

Corpus Christi RC Primary School

Stanley Road, Chadderton, Oldham OL9 7HA

Inspection dates 1–2 December 2015

Overall effectiveness **Outstanding**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher leads the school with passion and determination. Along with other leaders, he has developed a culture where only the best is good enough.
- Outcomes for pupils are outstanding. All groups of pupils make very strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics to reach standards that are above average by the time they leave Key Stage 2.
- Every lesson counts at Corpus Christi. Teachers are relentless in their pursuit of ensuring that every pupil reaches their full potential. Teaching is never less than good and much is outstanding.
- Pupils are incredibly proud of their achievements. They value the education that they receive and say that they wouldn't change anything about their school.
- Pupils' exemplary behaviour contributes substantially to the rapid progress that they make in lessons.
- Respect and tolerance is a golden thread that permeates school life at Corpus Christi. Pupils have a deep understanding of their role in a diverse community.
- Pupils are confident, resilient and self-motivated. Their highly positive attitudes to their learning help them to achieve well, ensuring that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed very well through the rich and balanced curriculum. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The pastoral care for pupils is outstanding. The bespoke support that they receive is very highly valued.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) in Key Stage 1 is a significant strength.
- Senior leaders ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively. As a result, disadvantaged pupils excel and leave Corpus Christi reaching standards that are at least in line with other pupils nationally.
- Governors are highly effective. They hold leaders to account effectively for the impact of their actions.
- The early years provision is good. It is improving rapidly under the leadership of the newly appointed early years manager.
- Robust systems are in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that outstanding teaching, learning and assessment are built upon further by:
 - providing frequent opportunities for pupils in all classes to develop their mathematical reasoning skills.
- Further improve the early years provision by:
 - making sure that systems to check that children access activities to develop their skills are robust.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior colleagues, has resulted in consistently high-quality teaching across the school. As a consequence, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve exceptionally well.
- Senior leaders have successfully cultivated an ethos of high ambition. Every lesson counts at Corpus Christi. Pupils' very positive attitudes towards their learning exemplifies the culture that permeates all aspects of school life.
- The headteacher and governors have a clear and aspirational vision for the school. Staff are in no doubt as to what this is. As a result, everyone is working as a team towards the same goals. As one member of staff stated, 'The whole team works hard together to ensure all children in our care achieve well academically and are supported in their spiritual and personal life journey'.
- Senior leaders' checks on teaching are rigorous. Teachers are observed in their classrooms and pupils' books are scrutinised. Findings are used to identify training needs and drive further improvements. As a consequence, teaching across the school is never less than consistently good, with much that is outstanding.
- A high proportion of middle leaders are new to their roles. Nonetheless, they have quickly and accurately taken stock of the strengths and weaknesses of the subjects that they lead. They have already begun to plan and implement actions for further improvement. The introduction of high-quality texts to use as a stimulus for writing across the school by the English subject leader, for example, is having a positive impact on the quality of the work that pupils produce.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed effectively. A well-balanced and rich curriculum provides a wide range of experiences that contributes to pupils' understanding of their belonging to a multicultural and multi-faith society. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, for instance, recently visited a mosque to learn about how Muslims practise their faith.
- There is an emphasis on the arts throughout the curriculum. Pupils studying Ancient Greece, for example, made clay sculptures of Aristotle and other Greek thinkers, enhancing their art skills and deepening their historical understanding. A specialist music teacher and a diverse menu of after-school and lunchtime clubs such as orchestra, choir and arts and crafts further enhances this provision.
- Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain and have a deep understanding of British values. School council members are elected at the start of each year after sharing their manifestos. They play a key role in developing the school and have recently worked with builders to design an outdoor performance area. Pupils value the opportunities they have to contribute to the wider community. Pupil chaplains recently led a harvest assembly and collected food for a Manchester-based homeless charity.
- Senior leaders direct the use of pupil premium funding very effectively. A range of initiatives, including employing an extra teacher, ensure that this group of pupils achieves strongly. In 2015, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was significantly better than that of other pupils nationally.
- Sports funding is used well to promote healthy lifestyles and increase the number of pupils who participate in sport. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular sporting clubs such as martial arts, cross-country running and cheerleading. The school reports that there has been increased participation in after-school sporting activities, with a wider range of pupils accessing these clubs. Pupils take part in a number of competitive inter-school events. The girls' football team, for instance, recently reached the final of the Sainsbury's School Games football tournament.
- The staff response to the Ofsted online questionnaire was overwhelmingly positive. All staff who responded agree that the school is well led and managed.
- The arrangements to keep children safe (safeguarding) are effective. Key policies and procedures are in place and understood by all to ensure the safety of pupils. Thorough checks to ensure that adults are cleared to work with pupils are up to date. Every parent who responded to the school's recent parental questionnaire agreed that pupils are safe at Corpus Christi.

