

# Inspection of a school judged Good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Bishop Ellis Catholic Voluntary Academy

Barkby Thorpe Lane, Thurmaston, Leicester, Leicestershire LE4 8GP

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 May 2025

## **Outcome**

Bishop Ellis Catholic Voluntary Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Andrew Monaghan. This school is part of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Neil Lockyer, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sarah Noon.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a caring school held in high regard by the school community. Pupils and their families appreciate the warm welcome at the school gate and the excellent pastoral support available. Pupils are happy and feel safe.

Pupils benefit from the high ambition and aspirations the school has for all pupils to thrive spiritually, academically and socially. The curriculum is inspiring and interesting for pupils. Pupils engage well with their learning and work hard. They achieve well.

The school's consistent approach to behaviour supports pupils in proudly upholding the school's mission to 'aspire to be our best'. Pupils are respectful and polite. All are welcome here. Social times of the day are joyful. Pupil sports leaders relish the responsibility of organising games for their peers. Interesting activities are provided for pupils' purposeful play. For instance, the popular lunchtime 'board games' club expands pupils' wider interests and social skills.

The school ensures that pupils are empowered to develop their leadership skills and contribute to the school community. For example, eco-warriors lead the school in developing recycling habits. The school council contributes to significant events such

as positive mental health day. The chaplaincy leaders organise reflection time for their peers with care and attention.

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

The school has carefully sequenced the curriculum to ensure that pupils learn and remember key knowledge over time. It ensures that pupils can make meaningful links and connections in their learning. For instance, in geography, pupils compare and contrast the local study of Leicester with the features of the capital city, London. Pupils revisit important knowledge regularly. This enables them to consolidate their understanding. For instance, pupils revisit the science topic of pollination through the purposeful application of written instructions about this in English.

A research-informed approach underpins the school's effective development of its staff. Staff have the appropriate subject knowledge and teaching expertise to teach the curriculum well. For instance, staff use skilful questioning techniques and checks for understanding to identify and address misconceptions promptly. Staff set out learning in manageable steps. Pupils have time to listen and understand before attempting tasks independently. Teachers maximise learning time and make effective use of pupils' contributions. Pupils achieve particularly well in English and mathematics. However, in a small number of wider curriculum subjects, and in some areas of the early years curriculum, pupils are not always provided with learning opportunities that stretch and enable them to extend their knowledge further.

Pupils learn to read well. Knowledgeable staff establish effective routines for phonics and early reading. They make sure that all pupils practise new sounds with precision and accuracy. Pupils who struggle with reading and those in the early stages of learning to read benefit from additional support so that they catch up. Pupils enjoy reading.

The early years is a vibrant and inviting learning space that nurtures children's independence and curiosity. For instance, children enjoy the challenge of mixing real tinned tomatoes and vegetables in their outdoor kitchen to create their own menus. Staff extend children's discussions well to develop early language and vocabulary. Children are sociable and communicate happily with each other.

The school is as ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) as it is for all pupils. It identifies and meets the needs of pupils with SEND effectively. For instance, staff provide well-placed prompts and guidance to support these pupils to access learning well and achieve success alongside their peers.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour in lessons. Classrooms are studious spaces to learn. Pupils are keen to show their 'STAR' learning behaviours. They need few, if any, reminders to concentrate. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are very positive.

The school provides a high-quality curriculum for pupils' broader development. Pupils have strong knowledge about life in modern Britain. They understand the fundamental British values. Pupils see the connections between these and their own school mission and ethos, such as mutual respect. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils are taught about rules and responsibilities in life. They understand that following rules earns trust and freedoms. For instance, pupils know that following the rules for the use of playground equipment will enable them to be able to use this equipment responsibly. Pupils know how to stay safe online.

Trustees and local governors know the school well and are effective in their roles. The school team is united in its relentless commitment to improvement. For instance, staff embrace opportunities that refine their teaching skills. Staff appreciate the support and consideration for their well-being and workload. All parents who completed the survey would recommend the school to others.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- At times, learning opportunities in a few wider curriculum subjects do not extend or deepen pupils' understanding. As a result, occasionally in these subjects, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure greater consistency in how pupils are supported to extend their knowledge and understanding, so that they achieve highly across the curriculum.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious

concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Bishop Ellis Catholic Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2012.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	149144
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10379606
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	242
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sarah Noon
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Neil Lockyer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Monaghan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bishopellis.leics.sch.uk">www.bishopellis.leics.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection, for schools with a religious character, took place in September 2024. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place within the next four years.
- The school moved into a new building in 2020.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with senior leaders, subject leaders and representatives from the local governing body. She spoke with a representative from the board of trustees and representatives from the trust's executive team.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector discussed pupils' attendance and behaviour with school leaders.
- The inspector considered the views of parents who responded to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and with pupils.
- The inspector considered a wide range of evidence, including some documents published on the school's website.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.

### **Inspection team**

Donna Moulds, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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