

Inspection of The Sacred Heart Primary Catholic Voluntary Academy

Southcliffe Road, Carlton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG4 1EQ

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 April 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The executive headteacher of this school is Anne-Marie Bell. The school is part of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi Academy 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), James McGeachie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nigel Stevenson.

What is it like to attend this school?

The 'HEART' values run consistently through the Sacred Heart Academy. The school expects pupils to be hard working, enthusiastic, aspirational, respectful and to aim for togetherness. Pupils do their utmost to live up to these values each day. As a result, they achieve well.

Pupils consistently demonstrate positive behaviour. They use 'Star Listening', 'Slow Walking' and 'Politeness Pets' to model positive conduct and courtesy. They value the awards that they can earn. Pupils enjoy moving through the behaviour chart from 'Heart to Star'. They are proud to earn points for their houses. They understand what happens in the event of poor behaviour but say that the reminders that go with the 'White Cloud' help keep behaviour positive. Pupils describe that the 'Blue Cloud' and 'Red Circle' have serious consequences, but they rarely have to be used.

Pupils take on many roles to help out around the school. These include well-being leaders, peer mentors, information technology technicians, wet play and assembly leaders. Pupils wear their badges of office with pride.

At breaktimes, pupils play co-operatively, explore and take calculated risks. They thrive on the opportunities to play imaginatively and to be creative. They do this to an impressive degree.

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

The recently established senior leadership team has brought about some significant improvements in a short period of time. It has strengthened safeguarding, provision in the early years and parts of the curriculum. Ably supported by the trust, the school knows what is working well and what needs to improve further. It has good capacity for continued improvement.

The school has implemented a well-planned curriculum. It makes clear what pupils are expected to know and remember at each stage of their education. Content builds incrementally over time. Important knowledge is revisited periodically. On the whole, pupils know and remember what they have learned. In many cases, pupils recall what they learned several terms ago with ease. In lessons, teachers check closely on how well pupils learn and remember content. However, in some subjects, the school does not use this information well enough to check on which parts of the curriculum are working well, and which parts need to be strengthened. In a small number of cases, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons. Some pupils are given work that is too easy for them.

Pupils get off to a good start in reading. The school's phonics programme is well organised. It makes clear the sounds that pupils are expected to know at each stage of the early years and key stage 1. The school regularly checks to make sure that pupils are keeping up. Typically, they do. Any that begin to fall behind are given the help needed to succeed.

Beyond phonics, pupils study a wide range of books, genres and authors. They enjoy the daily sessions where teachers read to them. One pupil told inspectors that it 'Helps us to feel like we're inside the story.' These strategies help pupils to become keen readers.

The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and ensures that staff have a clear understanding of their needs. Teachers skilfully adapt lessons to ensure that pupils with SEND learn and remember the curriculum. Pupils with SEND achieve well. Pupils who need help to manage their feelings and emotions are supported effectively.

The early years is a happy and vibrant place. The curriculum is well-organised. It makes clear the important milestones that children are expected to reach at each stage through Nursery and the Reception Year. The wide range of activities on offer help children to learn the curriculum and to develop their independence. Staff are skilled at helping children to develop their communication and language skills.

Pupils' personal development is supported well. The school has devised and implemented well-organised curriculums for personal, social and health education (PSHE), and relationships and sex education. Pupils learn about a wide range of faiths and cultures from around the world. They have a secure understanding of fundamental British values and an age-appropriate understanding of the protected characteristics.

Behaviour and attitudes are positive. However, some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, miss too much school. The school has begun to tackle this. It has put in place robust systems to identify and address barriers to attendance. However, while this work is showing some 'green shoots' of success, it has not fully secured the necessary improvements. This remains a priority for 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)

- In some foundation subjects, the school does not use assessment information well enough. As a result, in these subjects, the school does not have a fully rounded view of where strengths and weaknesses lie in the curriculum and its implementation. The school should ensure that its assessments are used to evaluate strengths and weaknesses, and to inform improvements.
- Occasionally, some pupils are given work that is too easy for them. When this is the case, pupils do not go on to achieve as highly as they could. The school should ensure that pupils are consistently given work that helps them to consolidate and extend their learning.

- Some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not attend school regularly enough. They miss important learning. The school should continue to work with parents to improve attendance for pupils.

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

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| Unique reference number | 138813 |
| Local authority | Nottinghamshire County Council |
| Inspection number | 10347545 |
| 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 | 219 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Nigel Stevenson |
| CEO of the trust | James McGeachie |
| Headteacher | Anne-Maire Bell (executive headteacher) |
| Website | www.sacredheart.notts.sch.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 16 and 17 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The Sacred Heart Primary Catholic Voluntary Academy is part of the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative education providers.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Nottingham. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in November 2019.
- The school currently has a temporary, executive headteacher for three days a week. The deputy headteacher acts as head of school for the remaining two days each week. The executive headteacher has been appointed as substantive headteacher and will take up post, full time, in September 2025. At the time of the inspection, the temporary arrangements had been in place for seven weeks.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection that 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the early years leaders, those responsible for SEND and groups of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: reading, mathematics, history, and art and design. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. Inspectors also spoke to leaders, looked at curriculum documentation and spoke with pupils about science, modern foreign languages and PSHE.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair. He met with the chief executive officer and deputy chief executive officer of the trust and the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and written comments from parents. An inspector spoke informally to parents outside the school. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- 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 reviewed school documents, including those relating to governance, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors scrutinised leaders' plans for improvement and their assessment of the school's effectiveness.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils at breaktimes, in the dining hall and on the playground.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Becky Lyon

Ofsted Inspector

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