■ The governance of the school

- Governors share the passion of senior leaders to secure the best possible outcomes for the pupils of Corpus Christi. They give of their time generously to ensure that they have first-hand knowledge of what is happening at the school. They are regular visitors to classrooms and speak to subject leaders to gather evidence about the quality of teaching and learning. External expertise is used to further validate the reports that they receive from the headteacher. As a consequence, governors have a very secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and ask challenging questions that hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions.
- The Governing Body takes its responsibilities to keep pupils safe seriously. A number of governors have undertaken training to give them the skills to fulfil their statutory safeguarding responsibilities when recruiting new members of staff.
- Members of the Governing Body ensure that they know how the extra funding that the school receives is spent. They review assessment data with the senior leadership team and as a consequence have a solid understanding of the impact that pupil premium funding is having on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- The quality of learning is outstanding because, in all classes, teachers have created a purposeful environment where hard work and high expectation are the norm. Learning at Corpus Christi starts from the moment pupils enter the classroom. In a Year 2 class, for example, pupils wrote well-punctuated sentences containing words with suffixes, before the morning register.
- Lessons are interesting and stimulate learning very well. Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons as teachers challenge them to do their best. In a Year 5 lesson, for instance, pupils were inspired by a topical Christmas advert to write emotive letters in the role of an elderly man on the moon.
- Teachers ensure that the lessons they plan build effectively and progressively upon pupils' prior skills and knowledge, making sure that all groups of pupils are challenged appropriately and consequently make rapid progress.
- Teachers develop reading skills well across the school. Those pupils who read to inspectors did so confidently and fluently. Older pupils are able to use inference skills effectively to deduce meaning from texts. In an English lesson, pupils were able to use these skills when reading the book *Street Child* by Berlie Doherty to plan to write non-chronological reports. A love of reading is developed through exciting initiatives such as the recent 'read anywhere' challenge, with several pupils photographed reading up trees!
- Pupils make rapid gains in their learning because teachers plan work that is challenging and requires pupils to think deeply about the subjects they study. In an upper Key Stage 2 English lesson, for example, pupils worked collaboratively and with a great deal of maturity to consider the responses a corporate organisation might make to complaints from a local community.
- Pupils are taught about and understand how to be resilient when faced with challenges in their learning. Their very positive attitudes contribute strongly to the progress they make in lessons. In a mathematics lesson, pupils utilised these skills very effectively to overcome their initial difficulties in grappling successfully with a range of challenging problems.
- Teaching assistants work effectively, in partnership with class teachers, to support pupils' learning. They mirror teachers' skilful use of questioning to gauge pupils' understanding. Their good subject knowledge allows them to provide help to pupils who need further assistance or challenge.
- Teachers frequently check pupils' work to make sure that learning is secure. Feedback is immediate and incisive, helping pupils to understand misconceptions or take their learning on to the next stage. For example, in a Year 1 art lesson, clear feedback given by the class teacher as well as pupils' own self-evaluation helped pupils to produce high-quality sketches of Samuel Pepys.
- Teachers plan learning opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across a wide range of different subjects. Expectations of the quality of this writing is equally as high as in English lessons. This contributes positively to the progress that pupils make. Displays in classrooms and in corridors celebrate pupils' high-quality writing in a broad range of topics. The application of mathematical reasoning skills across the curriculum is not as strongly developed. School leaders have identified this as an area for development across the school this year.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are incredibly proud of their school and their achievements. Those pupils who spoke to inspectors could not suggest any way in which they would change the school.
- Pupils have many opportunities to work collaboratively. During their discussions, they listen to the views of others with interest and respect, debating issues in a mature manner.
- An ethos of respect and tolerance permeates the whole school community. Those pupils who spoke to inspectors are clear that it does not matter how you speak, what you look like or where you come from; everyone is welcome at Corpus Christi. This attitude is evident in the playground where pupils of all ages and backgrounds play harmoniously alongside each other. As one pupil summed it up, 'we get along always'.
- Senior leaders place a high emphasis on supporting the emotional well-being of all pupils. The excellent impact of this work was seen first-hand by inspectors during their observation of a 'rainbow' session that was led expertly by a teacher. Difficult and sensitive issues are discussed in a mature way by pupils so that they are able to offer support to one another. Pupils in this group spoke highly of the help that they had received.
- Physical health is promoted effectively. Pupils develop a good understanding of healthy eating through initiatives such as the recent parent and pupil lunch and involvement in extra-curricular activities such as cookery club.
- Pupils have a thorough understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Visits to school by organisations such as the police help pupils to develop a good awareness of the dangers of drugs and alcohol.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying and how to report bullying if they were to be a victim or a witness. Those pupils who spoke to inspectors are confident that bullying is very rare in their school and are sure that adults can be trusted to deal with it immediately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is exemplary and contributes substantially to the excellent progress that they make. Teachers are good role models who have skilfully cultivated highly effective relationships with their pupils. As a consequence, most pupils are confident learners who relish the opportunity to engage in lessons. Behaviour outside classrooms is also praiseworthy. Pupils move around the school sensibly and without fuss. Playtimes and lunchtimes are calm and pupils return to their classrooms eager to learn.
- Senior leaders have taken effective action to ensure that attendance rates have improved over the past two years so that they are now in line with that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils who are absent regularly has also fallen over the same period and is below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- Pupils achieve exceptionally well. Pupils left school in 2015 reaching standards above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents outstanding overall progress given their starting points. As a result, pupils are very well prepared to take on the challenges of secondary school once they leave Corpus Christi.
- Pupils' phonic knowledge is very strong due to excellent teaching. In Year 2, for example, pupils were observed confidently distinguishing between real and nonsense words during a fun and competitive lesson. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening test has improved for the last two years and was above that seen nationally in 2015.

