curriculum is addressing this but it is not fully embedded. Leaders have thought carefully and made bold decisions on how to implement this new curriculum so that over time, pupils will acquire a deep understanding of the specific and ambitious curriculum knowledge that leaders have set out.

In the early years, staff have established routines that children know and follow. There is strong focus on developing vocabulary and early number, which prepares pupils for learning in Year 1. The environment supports children to learn and children access it with independence and confidence.

The school prioritises learning to read and there are high expectations. There is a clear programme for teaching phonics through the school. This starts in the early years and is taught with consistency. All staff are trained in the delivery of phonics. Most pupils keep up with the programme and read books that are well matched to the sounds they know. Pupils who need extra help with their reading, get it. The

reading curriculum beyond the phonics curriculum is less well developed. Some pupils do not show a love of reading or talk confidently about stories they enjoy or would recommend. Leaders and the trust already have plans in place to develop the reading-for-pleasure curriculum further.

Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum wherever possible. Support, adaptations and resources help pupils with SEND to learn alongside their peers.

Pupils display positive attitudes toward learning in the classrooms. They live out the St Bede's Bees code of 'be safe, be kind, be ready' in school and in the community. Right from the early years, pupils show a high level of independence and they cooperate with each other well.

The school gives careful thought to pupils' personal development. It is important to the school that pupils develop in the wider sense, beyond the formal curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to attend residential visits, take part in sports festivals and even play in a rock band. Pupils learn important information about online safety, healthy lifestyles and how to keep themselves safe. The well-being of pupils is well catered through the school's nurture programme. Pupils understand about equality and that everyone has the same rights as each other. They are confident that in their school, everyone is treated equally and is welcome. Pupils are keen to take on roles of responsibility such as being on the school council or being a 'Mini Vinnie'. In these roles, pupils make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community through leading fundraising events such as the Big Lent Walk.

Trustees, trust leaders, the diocese and governors share a clear and consistent vision for the school. They perform their duties with rigour. They provide strategic direction and hold the school to account. They work together with school leaders, never letting up on the drive for continuous improvement to provide the best education for every pupil. Where leaders are newer to their role and still developing, the trust provides excellent support and continuous development opportunities. Leaders prioritise staff well-being and ensure that staff workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some curricular areas, some pupils have gaps in knowledge. This means they cannot fully access the new, ambitious curriculum that is now in place. The school should further embed the new curriculum to ensure pupils fully acquire the important subject knowledge it provides.
- The reading curriculum, beyond phonics, is less well developed. This means that some pupils do not show a love of reading or talk confidently about stories they

enjoy or would recommend. The school needs to implement and embed the intended reading curriculum so that all pupils read widely and foster a love of reading.

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	147138
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10268729
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	221
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Angela Boyle
CEO of the trust	Nick Hurn OBE
Headteacher	Jonathan Anderson
Website	www.stbedesrcprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Washington converted to become an academy in July 2019. When its predecessor school, St Bede's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- This is a Catholic School and part of the Catholic Education Trust in the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. Its last section 48 inspection was in January 2018.

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 COVID-19 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, other school leaders, school staff, representatives of the governing body, representatives from the trust and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: 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.
- An inspector listened to some pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. An inspector also spoke with some parents.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the online staff survey, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Nichola Irving, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lynn George

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