



St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Edlington

Address: Bungalow Road, DN12 1DL

Unique reference number (URN): 106773

Inspection report: 6 January 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders prioritise pupils' attendance. They are committed to ensuring pupils attend school regularly so they can support them academically and develop the social and life skills pupils need to succeed. Both overall attendance and persistent absence rates are better than the national average and continuing to improve. These improvements are a result of the school's meticulous analysis of attendance data and targeted interventions. The school's strategy is successful because leaders and staff know pupils and their families well.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. A highly positive, established whole-school approach to behaviour has been sustained through a culture of high expectations and embedded routines. Behaviour expectations are taught explicitly. Staff model expectations daily and reinforce routines. Expectations for uniform, excellent manners and conduct are consistent and evident around school. Pupils settle quickly in lessons. They are focused and engaged. Pupils show high levels of motivation and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils socialise well together and show high levels of respect for each other. Outside the classroom, the school is calm and orderly. Pupils show high levels of self-control. Pupils understand the behaviour expectations well. They know what happens if expectations are not met and value the fair rewards system. This helps pupils to behave well and feel secure.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is ambitious and carefully sequenced from the early years to Year 6. Clear end points are established for the end of each year group. Teachers use information about pupils' previous learning so they know what pupils can already do and what they need to learn next. Leaders prioritise communication and language, placing oracy at the heart of the curriculum. Staff provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop vocabulary. Assessment is used well to identify and address gaps quickly. Staff use assessment information well to provide timely and well-targeted additional support. They adapt lessons skilfully so that pupils with additional needs access the curriculum and succeed.

Reading is prioritised. Phonics is taught consistently well. Leaders ensure daily lessons are never missed. Staff check targeted interventions regularly to ensure they remain purposeful. Parents and carers are supported to help pupils to read at home. Staff deliver the writing curriculum consistently well. Pupils have regular opportunities to practise handwriting and spelling. In mathematics, pupils benefit from daily sessions that help them to secure number facts and develop their mathematical fluency.

High quality-teaching is consistent across the school. Pupils learn well and build their knowledge securely over time. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They use questioning and modelling to develop and deepen pupils' understanding. They explain concepts clearly and address misconceptions quickly. Staff support pupils to apply their learning in different contexts. In lessons, well-established routines mean time is used well.

Tasks are engaging and pupils are enthusiastic. They have regular opportunities to talk about their learning.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

The needs of disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language are identified quickly and accurately. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide targeted academic and pastoral support. This supports disadvantaged pupils to overcome barriers and achieve well. Targets are carefully tailored to pupils' needs. Progress through the curriculum is rigorously monitored by well-trained staff. Leaders ensure pupils are supported well to develop their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders' approach is flexible and focused on the individual needs of each pupil. Leaders check frequently how well pupils are progressing towards their targets. They regularly review the impact of this approach and change strategies where needed.

In lessons, teaching is carefully adapted to meet pupils' individual needs. Staff know pupils well. They are highly skilled in providing the right adaptations in lessons so pupils can access the curriculum effectively. Disadvantaged pupils learn successfully alongside their peers. Pupils benefit from interventions such as short, focused teaching sessions that take place before the start of the normal school day. Pupils receive well-matched interventions in reading, writing and mathematics. This enables pupils to secure the knowledge and skills they need to access the curriculum.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders are aspirational for pupils, including those who are vulnerable. Leaders and governors have established a clear vision driven by the school's diverse context. They prioritise high expectations for learning, behaviour and attendance. This creates a calm and purposeful environment, ensuring pupils succeed regardless of their ability or background. Leaders are committed to providing a high quality education that has a positive impact on pupils' outcomes both socially and academically. This is tailored specifically to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils. Parents and carers feel involved and appreciate the support their children receive.

Professional learning is well considered and clearly focused on improving practice. Leaders work closely with other schools in the partnership. Training is purposeful and linked closely to school priorities. Staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the considered approach to managing workload. This is supported by purposeful training and development opportunities, including those specifically linked to inclusion.

