

Inspection of St John Vianney Catholic Primary School, West Denton

Hillhead Road, West Denton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE5 1DN

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 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 Allyson Thorpe. 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.

Ofsted has not previously inspected St John Vianney Catholic Primary School as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St John Vianney Primary School prepares pupils to be confident, lifelong learners. It effectively supports pupils' social and emotional well-being, which ensures pupils are ready to learn.

The school teaches pupils its behaviour expectations through the 'ready, respectful, safe' mantra. Adults use the same script when they speak to pupils who have not made the right choice. The school 'positively praises and private sanctions' pupils. This ensures that there is a consistent and fair approach to behaviour management.

Pupils understand the significance of the 'board of recognition'. Each half term, pupils focus on displaying a character trait. For example, at the time of the inspection, it was to be respectful to others. Pupils confidently demonstrate this trait by holding doors open and being kind to each other.

Pupils have great respect for the adults that support them. They trust these adults to keep them safe.

The school has made changes to their curriculum in recent years. The staff who lead curriculum improvements are passionate, knowledgeable and equipped to develop their subjects further.

The school provides leadership opportunities to pupils, such as school councillors, eco-warriors and subject ambassadors. These roles promote responsibility.

Pupils have opportunities to show their Catholic faith in action. They actively seek to do good for others, for example supporting the local soup kitchen and food bank.

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

The school's curriculum has undergone necessary changes since 2021. The school ensures each subject is well planned and sequenced. The school has considered the essential knowledge and skills that pupils need to know from Nursery to Year 6. The school uses knowledge organisers to support pupils to understand the important aspects of a unit of work. These organisers include the appropriate vocabulary that the school has identified it wants pupils to use. However, in some subjects, pupils do not consistently use the subject-specific vocabulary to explain what they have previously learned.

The school prioritises the teaching of early reading from Nursery. It has carefully selected texts and uses these as 'a book as a hook' to enhance the curriculum. There is a consistent structure to the school's phonics lesson. Pupils use their phonics knowledge to sound out new words. As a result, most pupils can read at an age-appropriate level. The school regularly checks which pupils need extra catch-up sessions if they are not keeping up with the phonics programme. These are additional sessions that focus on the sounds that pupils do not know.

The school ensures that their mathematics curriculum gives pupils the opportunity to access a mastery approach. This means that pupils are developing their ability to problem solve. Pupils enjoy mathematics and talk enthusiastically about the 'tough 10'. This aspect of mathematics focuses on pupils improving their arithmetic automaticity. As a result, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are positive.

The school uses 'blasts' at the start of each lesson to support pupils to recall and revisit prior learning. This activity allows pupils to blast the knowledge they have learned before. Pupils confidently talk about their learning as it happens in lessons. However, in some subjects, pupils struggle to remember what they have previously learned.

The school is highly ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has a focused monitoring system that enables leaders to continually review provision for groups and individuals. Pupils with SEND are particularly well supported in English and mathematics with appropriate, adaptive resources. The school's demographic has changed since the last inspection. As a result, leaders are accurately early identifying more pupils with SEND.

The practitioners in the early years support children to develop a love of learning. The school supports children to be resilient, capable and self-assured learners. In the areas of provision such as the water or sand trays the school displays vocabulary. This supports practitioners to focus on modelling and repeating the right language. In Nursery, the adults promote listening skills, share stories and sing rhymes to lay the foundations to develop children's language and communication skills. However, in some areas of the outdoor provision, like the construction zone, the learning intention is not clear.

The school's programme to develop pupils' character and citizenship links closely to their Catholic ethos and values. Staff sensitively nurture and reassure pupils to boost their self-esteem and confidence. Golden book assemblies celebrate pupils' achievements in school and at home. Pupils know how to stay safe online.

The staff know that leaders are mindful of their workload and feel that they have been part of the school's improvement journey. The local governing committee holds leaders to account through its visits to the school and its questioning. As a result, it has a good understanding of how the curriculum changes impact on pupils' achievement.

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 subjects, some pupils do not use the subject-specific vocabulary,

identified by the school, to talk about their previous learning. This means that pupils are not using the right language to discuss what they know. The school should ensure that the subject-specific vocabulary is appropriately emphasised so it builds over time.

- In some subjects, some pupils are less able to recall and make connections between aspects of their learning than they are in others. The school should provide opportunities for pupils to revisit learning consistently well across all subjects so that it is better embedded in pupils' long-term memory.
- The school has not ensured that some activities in the early years areas of provision have meaningful learning intentions. This means that some skills do not build progressively from Nursery to Reception. The school should ensure that all activities are purposefully chosen to build children's knowledge and skills over time.

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	148977
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10290390
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	446
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Harrison
CEO of the trust	Anita Bath
Headteacher	Allyson Thorpe
Website	www.stjohnvianneynewcastle.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust in April 2022. There is a local governing committee that helps set the strategic direction of the school.
- The school is a Roman Catholic primary school. The most recent inspection of the school's religious character took place in March 2023.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- The school building has been identified as containing reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete.
- The school does not use any alternative provisions.
- The school has Nursery provision for three-year-old children.

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, curriculum leaders, staff and pupils.
- Meetings were also held with representatives of the local governing committee, the CEO, a trustee and the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, geography and modern foreign languages. 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 discussed the curriculum structure of art and design and design technology.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 views of parents, staff and pupils were considered from meeting with them and from the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire.

Inspection team

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sue Richardson	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Hall	Ofsted Inspector
Rowena Sykes	Ofsted Inspector

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