

Alice Ingham Roman Catholic Primary School

Millgate, Halifax Road, Rochdale, Lancashire OL16 2NU

Inspection dates

24–25 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have failed to make the improvements required following the previous inspection.
- Standards have been below or significantly below average for several years. They show little, if any, sign of improvement.
- There has been a very high turnover of staff, which means that there has been no stability in pupils' learning. The quality of teaching is inadequate.
- The school's policies for teaching, learning and marking are not being implemented and very little has been done to tackle this.
- Pupils of all abilities are not making enough progress. In too many instances, they are going backwards in their learning.
- Pupils show little thirst for learning because the work that they are asked to complete is not challenging enough.
- The quality of provision in the early years is inadequate. Leaders do not know what children can do when they join the school and cannot track the progress that they make.
- Leadership and management are inadequate and the governing body is currently leaderless.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well in the playground and around the school.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are safe and feel safe at the school.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the leadership and management of the school, by:
 - ensuring that the school is led, at all levels, by staff who have an uncompromising focus on ensuring that pupils and teachers achieve the highest standards of which they are capable
 - drawing up detailed plans that set ambitious targets for raising standards, so that they are consistently in line with, or above, national averages at every stage and in every subject
 - ensuring that all plans have clear timescales, measures and checks to ensure that the school is on track to achieve its goals
 - ensuring that all members of the governing body are trained to conduct a detailed and objective analysis of the school's performance against that of other schools nationally and have the readiness and determination to hold the school rigorously to account and accept nothing but the best.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by:
 - ensuring that the school has high-quality, permanent members of staff who will provide continuity and stability to pupils' learning and development
 - ensuring that all teachers are trained to provide pupils with high-quality, stimulating work that engages their interest and makes high demands of them, whatever their level of ability
 - ensuring that regular checks are made on the quality of teaching and learning and that timely and rigorous action is taken to bring about improvements whenever these are necessary.
- Improve the quality of behaviour in lessons, by:
 - ensuring that teaching is stimulating, demanding and develops pupils' thirst for learning
 - revising the behaviour policy so that the emphasis is as much on the behaviour modelled by staff as that of pupils
 - providing training for teachers in setting consistent boundaries for behaviour
 - ensuring that the policy is implemented consistently across the school.
- Improve the quality of the provision in the early years, by:
 - ensuring that leaders have the highest ambitions for the children
 - ensuring that the information on children's ability on entry is detailed and accurate and that regular checks are conducted on children's progress towards demanding goals.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers to its staff.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Leaders have not succeeded in bringing about the improvements required following the previous inspection. Instead, the school has declined. Most aspects are now inadequate, apart from pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, where improvement is required.
- The school's self-evaluation and development plan were produced by the headteacher without any apparent consultation with other members of the senior leadership team. The self-evaluation presents an overly optimistic view of the school. The development plan lacks specific targets or clear timescales for improvement and does not show how the school will check on how well it is progressing towards its goals. It lacks ambition, focusing on reaching no more than the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress. There is no recognition that progress must be far greater than the average if the school is to compensate for the serious underperformance in the past and give its pupils a proper start in life.
- The school has a system in place to set performance management targets for staff. However, because of high turbulence, review of progress towards targets has been completed in only a small number of cases. Any checks on performance have not been effective in bringing about improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school's curriculum plans cover the whole of the national curriculum. However, they do not indicate how the knowledge, skills and understanding specific to each subject are to be developed through successive topics. The work in pupils' books indicates that not all subjects are covered in practice. Leaders do not have a clear overview of what is taught across the school.
- Overall, the parents who spoke to the inspectors were very positive about the school and felt that their children were happy and safe there. The staff who responded to the online questionnaire were of a similar opinion. These members of staff were less positive about the management of the school. Just over a third felt that it was well managed; almost a half felt that it was not. The local authority and diocese have had concerns about the school for a while. In February 2015, it was identified as a school causing concern and received additional support and advice from a local authority consultant as well as regular reviews of its work. This led to a number of short-term improvements but these were not sustained. As a result, in the week before the inspection, the authority issued a performance and safety warning notice. The local authority and diocesan representatives agree that this should have been done earlier.
- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was absent and the school was being run by the recently appointed deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. Both leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governors have been supportive of the school and the senior leadership team but have relied very heavily on the headteacher's evaluation of the school's performance. Despite the range of very relevant expertise and experience among the governors, they have only recently begun to challenge the headteacher's leadership of the school. The local authority has advised that their performance management of the headteacher has been ineffective.
 - The governors have published reports on how the primary sports funding was used in 2013/14 and 2014/15. However, the website gives no indication of how the money is being spent this year.
 - The information on the government's additional pupil premium funding, to support vulnerable pupils, is also incomplete. The report for 2013/14 only accounts for the spending for half a year. There is no plan or report for 2014/15. It is clear how the money is being used this year but there is no indication of the intended impact of such expenditure.
 - After the last review by the local authority, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body resigned and no one has replaced them, even temporarily. Therefore, at the time of the inspection, the governing body was leaderless.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has appropriate systems for checking on the suitability of staff to work with children. There are relevant policies in place to ensure pupils' safety and staff have received recent training to support their implementation. The safeguarding policy makes no reference to female genital mutilation or forced marriage and the statement on combatting terrorism is very short. It gives limited information on possible indicators of radicalisation. It is unclear how the school plans to develop staff's understanding of these matters. The pupils who spoke to the lead inspector said that they felt safe at the school and when travelling to and from school. This reflected the views of those who responded to the online questionnaire. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of circumstances, including

