

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Cuthberts Catholic Primary School, Kenton

Balmain Road, North Kenton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE3 3QR

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 February 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 Anne Bullerwell. 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?

Pupils thrive in an environment that is caring, supportive and highly inclusive. The school is ambitious for pupils and ensures that they are well prepared for each step in their education journey. This is reflected in their achievement in reading, writing and mathematics, along with a range of other subjects.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They show great consideration towards one another. They are polite and thoughtful. This positive behaviour stems from pupils' understanding of the core values of the school, such as respect and tolerance. Pupils work hard in lessons. Children in the early years follow clear routines and engage enthusiastically in learning activities. Pupils of all ages co-operate with the adults to tidy up, help out and make the school a happy place to learn and make friends.

Pupils undertake a range of leadership roles in school. They enjoy this responsibility and they learn from it. The heritage heroes are enthusiastic about local history, the technical team look after equipment and the eco warriors care for the environment. Pupils also enjoy a wide range of enrichment opportunities and trips. These often take them to places that they may not otherwise have a chance to visit, such as theatres and galleries.

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

The school curriculum provides the pupils with a breadth of learning across the full range of subjects. Pupils learn these subjects effectively so that, by the time they leave Year 6, they are well prepared for the secondary school curriculum. This equally applies to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children in the early years also make a very strong start to their education. They are ready for the demands of reading and mathematics by the time they reach Year 1.

Pupils of all ages express a passion for reading and a love of books. They are keen to show the class scrapbooks, where they enthusiastically take turns to complete illustrated book reviews. The library is a vibrant space that inspires pupils to seek out new books. Pupils enjoy classic and modern literature, poetry and non-fiction, with equal interest. The teaching of reading is highly effective. When some pupils need more help with learning to read, they receive timely and effective support. Pupils at the end of key stage 2 attain highly in national reading assessments.

Pupils learn new information and skills that helps them to grasp increasingly complex ideas. For example, in geography pupils learn about the water cycle before considering the impact of climate on the availability of fresh water around the world. In science, pupils learn about different types of plants in order to later understand pollination. Pupils learn accurate facts and methods in mathematics and they apply them to increasingly complex problems. Pupils with SEND learn successfully alongside their peers. Those pupils who may need additional support are promptly identified. Staff ensure that pupils with SEND receive the right support in lessons.

The school provides pupils with many opportunities to enrich and bring their learning to life. This is particularly the case in history and geography. For example, each year group undertakes a visit that combines geography fieldwork with local heritage.

The programme for pupils' personal development is a significant strength of the school. It helps to ensure that pupils have an effective understanding of life beyond school. Pupils demonstrate a secure, age-appropriate understanding of important topics such as online safety and healthy relationships. They know about different faiths. Over 30 different languages are spoken by pupils and this diversity is celebrated and used to teach pupils about other cultures.

Lessons proceed without any need to remind pupils of the school's high expectations. Pupils play well together at social times. They enjoy strong relationships with staff, and they trust the adults that work with them. The school works successfully with families where more support is needed to improve pupils' attendance. Attendance at school is above the national average.

Trust leaders and local governors have a clear understanding of their respective responsibilities. They know the school well. Leaders at all levels are highly aspirational for the pupils. Staff workload is very well managed. Staff are extremely positive about

working at the school and they feel valued. The school engages extremely effectively with parents and carers.

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 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School to be good for overall effectiveness in September 2018.

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	148978
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10346800
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	229
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Harrison
CEO of the trust	Anita Bath
Headteacher	Anne Bullerwell
Website	www.stcuthbertsk.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Bishop Bewick Catholic education Trust.
- The next section 48 inspection of Catholic schools is due by March 2027. The last inspection took place in March 2019.
- St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy school in March 2022. When its predecessor school, St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good for overall effectiveness.
- The school offers a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation of the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection 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 spoke with the headteacher and other leaders, along with a range of staff. Meetings were held with governors, representatives of the trust, and a representative of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.
- 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 visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The views of parents, staff and pupils were gathered through Ofsted Parent View, staff and pupil surveys, and face-to-face discussions.
- The inspector considered a range of documents. These included safeguarding records, attendance information and the school improvement plan.

Inspection team

Carl Sugden, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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