- Evidence seen during lessons and in books shows that all groups of pupils in Key Stage 1 make sustained and significant progress in all subjects. In a mathematics lesson in Year 1, for example, the most-able pupils made rapid progress because they were challenged by the class teacher to deepen their understanding by constructing their own clock. In 2015, overall achievement was significantly above the national average for pupils leaving Key Stage 1.
- Achievement in writing across the school is outstanding. Leaders' introduction of high-quality texts to inspire pupils' writing this year has impacted positively. Work in pupils' books is of a high standard. Pupils punctuate accurately and use a range of adventurous vocabulary to enhance their writing. Sophisticated skills are being developed by older pupils to subtly convey meaning to their audience.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in mathematics. For the past two years, progress has been significantly above the national average for pupils in Key Stage 2. Books show that pupils develop mathematical fluency effectively and have opportunities to deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts through problem-solving activities. Pupils are not currently given the same opportunities to develop their reasoning skills in all classes.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve very well at Corpus Christi. Evidence shows that progress for this group of pupils is at least in line with other pupils in all subjects. Senior leaders keep a close watch on the achievement of this group of pupils through analysis of assessment information and checks on pupils' books. As a result, in 2015 the progress of disadvantaged pupils was above that of other pupils in school and significantly above other pupils nationally.
- The progress that the most-able and lower-attaining pupils make is equally strong. This is because teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve. Teachers use what they know about pupils to plan lessons that build upon their knowledge and skills. As a consequence, in 2015 the overall progress of lower-attaining and the most-able pupils was significantly above that of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils with special educational needs make progress that is at least in line with that of other pupils in the school. This is because the leader of the provision for this group of pupils has supported teachers to plan lessons that meet the needs of these pupils by organising appropriate training, for instance in dyslexia and autism.
- The use of specialist teachers in subjects such as music, as well as the provision for a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, ensure that achievement in subjects other than English and mathematics is also strong. For example, inspectors observed the school orchestra rehearsing for an upcoming performance, demonstrating high levels of skill and performing several pieces of music exceptionally well.