Governors are knowledgeable about their statutory duties and carry them out effectively. They know the school well. They provide effective support and challenge, using a range of evidence such as visits, reports and training to assure themselves of the quality and impact of the school's work. Governors have an appropriate balance of skills, experience and backgrounds. They are knowledgeable about inclusion, safeguarding and attendance. They are committed to ensuring pupils' outcomes and attendance are maximised for

disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and vulnerable groups.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school's personal development programme is well thought out. Leaders have carefully considered how the experiences they offer enhance the lives of pupils, including vulnerable pupils. Through the relationships, sex and education (RSE) and health education curriculum, pupils learn about friendship, wellbeing and emotions. They receive support to consider future careers. Pupils learn about fundamental British values. They understand respect, fairness and equality. They know that discrimination, racism and segregation are not acceptable. They talk about safety and the right of everyone to feel safe, including people affected by war or those who come from other countries. The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe.

Leaders and staff know pupils well and identify pastoral needs quickly. Support is highly effective. The RSE curriculum supports pupils' health and wellbeing. Pupils learn how to form and maintain friendships, manage peer pressure and resolve difficulties respectfully. The 'life skills programme' develops independence, responsibility and self-care from early years onwards. This broadens pupils' experience of the world around them and supports them to become independent at home.

Pupils show high levels of respect for others. They talk confidently about difference and equality and understand that everyone should be treated fairly. They understand how to discuss different views respectfully and link this to learning, such as learning about Black History Month and current affairs. A wide range of clubs, trips, residential and work with other schools helps pupils to develop talents, interests and confidence. Pupils take responsibility seriously. They support younger pupils, contribute to assemblies and take on leadership roles, such as those of attendance ambassadors. Pupils also contribute positively to the wider community through charity work, remembrance events and fundraising. Pupils feel safe in school and understand how to keep themselves safe, including online. They understand healthy lifestyles and talk knowledgably about physical and mental health.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Over time, pupils achieve broadly in line with national outcomes, including those who are disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Achievement gaps for disadvantaged pupils are reducing. This ensures pupils are well prepared for their next steps after Year 6.

Pupils' knowledge is secure across the curriculum. Pupils recall subject-specific learning and explain key concepts clearly. Across the curriculum, they develop a broad vocabulary that helps them to explain their ideas clearly and confidently. Teaching revisits and reinforces key knowledge and skills which supports pupils to typically build their understanding securely

over time. This ensures they remember more and understand ideas in greater depth as they move through the school.

Pupils secure their foundational knowledge in literacy and mathematics well. Lesson visits, work in books and discussions show that pupils build fluency in reading, handwriting, spelling and number facts. Short daily mathematics sessions help pupils to remember key knowledge, which they apply to more-complex tasks in longer mathematics lessons.

Early years

Expected standard 

The early years curriculum is well structured from Nursery to the end of Reception across all areas of learning. The curriculum reflects the context of the school community. Children often enter with low starting points and are supported well. High priority is given to developing language, vocabulary and communication. Clear routines and high expectations are established as soon as children start at school.

Teaching is purposeful and engaging. Staff interact well with children and extend their thinking through talk. Staff know children well and support learning effectively through play and structured activities. The curriculum sparks children's curiosity and interest in learning. Learning is adapted to meet children's needs. For example, activities in mathematics use different-sized resources so all children can take part. Children secure their phonics knowledge and develop early reading skills through regular teaching and opportunities to practise. Well-designed opportunities support children to consolidate learning, including in mathematics and early number.

