

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, North Shields

Wallsend Road, Chirton, North Shields, Tyne and Wear NE29 7BT

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 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 Claire Bryant. 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. There is also a head of school, Ciara Yeoman, who was appointed in April 2024.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Joseph's provides a happy, safe and nurturing environment for pupils. Pupils appreciate the pastoral support that school provides. Pupils at St Joseph's are inquisitive and keen to learn. They embody the school's values, including resilience and empathy. Pupils are polite and courteous. They greet each other with smiles and good manners. They repeatedly talk about how easy it is to make new friends at this school.

Pupils strive to reach the high expectations of leaders. Pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points. There is a calm and orderly atmosphere evident across the school. A keen sense of respect for one another runs through the school. Pupils talk about the importance of equality and how they 'shouldn't discriminate against anyone'. Pupils have trusted adults that they can go to with any problems.

Pupils are proud of their school. They celebrate their local heritage whilst also celebrating the heritage of pupils who come from overseas. Parents are positive about the school. They praise the staff for 'taking the time to know each and every child'.

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

From children's first days in Nursery, knowledgeable staff make sure there is a focus on stories, rhymes and songs. Early years staff provide a clear emphasis on communication, language and listening skills. This prepares children well for phonics teaching and learning in Reception. Early years children are keen to engage with the activities that adults plan for them. Pupils print using shapes and paint. They correctly identify shapes such as squares, rectangles, circles and pentagons. Children in Nursery told an inspector how to brush his teeth, 'up and down, not side to side'. Other children in Reception talk confidently about the plants they look after and how 'they need water to grow big'. Children develop their confidence in number through carefully planned activities.

Phonics teaching is consistent across the school. Well-trained staff use assessment carefully to track pupils' progress in phonics. Targeted support is given to those who need it. This provision helps pupils to make effective progress from their starting points. Pupils' starting points in phonics are generally low, however. This means that published outcomes do not reflect the effectiveness of the school's phonics provision.

The majority of subject curriculums across school are well planned and sequenced. Staff subject knowledge is secure. Staff implement these curriculums in line with the school's intentions. As a result, pupils recall their prior learning well. For example, pupils in Year 2 talk about time with understanding. They make links between the hands on a clock and prior work on angles. Some curriculums are not as well planned or sequenced. These curriculums do not identify the key knowledge that pupils should learn. Pupils' learning in these subjects is less secure.

Leaders have carefully considered the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, some children access the school's 'Engage' provision in early years. Here they receive bespoke support tailored to their individual needs. They develop and progress well. However, some older pupils with SEND do not have their needs identified with sufficient precision. Targets for these pupils are not specific and do not highlight the precise support that these pupils need. The school has taken action to address this issue, but more work is necessary to ensure improvements are consistent.

Behaviour in and around school is positive. Staff support pupils who struggle to manage their emotions effectively. Lessons proceed without disruption. Leaders place a high priority on pupils' regular attendance. The impact of leaders' effective approach to attendance is clear. There has been a rapid reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

The school provides for pupils' wider development effectively. Through a well-planned curriculum, pupils become responsible members of the school community. They have positive attitudes towards others, including those of different faiths and ethnicities. Pupils understand the importance of treating others with respect and tolerance. A planned series of educational visits and experiences enhance the school's curriculum well. Pupils talk enthusiastically about performing with the choir at the Whitley Bay Playhouse, for example. The school provides numerous opportunities for pupils' leadership. These include school councillors, digital leaders and art councillors.

Leaders in school and within the trust identify key areas for improvement precisely. They take action effectively to move these areas forward. Governors and trustees work together to support and challenge school leaders. The work of the trust in supporting the school is evident. Staff feel well supported for their workload and well-being.

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 foundation subjects, newly established curriculums do not precisely map out a clear progression of knowledge, concepts and skills. This means that pupils' do not make the progress of which they are capable. The school should ensure that all curriculums precisely identify key knowledge, concepts and skills.
- Targets in the plans of some pupils with SEND are not precise enough. This means their progress is limited. The school should ensure that recent

improvements in SEND plans are reflected in precise targets that allow its provision to be more effective.

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	148449
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	10323127
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	249
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Harrison
CEO of the trust	Anita Bath
Headteacher	Claire Bryant
Website	http://www.stjosephsrc-primary.co.uk/
Date(s) of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy in August 2021. When its predecessor school, St Josephs Roman Catholic Primary School Aided, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is one of 39 schools in the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust.
- A new head of school was appointed in April 2024.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school also uses one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school operates an on-site breakfast club. This is managed by the governing body.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last Catholic Schools Inspection of the school was in May 2023. The next inspection is due before May 2028.

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. The inspectors discussed the 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, the head of school, other school leaders, school staff, representatives of the governing body, representatives of the trust and a representative of the diocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, computing and history. For each deep dive, the 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 Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 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 and pupil questionnaires, including the free-text comments.
- An inspector visited the unregistered alternative provider and spoke with staff at the provider.

Inspection team

Richard Beadnall, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Janet Madden	Ofsted Inspector
Deb Ward	Ofsted Inspector

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