

Inspection of a good school: The Cathedral Catholic Primary School, Lancaster

Balmoral Road, Lancaster, Lancashire LA1 3BT

Inspection dates:

10–11 March 2020

Outcome

The Cathedral Catholic Primary School, Lancaster continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Cathedral School welcomes pupils from many places across the world. Pupils are very proud of their school and the many nationalities and cultures that make up the school family. Pupils who spoke to us said that they feel safe and well looked after.

Classes are calm. There is no disruption to lessons because pupils know how to behave. Bullying is extremely rare as everyone is valued for their uniqueness. Pupils say that if bullying were to occur, they are confident that adults would deal with it.

Pupils get the opportunity to learn a wide range of subjects. Teachers plan interesting lessons and have high expectations for every pupil. However, in some subjects, teachers expect pupils to learn lots of information. This can mean that sometimes, there is too much to remember all at once.

The school offers pupils lots of opportunities for learning beyond lessons. There is a variety of after-school clubs, including those for street dance, netball, chess and choir. Visits and visitors make the curriculum more interesting for pupils. For example, trips to theatres, galleries and places of worship help them to understand different cultures and religions.

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

Leaders have planned a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Teachers demonstrate a strong knowledge of the subjects they teach. In most subjects, pupils get opportunities to go back over what they have learned and build up their knowledge. This helps them remember the important ideas in each topic. In art, teachers sometimes do not present what they are teaching clearly enough. Pupils do not get enough opportunity to build up their skills as they progress through school.

Leaders think that reading is important across the school. Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start in Reception. Pupils learn to read well. There is a well-planned and sequenced curriculum. Books are matched closely to the sounds that pupils know. There are effective strategies for ensuring that pupils catch up quickly if they fall behind. Adults have received a range of effective training and have a good understanding of the phonics programme. Results in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2019 were disappointing. However, leaders responded quickly by buying new reading books to help pupils to practise what they learn in phonics. Pupils are now doing much better. The teaching of reading in key stage 2 is well structured. Pupils read fluently. They can use their knowledge well to read and understand a range of texts.

Leaders have refined the curriculum plans for mathematics so that the work for each year group is clearer. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Pupils get opportunities to put their knowledge into action through problem solving and reasoning. Sometimes, however, teachers do not present what pupils need to know as clearly as they could. For example, occasionally, there is too much information in each lesson. This makes it hard for pupils to remember what they have learned.

Since the last inspection, leaders have reviewed the provision in early years. They have designed a curriculum that gives most children the knowledge they need. Children get off to a good start in Reception. Leaders give priority to developing children's knowledge of language and mathematics. Children are excited about their learning. Staff organise a wide range of activities, both indoors and outdoors. They enable children to become independent and resilient.

Leaders ensure that pupils get many experiences beyond the classroom. There are residential trips for pupils in key stage 2. Pupils take part in community events, such as collecting for charity and singing at residential homes. Older pupils have opportunities to take on leadership roles, such as prefects, class ambassadors and school councillors.

Pupils behave very well. They are polite and respectful. Pupils know what teachers expect of them and they enjoy achieving rewards for good behaviour. Bullying is extremely rare, and if it does occur, leaders deal with it swiftly and effectively. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Adults teach them how to stay safe. Staff support pupils' well-being effectively. Pupils have time to talk if they are worried about anything at school or at home. Relationships between school and home are strong.

Staff are very appreciative of leaders' efforts to look after their well-being and reduce workload. There is a strong sense of teamwork. Staff feel valued. Relationships with leaders are positive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know what to do if they are worried about a child. Reporting arrangements are clear. Records show that leaders are quick to respond to any concerns. The school works well with support services outside school to help families. Leaders make sure that they train staff in safeguarding. They keep them up to date about their safeguarding responsibilities.

Leaders have thorough procedures in place to recruit staff safely. They carry out all the checks they need to in order to ensure that adults are suitable to work with pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders ensure that pupils learn a broad curriculum. However, teachers do not present some content in the curriculum as clearly as possible. This means that pupils do not acquire the knowledge they need as securely as they could. Leaders need to ensure that, across all subjects, teachers present subject matter in a way that enables pupils to gain knowledge and remember it.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good/standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	119621
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10122102
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Nolan-Barnes
Headteacher	Nicola Holt
Website	www.cathedral.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have both taken up their posts since the last inspection.
- The school's last inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 was in November 2015.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, subject leaders, teachers and members of the governing body. I also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- I talked with pupils in meetings and around school. I also listened to pupils read.
- I considered 48 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including free-text responses. There were 16 responses to the staff questionnaire and 30 responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- I looked at the school's self-evaluation document.

- I reviewed a range of documentation about the school. This included information about safeguarding and behaviour.
- As part of the inspection, I looked in detail at reading, mathematics and art. I visited lessons with leaders and looked at pupils' work. I met with some pupils from the lesson visits to discuss their learning. I discussed the curriculum in these subjects with teachers and subject leaders.

Inspection team

Emma Jackson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020