Early years provision

is good

- Effective leadership and teaching ensure that children get off to a good start in the early years. They increasingly make good progress from their starting points so that they are ready for further learning as they enter Key Stage 1. The proportion of children leaving the early years having achieved a good level of development increased in 2015 so that it was close to the national average.
- Teachers have high expectations of what all groups of children can achieve. They plan learning activities that capture and stimulate their interests, ensuring that skills such as communication and language are developed well. Children made good progress, for example, when they joined in with 'Leo the Lion' to recognise and create repeating patterns using different colours.
- The indoor and outdoor areas are well resourced and provide children with a wide range of exciting learning opportunities. The outdoor staged area, for instance, was used effectively when children from the nursery planned for a birthday party. The class teacher used a range of questions to stimulate ideas and develop imagination as children made birthday cakes and decorated the area.
- Children get along well together and happily share resources during learning activities. A girl and a boy, for example, were observed by inspectors working closely together to plan and build a large bridge to span the width of the construction area.
- Clear routines and high expectations are firmly in place and contribute to good behaviour across the early years. Children are well supervised, cared for and kept safe by conscientious staff. As a result, children settle quickly, feel secure and are ready to learn. Highly positive attitudes ensure that even the youngest children remain focused on their learning and listen attentively to their teachers.

- Teachers and other adults use assessment effectively to plan learning activities that match the needs of all groups of children. However, systems to check that children access a full range of activities throughout the day are not fully developed.
- The early years leader has recently been appointed to her role. She has quickly gained a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and has developed a plan that is supporting rapid and further improvements.
- Attempts to increase parental involvement have met with mixed success this year. Leaders acknowledge this and plans are in place to further enhance this aspect of the early years provision.

School details

Unique reference number	105718
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10003374

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	338
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr Dermot Heakin
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Christopher Hanson
Telephone number	0161 6521275
Website	http://corpuschristi.oldham.sch.uk/
Email address	head@corpuschristi.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 October 2011

Information about this school

- Corpus Christi RC Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average (the pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those who are looked after by the local authority).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is not or believed not to be their first language is broadly similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs is below the national average.
- In 2014 the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school is part of an informal federation of other local schools (soft federation).

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in each class of the school, including a joint observation and learning walk with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, members of staff, three representatives of the governing body, two representatives of the local authority and an external school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, school improvement planning, assessment information and reports on the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during the school day and observed them during playtime, lunchtime and before and after school. They also met formally with two small groups of pupils, including the school council, to chat about their learning and behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors heard a number of children read.
- Inspectors took note of displays around the school and the work in the outdoor areas.
- A range of pupils' books was checked.
- Inspectors spoke to a small number of parents at the start of the day. They also took account of the three responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 143 responses to the school's own recent parental questionnaire. Inspectors also took note of the 23 responses they received to the inspection questionnaire for school staff.
- Three further Ofsted inspectors joined the inspection on the second day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Martin Bell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kathleen McArthur	Ofsted Inspector
David Deane	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Parkinson	Ofsted Inspector

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