

Inspection of a good school: Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Primary School

The Drove, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 7AT

Inspection dates:

10–11 December 2019

Outcome

Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. The family ethos helps pupils to get to know each other well. Pupils are not worried about bullying; they say that staff help them when problems arise. Staff celebrate pupils' achievements and acts of kindness in weekly assemblies. Leaders record pupils' notable acts in the school's 'gold book' of achievements. Pupils strive to live by the school's motto to 'love, live and learn in the light of Christ'.

Most pupils behave very well. They are polite and kind to each other. At times, a few pupils struggle to manage their behaviour. The support to help these pupils is not always available. The expectation of how pupils should behave is not the same in all classes.

Pupils take part in a wide range of community activities. They visit the local church and join in with services and community events. Pupils put on performances for parents. They enjoy singing and performing.

Recently, there have been many changes to staffing. Leaders have not made sure that all teachers have the same high expectations. The quality of education pupils experience in different subjects is not the same. Turbulent subject leadership has led to a slip in standards in some subjects.

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

The headteacher has made improvements to the curriculum. This has included implementing a curriculum for early reading and mathematics. In recent years, there has been a high staff turnover. This has meant that some staff have not had training in how to deliver the curriculum. These new staff have not been able to take on subject leadership roles. Leaders have not been able to check on the quality of education in all subjects.

In reading, some staff teach pupils well. Children start learning letter sounds as soon as they begin in Reception. Teachers know how many sounds children should have learned

by the end of each term. Many pupils achieve this. However, other staff have not had the training they need to deliver the school's phonics programme. Some staff who teach the weakest readers are not skilled enough to help these pupils to learn. The books these pupils read do not always match the sounds they know. These pupils are falling further behind.

Pupils who know all the phonics sounds do not continue to develop their reading well enough. There is not a coherent curriculum in place to further develop pupils' reading. The leader for English has a plan in place. It is too early to assess the impact of this.

The mathematics curriculum is planned to build on what pupils have learned before. There have been changes in the leadership of mathematics. Sometimes staff do not follow the curriculum plan. The implementation of the mathematics curriculum is not consistent across the school. This causes confusion for some pupils. Teachers' use of assessment is not yet effective enough for them to know what pupils can and cannot do.

In history, pupils learn how to find out about the past. They look at evidence to draw conclusions about life in the past and to make comparisons with today. Pupils in Year 4 consider why the Nile was important to the Ancient Egyptians. They compare it to the motorways of today. In Year 5, pupils reflect on the impact of the Great Fire of London on life in the capital city.

In the early years, children are happy and well cared for. Teachers check what children can do, and then build on what they already know. For example, children were learning that a number can be represented in different ways. They used objects and pictures to add numbers together. Teachers plan learning around reading books. Children were enjoying learning about the gingerbread man.

The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is not always effective. This is particularly the case for those pupils with social or emotional needs. Staff who should work with these pupils are often not available. Some staff do not have the skills to stop incidents of poor behaviour from getting more serious. Too often, incidents end with leaders excluding pupils.

Pupils have opportunities to learn about life in modern Britain. They enjoy taking on extra roles and responsibilities. Pupils in Year 6 apply for the roles of head boy and girl, and their deputies. In most lessons pupils behave well; however, sometimes pupils take time to settle. When this happens, some staff do not follow the school's behaviour policy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know what the needs of pupils are. When they have significant concerns, they seek help from the local authority. Leaders seek support to help families before issues become a major concern. Leaders' records are comprehensive and show the support pupils receive. Staff know their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils. They know how to report concerns, including if they have a concern about one of the senior leaders. Staff

have had training in the 'Prevent' duty and to understand the risks that pupils may face. This includes female genital mutilation and domestic violence.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Support for pupils with social and emotional needs is not consistent. Some staff do not follow the school's behaviour policy. Pupils do not receive timely support to help them manage their behaviour. Too many incidents of poor behaviour escalate and result in fixed-term exclusions. Leaders must ensure that staff have the same expectations and are well trained to help pupils manage their behaviour, resulting in fewer fixed-term exclusions.
- The teaching of phonics is not consistently strong. Some staff who teach phonics have not received training in the school's approach. The weakest readers do not get effective teaching. Leaders must ensure that all staff have training to teach phonics, and check to make sure that teaching is consistent, of high quality and helping those pupils to catch up quickly.
- The curriculum for reading does not build pupils' knowledge well. There is not a consistent approach to teaching reading. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum sets out how pupils' reading knowledge will be developed as they move through the school, and that teachers are well trained to teach the curriculum.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to the teaching of mathematics. However, due to turbulence in staffing they have not been able to check its implementation. The use of assessment in mathematics is not yet effective in identifying gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders must ensure that staff receive training that is effective in enabling them to use the school's approach to mathematics. Leaders must check that staff are following the school's curriculum and that pupils know more and remember more.

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 school 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 or that 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school to be good on 21 November 2011.

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 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	139621
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10110149
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	164
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jerzy Krawiec
Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Parker
Website	www.our-lady.lincs.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	3 March 2016

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school trust has changed from the St Gilbert of Sempringham Catholic Academy Trust to the St Therese of Lisieux Multi-Academy Trust.

Information about this inspection

- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. This included lesson visits accompanied by members of the school's staff. I talked with pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work in these subjects.
- I held meetings with the headteacher, the leader for the provision for pupils with SEND, subject leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. I also spoke with the vice-chair of the governing body and two other governors. I considered the 25 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View. There were no responses to the staff survey.
- I looked at a range of documents, including the school's curriculum plans, plans for improvement, the most recent published information on the achievement and progress of pupils and information relating to the arrangements for safeguarding pupils.

Inspection team

Helen Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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