Leaders ensure gaps in learning are identified early. They have aligned curriculum maps into Year 1. This ensures any gaps are quickly addressed and pupils are ready for Year 1 and beyond. Children respond quickly to instructions and move independently between activities. The environment is calm and purposeful. Children are engaged and sustain their attention in activities. Staff build positive relationships with parents to ensure needs are identified early and children settle quickly.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

This is a highly inclusive school where pupils feel valued and supported. Leaders have embedded an 'Every Child Can' culture and set high expectations for all pupils, including those who join the school later or those who are vulnerable. Many pupils join the school who speak English as an additional language, and often with low starting points. They quickly feel safe and know who to talk to if they are worried. Pupils trust staff and are confident that adults will help them. Relationships with staff are warm and caring. Staff know pupils well. Staff respond quickly if something is wrong. Pupils attend regularly. They feel secure and well cared for.

Lessons are purposeful and engaging. Pupils settle quickly and stay focused on learning. They speak enthusiastically about a wide range of subjects. Pupils enjoy learning and talk about what they know and how it links to what they learned before. Reading is prioritised. Those who need extra help receive it promptly and effectively. Many pupils enjoy reading.

Pupils speak very positively about the school. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are polite, respectful and follow clear routines from the early years onwards. They feel proud to belong, value the support from staff and enjoy coming to school. Pupils with additional needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language, are supported well. Support is timely and carefully tailored, which ensures pupils make positive progress through the curriculum. Pupils respect difference and show kindness and tolerance to others. The school's ethos underpins daily life and creates a safe, caring place where pupils are empowered to succeed. Pupils benefit from a broad range of experiences that prepare them well for life in modern Britain. For example, clubs, trips and leadership roles help pupils build confidence. Any concerns, including bullying, are dealt with swiftly.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to close the achievement gap in reading, writing and mathematics for disadvantaged pupils across all year groups, ensuring that adaptations and support remain carefully targeted.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is John Cape.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher, head of school and assistant headteacher during the inspection. They also met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the safety manager and the finance manager.

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character within the Diocese of Hallam. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in July 2022. The next section 48 inspection will be within 8 years of the previous section 48 inspection.

The school is part of an informal partnership with 2 other schools.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Executive Headteacher/Head of School: Bernadette Nesbit/Sarah McCall

Lead inspector:

Nicola Beaumont, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Dughall McCormick, His Majesty's Inspector

Elaine Watson, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 6 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

201

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

220

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

25.82%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

1.00%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

11.44%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	56%	61%	Close to average
2024/25	71%	62%	Above
2023/24	50%	61%	Below
2022/23	50%	60%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	68%	74%	Below
2024/25	75%	75%	Close to average
2023/24	59%	74%	Below
2022/23	71%	73%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	77%	72%	Close to average
2024/25	88%	72%	Above
2023/24	72%	72%	Close to average
2022/23	75%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	71%	73%	Close to average
2024/25	79%	74%	Close to average
2023/24	56%	73%	Below
2022/23	82%	73%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	54%	46%	Close to average
2024/25	88%	47%	Above
2023/24	36%	46%	Close to average
2022/23	44%	44%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	61%	62%	Close to average
2024/25	88%	63%	Above
2023/24	45%	62%	Below
2022/23	56%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	68%	59%	Above
2024/25	88%	59%	Above
2023/24	55%	58%	Close to average
2022/23	67%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	61%	60%	Close to average
2024/25	88%	61%	Above
2023/24	36%	59%	Below
2022/23	67%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	54%	68%	-14 pp
2024/25	88%	69%	18 pp
2023/24	36%	67%	-31 pp
2022/23	44%	66%	-22 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	61%	80%	-19 pp
2024/25	88%	81%	7 pp
2023/24	45%	80%	-34 pp
2022/23	56%	78%	-23 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	68%	78%	-10 pp
2024/25	88%	78%	9 pp
2023/24	55%	78%	-23 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23	67%	77%	-11 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	61%	80%	-19 pp
2024/25	88%	81%	7 pp
2023/24	36%	79%	-43 pp
2022/23	67%	79%	-13 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 terms)	3.3%	5.2%	Below
2023/24	4.9%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23	4.7%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 terms)	6.9%	13.3%	Below
2023/24	13.9%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23	8.6%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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