

Inspection of St John Henry Newman Catholic School

Scalegate Road, Carlisle CA2 4NL

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including students in the sixth form, are proud of their school. They said that they enjoy coming to school to learn. Pupils also said that the school hymn, which is played throughout the school each morning, gives them a sense of belonging and makes them feel happy to start the day.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school and know that there is always someone that they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns.

Pupils and students know that all staff have high expectations for both their behaviour and learning. They feel challenged in lessons to do their best. They also understand that poor behaviour will not be tolerated. Pupils and students behave well in lessons and when moving around the school site. They are confident that when bullying occurs, leaders deal with this quickly and effectively.

Pupils and students enjoy a range of opportunities to take on additional responsibilities. This includes representing their form group as a member of the school parliament.

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

Leaders have created a well-designed and ambitious curriculum which supports all pupils and students to achieve well. Teachers are clear about the essential learning that pupils and students need to learn and when they need to learn it. Teachers choose appropriate activities to help pupils to learn the curriculum.

Mostly, teachers use assessment strategies well to check that pupils have learned the important knowledge that they need. Teachers use assessment information effectively to revisit learning that pupils may have forgotten and to pinpoint and address pupils' misconceptions.

Leaders have effective systems in place to identify those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This group of pupils achieve well. This is because, for the most part, teachers have a clear understanding of these pupils' needs. Staff ensure that pupils with SEND are supported to access the curriculum. However, the needs of a small minority of pupils are not as well understood by some teachers. This is because leaders do not share sufficient up-to-date information readily with staff about these pupils' needs.

Most pupils behave well. Where this is not the case, teachers use the behaviour policy effectively to avoid learning being disrupted. That said, some pupils struggle to express themselves fluently and confidently. Leaders are addressing this by providing speaking and listening opportunities across subjects to improve this aspect of pupils' development.

Reading is a high priority across the school, including for students in the sixth form. Opportunities for pupils to read and access high-quality texts are built into the day and include class readers for each form group. This continues in sixth form, where students read increasingly complex texts to further improve their vocabulary and discussion skills. Pupils and students learn key vocabulary to help them to understand the meaning of texts. Students in the sixth form learn how to support pupils' reading in Years 7 and 8. Pupils make good progress in reading and most can read fluently and confidently.

Leaders have planned a structured approach to pupils' personal development. A particular strength is pupils' awareness and understanding of tolerance and diversity. For example, a recent series of assemblies designed and delivered by pupils of different backgrounds supported their peers to understand the diversity of their community. Pupils and students are taught about healthy relationships, as well as online and financial risks. The school parliament is a way for pupils to share their ideas and to propose and make changes within school.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils and students to learn about options for their next steps. This includes a wide range of work experience. Pupils and students benefit from opportunities to learn about apprenticeships and career paths linked to their courses, particularly through careers week and careers fairs.

Leaders and governors share an ambitious vision for the school. They work together to make sure that all pupils and students benefit from a range of opportunities to learn how to become articulate and responsible citizens. Leaders work well with stakeholders, including consulting with parents and carers on key issues.

Leaders, including governors, are supportive of staff's well-being and workload. Staff feel that they are highly valued. The school has a strong community feel, where staff and students work together.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on the well-being and safety of all pupils and students, including teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe.

Staff are trained well to spot any signs that indicate a pupil may be at risk from harm. All staff understand the importance of using the recording systems to ensure that any concerns are identified quickly. For instance, leaders include a 'welfare-check' system for those pupils who are late to school. This helps to identify any barriers to them attending as often as they should.

Leaders work very well with outside agencies to provide the support that pupils and families need. Leaders have employed their own counsellor to make sure that they can provide support for vulnerable pupils when needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers are not provided with sufficient up-to-date information to help them to best meet the needs of a small minority of pupils with SEND. This means that teachers do not always use the most appropriate method to help these pupils to learn effectively. Leaders must ensure that sufficient information is shared with teachers in a timely manner to ensure that these pupils benefit from the most appropriate support.

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.

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	112399
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10216079
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	603
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	49
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Amanda Yellowley
Headteacher	John McAuley
Website	www.newman.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 and 31 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Roman Catholic school in the Diocese of Lancaster.
- The last section 48 inspection of this school was on 22 and 23 November 2018.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: mathematics, English, history and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited some lessons, spoke with pupils, students and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' and students' work. Inspectors also visited lessons and looked at samples of work from other subjects.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the special educational needs team, subject leaders and teachers. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority and the diocese.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and vice chair of the governing body and other governors. Inspectors also considered the minutes of several governors' meetings.
- Inspectors checked safeguarding procedures, including the recruitment checks made on staff. Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader, staff, students and pupils to discuss wider aspects of safeguarding. They scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. They also considered survey responses from staff, parents and carers, students and pupils around safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including that relating to the curriculum, pupils' and students' behaviour, improvement plans and leaders' self-evaluation summary.
- Inspectors observed pupils' and students' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at breaktimes, at lunchtimes and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils and students about behaviour and bullying.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and students about their programme of wider personal development.
- Inspectors considered the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments submitted via the free-text facility.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and staff survey.

Inspection team

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