

Inspection of St Peter's Catholic Academy

Waterloo Road, Cobridge, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST6 3HL

Inspection dates:	15 and 16 October 2024
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Andrew Hodgson. This school is part of Newman Catholic Collegiate, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Ian Beardmore, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gillian Meller.

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Peter's Catholic Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged St Peter's Catholic Primary School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as St Peter's Catholic Academy as a result of conversion to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy, caring and inclusive school where every pupil thrives. Pupils love coming to school. They enjoy their learning in the classroom and the many additional activities the school provides.

Expectations of behaviour and achievement are high from Nursery onwards, and pupils are supported every step of the way to meet them. They are proud of the progress they make, and even prouder when they can help others to make progress too.

In this highly diverse school, the school values of 'together, one family, one community in Christ' are enacted by every member of staff and every pupil daily. Pupils want to be kind and respectful to each other. They actively look for opportunities to help others, to celebrate their differences and to contribute to their community.

Pupils value the exceptionally broad range of opportunities the school provides. They develop their talents and interests through the many clubs and activities that take place throughout the year. Visits, visitors and dedicated days to share cultures and beliefs ensure that pupils have a rich array of experiences. These broaden their horizons, raise their aspirations and prepare them exceptionally well for their next steps.

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

The overriding driver for this school is quite simply: 'what is best for our children?' Then, the school takes action to achieve it. This translates into a highly ambitious curriculum that is designed from the beginning to meet the needs of all pupils, no matter what their starting point, from Nursery onwards. For instance, in the early years, the school has crafted a curriculum that meets all statutory requirements but also takes careful account of the additional experiences children need. The school provides children with many opportunities for discovery and experimentation through practical tasks. These support their emotional and physical development alongside their communication skills and early introduction to reading and number. As a result, children are well prepared for the transition to Year 1 and beyond.

Subject curriculums build on the strong early years groundwork. In each subject, there is a clear understanding, shared by all teachers, of what pupils need to learn and when. Pupils learn and remember the planned curriculum content because teachers have excellent subject knowledge and well-developed teaching skills. They make rapid progress from their starting points as a result. Pupils take enormous pride in their work, reflected in their handwriting and presentation.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported. Work begins even before children join the school to ensure that needs are identified quickly and appropriate support put in place. Teachers are rigorous in ensuring that any difficulties or misconceptions are rapidly identified and addressed in lessons. More formal assessment is used effectively to check pupils' progress and to consider how the

curriculum might be revised to help pupils learn even better. Consequently, pupils with SEND are successfully learning the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Reading is taught exceptionally well. Nearly all pupils learn to read accurately and with fluency and comprehension. Where this is not the case, high-quality and rigorous teaching ensures that pupils make significant progress from their starting points. From the early years, pupils are introduced to a wide range of stories and poems. They are encouraged to read widely in school and at home. Pupils love to choose their own books, to talk about them and to share their ideas.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They learn the importance of respect for all very quickly. In the classroom, they are engaged and enthusiastic learners, and around school they are kind and courteous. Pupils want to come to school. As a result, attendance is high.

All pupils have extensive opportunities to access a broad sweep of experiences. These are explicitly designed to help them to understand the wider world and life in modern Britain, to keep themselves safe and to develop healthy relationships. Pupils regularly contribute to their community and beyond. Consequently, pupils become kind, considerate, well-rounded individuals who are ready for their next steps.

Governors and trustees know the school very well. They work effectively with the school, with a joint moral purpose to achieve the best outcomes possible for all pupils. Staff are proud to work here. They feel valued and supported by school and trust leaders. They appreciate the 'open door' policy of leaders and feel that they are listened to. They appreciate the extensive and high-quality professional development opportunities they are given.

The school communicates with parents exceptionally well. The strong partnership between school and parents has pupils' best interests at its heart. As a result, parents trust the school to do what is right for their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	140150
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10290606
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	239
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gillian Meller
CEO of the trust	Ian Beardmore
Principal	Andrew Hodgson
Website	www.stpetersnewman.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has converted to become an academy within Newman Catholic Collegiate.
- The principal has been in post since January 2024.
- St Peter's Catholic Academy received its last statutory inspection under section 48 by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate in March 2023. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in 2028.

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 met with the principal, the deputy principal, the chair of the board of trustees, the CEO, the chair of the local governing body and two governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors also reviewed curriculum plans for a range of other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- A range of documentation was reviewed, including leaders’ self-evaluation of the school’s work and their subsequent plans to improve the school, curriculum documentation, policies, minutes of governance meetings and the school’s website.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils, parents and staff through meetings and through their responses to Ofsted Parent View and online surveys.

Inspection team

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