

Inspection of Ss Peter and Paul's Catholic Primary Academy

Northumbrian Road, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 6DB

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The executive headteacher of this school is Charlotte Chapman, who is responsible for this school and one other. The head of school is Stephen Anderson. 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, Anita Bath, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Harrison.

What is it like to attend this school?

Strong and determined leadership has raised the expectation of what can be achieved in the school. Staff and pupils are living up to these high aspirations. Pupils achieve well in the curriculum and enjoy a range of exciting and interesting activities beyond the classroom.

Pupils are happy. They welcome new friends joining the school and say that the school is: 'a safe place for children to learn and have fun'. There are new and exciting activities at playtimes. Pupils of all ages make music, play in the giant sandpit, climb trees and enjoy an array of dressing-up props. There is a sense of fun and enjoyment.

Behaviour is calm and orderly in and outside of classrooms. Pupils are polite. They hold doors open for visitors and have excellent manners. Their spiritual and moral development is underpinned through the strong Catholic ethos of the school. From an early age, the school teaches pupils to reflect on their own actions and behaviours, in line with the teachings of Catholicism.

Several parents describe Ss Peter and Paul's as a 'family'. Relationships between staff, pupils, and parents and carers are warm and welcoming. Families appreciate the genuine care and support given to pupils and are delighted with the improvements seen at the school.

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

Staff have developed a carefully sequenced, high-quality curriculum. Pupils achieve highly in this school and acquire important knowledge and skills across a broad range of subjects. Pupils take pride in their work and complete it to a high standard. Leaders have instilled a culture of high expectation which is being lived in every classroom in the school. These high expectations begin from the day children join the Reception class. Strong links with local early years settings ensure that children make a strong start at the school.

The approach to the teaching of early reading is thorough and effective. Well-trained adults ensure that those pupils who struggle to keep up are supported to catch up. Pupils talk with confidence and excitement about the books and authors that they enjoy, demonstrating their love of reading. They love the school-designed 'raid the reader' sessions.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are carefully supported to access the same curriculum as their peers. Staff are trained so they know how to identify the needs of pupils with SEND and adapt their teaching to make sure that everyone can access the curriculum. In mathematics, for example, pupils have access to a range of apparatus to draw on if they need additional support.

Pupils' wider development is exemplary. Pupils take advantage of a rich set of experiences and opportunities to broaden their horizons and nurture their talents. They take on responsibilities such as Mini Vinnies, the school newspaper and eco-warriors with pride. Creative and exciting school clubs, including School of Rock, Rosary Club and Modified Ball Games Club, ensure that there is something for everyone.

The school develops pupils' confidence and speaking skills extremely well. Pupils achieve highly at public speaking competitions organised by the trust. Pupils also lead their own assemblies, linked to 'the language of the term'. This helps those with English as an additional language to feel valued and welcomed. Pupils say that everyone is welcome at Ss Peter and Paul's. As such, attendance is high. Pupils want to attend school each day.

Pupils' behaviour and attitude are a strength of the school. Support is available for those who need additional help with their emotions. Pupils can visit the Rainbow Room, a safe space to talk, draw and reflect. This approach to nurture runs through the school community. Early years staff interact with children warmly, guiding them into the 'Ss Peter and Paul's way'. They develop children's communication and language skills in highly effective ways.

The significant improvements made to the school have been carried out with pace but also with care and leadership expertise. Staff report that they have been supported and coached extremely well. They feel valued and proud to be part of the school and trust. Staff morale is high. Subject leaders have been carefully nurtured to gradually take ownership of their subjects. They are now ready to further strengthen the delivery of the curriculum offer and bring in greater consistency. On occasions, there remains some variation in how well the curriculum is implemented. For example, in some subjects the tasks that teachers set pupils do not enable them to fully learn the knowledge that they need.

Governance is strong at all levels. The local governing committee and board of trustees have the necessary training and experience to support and challenge the work of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not yet fully refined the ways in which some aspects of the curriculum are taught. This means that in some subjects the tasks that pupils are set are not fully matched to what pupils need to know and understand. The school should continue to work with subject leaders to further enhance the

teaching of the curriculum so that the tasks pupils are set align fully with the important things they need to learn in every subject.

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	141832
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10290277
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	180
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Harrison
Executive Headteacher	Charlotte Chapman
Website	www.ss-peterandpauls.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic primary school. Its last section 48 inspection was in June 2018. The school is part of the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has joined the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust.
- The school does not currently use any alternative education providers.
- The school provides wraparound care for its pupils, in the form of breakfast and after-school clubs.

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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and computing. 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 reviewed the curriculums for history, geography and for the early years.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 1, 2 and 3.
- As part of the inspection, inspectors held discussions with school leaders, the trust chief executive officer, the director of primary standards, a trustee, members of the school local governing committee and the deputy director of education for the diocese.
- 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons visits, at lunchtime, playtime and during a visit to the school's breakfast club. Inspectors spoke with pupils and were also given a tour of the school by pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation provided by the school, such as minutes of governance meetings, quality assurance reports and school improvement planning.
- Inspectors considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil questionnaires. Inspectors met with staff to discuss their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Mark Dent, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Rowena Sykes

Ofsted Inspector

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