

Inspection of St Aloysius Catholic Junior School Academy

Argyle Street, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear NE31 1BQ

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Aloysius Junior School Academy are exceptionally proud to attend this school. The quality of the curriculum and education pupils receive is exceptional. Relationships between pupils and teachers are caring and respectful. Pupils respect and value one another. The Christian ethos is woven into the daily life of the school. In lessons, pupils consistently work hard and take pride in their work. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary and their attitudes to learning are overwhelmingly positive. Bullying is rare and staff know how to keep pupils safe.

Leaders have planned a highly ambitious and broad curriculum for all pupils. Staff at all levels understand this ambition and support pupils to achieve this. As a result, pupils have a vast range of deep and connected knowledge. Pupils are passionate about their learning and eager to share their achievements. Pupils reflect on their own learning and progress in extremely insightful ways.

Pupils are given the opportunity to take part in a range of leadership activities. Leaders make sure that pupils know about diversity and equal opportunities so that pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

School leaders and governors are extremely proud of the achievements of pupils at St Aloysius Junior School Academy. School leaders have built an exceptional curriculum. This enables pupils to learn knowledge extremely well across a wide range of subjects. Pupils recall this knowledge with clarity and confidence.

Reading is prioritised by leaders. They know that good reading is essential to enable pupils to access the wide range of subjects on offer. The youngest pupils are well supported to embed their phonics knowledge. This helps them to read more fluently. Reading is woven through all areas of the curriculum. Pupils talk with eagerness and passion about their favourite authors and books. Pupils value reading as a chance to escape and to relax. Staff ensure that support is put in place to help pupils at the earliest stages of reading to become fluent and confident readers. Pupils also excel in maths. Strong previous learning helps pupils grasp new advanced mathematical concepts.

Leaders ensure that the foundation subjects, such as history, art and music, help pupils to build connected knowledge over time. Subject leaders and teachers purposefully design learning to make sure that pupils are ready for their next steps. This includes moving to secondary school. In art, pupils can explain in detail the techniques that a diverse range of artists use in their work. The learning sequence in history means that pupils can connect new learning about the First World War to other conflicts in the past. All pupils, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND), take part fully in the curriculum. Leaders are clear in their ambition for all pupils in the school.

Leaders at all levels are supported to develop their leadership skills. Teachers and teaching assistants receive bespoke professional development. Teaching staff have access to unique school-based toolkits to support their planning. Assessment is used carefully to improve teaching and learning. Teachers make sure that teaching builds well on previous learning.

Staff build a calm and purposeful environment so that pupils can get on with their learning. Pupils know their hard work is recognised. When pupils talk to each other, they focus and respect others' opinions. The way in which they value each other is exceptional.

Pupils take great interest in other faiths and recognise common aspects between them. Staff develop pupils' resilience and determination because the personal, social and health education curriculum is part of everyday school life. Pupils have the opportunity to develop leadership qualities in a wide range of contexts. They enjoy roles on the school council and can also be mental health champions. They enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as choir, art and forest school clubs. Pupils have performed in community projects, such as singing at Durham Cathedral.

Governors and the directors of the trust share leaders' vision for school improvement. They are proud of the achievement of the leaders and the teaching team. Leaders work across schools in the trust to share their curriculum expertise more widely.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and team have thorough procedures in place to ensure that pupils are well supported when they are at risk of harm or are vulnerable. They support families who are in difficult circumstances well. By using a range of external support, the safeguarding team accesses the appropriate services for families in a timely way. They know their families well.

Teachers and governors have regular safeguarding training. Teachers reflect well on the impact of training and talk with confidence about how it has changed their practice.

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](#)' 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	148274
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10240532
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	242
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of local governing body	Wendy Woods
Headteacher	Kathryn Fenwick
Website	www.st-alloysius.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 September 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club, which is open to all pupils.
- The school makes use of a SEND resource base at Hedworthfield Primary School.
- The school is part of Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust.
- The school is federated with St Aloysius Catholic Infant School.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art. The lead inspector also looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work in music and modern foreign languages. The inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons and

spoke to teachers, including those at the early stages of their career. They spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils at the early stages of reading with a familiar adult.

- The lead inspector met with four members of the local governing body. The lead inspector met with the chief executive of the trust and two directors virtually as well as representatives from the diocese and the trust school improvement team.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, in the dining hall, during indoor breaktime and lunchtime and outdoor lunchtime.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to staff, parents, carers and governors. Safeguarding documentation was scrutinised, including the safeguarding policies, and the single central record. Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed relationships between pupils and adults. The lead inspector also met with the DSL and a deputy DSL.
- Inspectors gathered views of parents informally in person and formally through responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text responses. The views of staff and pupils were considered through meetings, as well as considering their responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Emily Stevens, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Aitchison

Senior His Majesty's Inspector

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