

Inspection of Archbishop Runcie Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

Christon Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne, and Wear NE3 1US

Inspection dates:	10 and 11 December 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and proud to attend Archbishop Runcie Church of England First School. They flourish and live up to the school vision to 'Be courageous, be strong. Do everything in love.' They enjoy being taught in a nurturing and caring environment from the moment they start in Nursery.

Pupils are kind to each other. They willingly take on the many roles and responsibilities around school. Pupils who are library champions, play leaders or in the school council take on their role with pride. They share in each other's successes in the weekly celebration worship.

Pupils behave well. They show care and consideration when letting each other past in corridors or by waiting patiently for their turn in activities. Outside, pupils enjoy the variety of physical activities and the more relaxed areas of the playground, such as the reading shed.

Pupils know that staff are ambitious for them as learners. They achieve well across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) typically learn alongside their peers and achieve well. Their needs are carefully met. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

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

The school rightly prioritises the importance of reading. Staff are well trained, and pupils receive high-quality teaching. Regular checks are made on pupils' progress. Those who fall behind are quickly identified and receive the additional support they need. Pupils practise reading using books that are closely matched to the sounds they have learned. The school is aware that some less-experienced readers need more practice to develop their fluency. Pupils achieve well, and this is reflected in the school's outcomes.

The curriculum is well sequenced and reviewed regularly by the school. Leaders have high ambition for all pupils. Staff use a variety of checks to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. The curriculum is largely adapted to address any gaps that may arise. The school is introducing consistent strategies in lessons to help pupils to remember important knowledge. In mathematics, pupils enjoy applying their learning through reasoning and problem-solving activities. This enables staff to carefully check that pupils know and remember more.

Staff share their subject knowledge well. This helps to improve the quality of work across subjects, as evident in pupils' impressive work in their sketchbooks in art. In most subjects, activities are well planned to support the intended learning. However, on occasions, the activities that pupils are set do not deepen pupils' understanding as well as they could.

In many subjects, staff enhance pupils' knowledge with practical application in local study or fieldwork. In geography, for example, educational visits reinforce what pupils have

learned in previous lessons, and pupils enjoy using resources such as atlases to learn about different places around the world. They can recall recent learning and things they have been taught in the past. Pupils with SEND are well supported through adaptations in their work, or where necessary, through the support of well-trained adults.

The school checks pupils' understanding with increasing accuracy. However, on some occasions, misconceptions persist and are not addressed as well as they could be. This slows pupils' understanding of new knowledge.

In early years, the curriculum is enhanced by links to well-chosen books. There is a careful balance between adult-led activities and children's play. Staff have a good understanding of children's starting points and know the children well. Children receive timely focused tasks to enable them to learn well. Relationships between both staff and children are warm and friendly.

Attendance is improving. The school develops good relationships with parents and carers and works proactively with those who need support to improve their attendance.

The school's work to support the wider development of pupils is strong. Pupils know how the school values apply both in school and more widely in the local community. Pupils are also encouraged to be 'agents of change' and are rightly proud of their achievements. They regularly tidy the local park and have written to their Member of Parliament to improve road safety in the area. Pupils are taught to stay safe online. There is a wide range of clubs and educational visits to broaden pupils' experiences.

Governors are ambitious and determined. They have a range of skills and knowledge to carry out their responsibilities effectively. There is effective support and challenge in place for leaders. Leaders check staff well-being closely and consider their workload. Staff appreciate this support, which has helped to develop and maintain a strong team ethos.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, some planned activities do not match the intended learning well enough. This means that pupils do not deepen their learning as effectively as they could. The school should work with staff to ensure that the activities that pupils are set consistently enable them to learn the intended curriculum.
- The school does not consistently identify misconceptions in pupils' work. As a result, some errors persist. The school needs to ensure that misconceptions are consistently identified and addressed to further improve pupils' learning.

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

Unique reference number	108495
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10377146
Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Pickett
Headteacher	Kate Massey
Website	www.archbishop-runcie.eschools.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently offers both breakfast and after-school provision.
- The school has a Christian character. It is part of the Diocese of Newcastle. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in September 2024.
- The school is a partner school to the Gosforth Schools' Trust.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school’s education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection 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 of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, and pupils. The lead inspector met with members of the board of governors, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also met with a representative from both the Diocese of Newcastle and the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to staff.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 took account of a range of other information, including curriculum plans, policies and documentation regarding behaviour and attendance, and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted’s surveys.

Inspection team

Paul Martindale, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Louise Mallin

Ofsted Inspector

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