when using the internet and social media. The school and the surrounding area are secure and pupils are kept safe from harm. However, despite the school's no-smoking policy, and requests for them not to do so, some members of staff smoke on the school site. During the inspection, the smell of smoke was very evident in one part of the building. This not only sets a bad example for the pupils, it also poses a risk to their health.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- The quality of teaching and learning in the school has been severely affected by the huge turnover in staff. Only three classes have had the same teacher for the whole of the year. Since September, Year 6 has had eight teachers and the reception children have had 10 teachers. There has been a very heavy reliance on supply staff, who have moved quickly through the school, without knowing what has been done before they arrived and without letting their successors know what needs to be done next.
- One result of this is that pupils are not given work that is at the right level for them. For example, they are asked to perform mathematics calculations that are far less complicated than ones that they have completed successfully earlier in the year. The most able pupils are not given any additional challenges to extend their thinking. Because the teachers do not know the pupils well, they are not able to plan additional support effectively. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs or disability make little progress.
- The school's marking policy is not being applied consistently. As a result, pupils are not given a clear indication of the strengths and weaknesses of their work and what they need to do to get better. Where comments are made, there is little impact or follow-up. For example, pupils who have been asked to ensure that they start a sentence with a capital letter are still not doing this several weeks later and the teachers make no comment. Similarly, they do not comment when work is incomplete or where it has not even been done. Work is not marked regularly and sometimes not for very long periods of time, as in the case of a book that had not been marked from September 2014 until January 2016.
- The school has a presentation policy, but this is not being implemented. The quality of presentation across the school is poor. Books are often very scruffy, with stained covers which make them unpleasant to handle. Pupils' handwriting is underdeveloped. Even those pupils who are capable of producing clear, legible, neat work do not do so consistently and there are too many instances where pupils' presentation deteriorates over the year, or from one book to another. Teachers rarely comment on this and there are examples of pupils being awarded a star for good presentation when in fact the work is far from good.
- In lessons, pupils display little enjoyment of learning. There are many instances where they are clearly bored by the work because it is not demanding enough for them. In one lesson, two girls grew tired of the slow, unfocused questioning by the teaching assistant and carried on reading on their own. In another, most of the pupils completed a multiplication task quickly and accurately and then had to sit through twenty minutes of questioning by the teacher about the steps they had taken to complete the task. Since they already knew what these were, they lost interest. They did not disturb each other but they were not learning. The teachers do not demand enough of pupils in terms of behaviour and, when they give instructions, do not insist on an immediate response. As a result, some low-level misbehaviour escalates and the teachers do not have effective means of dealing with the situation.
- The school's approach to assessment is underdeveloped. A new, internally-devised system was introduced last September but this did not provide sufficient information on the progress made by pupils in the short term. It was amended and supplemented by a mixture of teachers' assessments and tests from a published scheme. This is now being replaced by a commercial scheme. Assessment in the foundation subjects is confined to the end of the year. Given the high turnover of staff and the paucity of information in pupils' books, the school is not going to be in position to make an accurate judgement on learning and progress in each subject.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- All the pupils who spoke to the lead inspector said that they liked coming to school. They all felt safe there and on the way to and from school. They knew whom to go to if they were worried about anything and were confident that they would receive the support and help they needed. They knew how to keep

themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet and social media. A small number said that they had been bullied, but this had been sorted out. They said that there was name-calling at the school. In addition, they gave specific examples of racist comments that had been made. However, the school has no record of any racist incidents which indicates that they are not being reported or recorded accurately.

- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It has close connections with the local church and pupils take worship and prayer seriously. The members of the pupils' chaplaincy 'gift team' encourage others to pray and, this month, are leading the school in telling the rosary. As well as learning about Christianity, the pupils also learn about other faiths. They have recently been involved in a study of Judaism and will shortly be learning about Islam. The pupils examine a range of moral issues through such projects as 'wonderful world' and the 'Fairtrade week'. They raise money for charities in this country and abroad and contribute to the community in a number of ways, including performing in local concerts.
- Pupils' cultural development is fostered through an appropriate range of curricular and extra-curricular activities. Year 2 pupils, for example, have recently finished a project on Western African art which resulted in a very attractive display of sunset illustrations. As well as learning Spanish, they learn about the culture of Spain. Pupils have the opportunity to take drumming lessons, to sing in the choir and to participate in the X-Factor competition in the local community. To prepare them for the future, pupils also take part in the 'aspiration week' where visitors from business and industry come to talk to them, in order to extend their understanding of the range of employment opportunities available locally and nationally.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Most pupils behave appropriately in lessons. However, inspectors saw several examples of pupils who lost concentration in lessons, usually when the work was not challenging enough for them.
- There has been a considerable investment in providing an attractive environment for learning, and the site manager, cleaners and other staff work hard to maintain this. However, not all pupils take sufficient care to keep the school clean. At the end of lunchtime, for example, there is a considerable amount of food on the floor and too much litter in classrooms. Teachers do not encourage pupils to develop the self-discipline to clean up after themselves. As a result, other staff are given more work than is necessary.
- The school has a policy of reinforcing good behaviour. There is little evidence of this being applied in lessons and the behaviour records indicate that its impact is limited. Teachers do not take a consistent approach to behaviour and do not insist that instructions are followed by all pupils. In some instances, it is because they are wary of precipitating worse behaviour. Where more serious misbehaviour happens, there is a tendency to see it as the fault of the pupils rather than possibly the result of the work being insufficiently challenging or the boundaries for behaviour not being clear enough.
- Pupils behave well around the school. They play safely during breaks and lunchtimes, respond very promptly to instructions, and line up quickly ready to return to their classrooms. The great majority of them, especially in Year 6, are very polite and helpful towards staff.
- Last year, the attendance of pupils entitled to free school meals and those with special educational needs was in the lowest 10% of all schools nationally. Current figures show an improvement and are almost in line with national averages. Fixed-term exclusions which, in the past have been very high, have also reduced considerably, although they are still worse than the average nationally.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Outcomes for pupils are inadequate across the school.
- Over the last three years, results in the checks on phonics (relating letters to the sounds they make) have declined from above average to well below average. Last summer, the results for Year 1 girls were only half as good as for girls across the country. Results for pupils resitting the test in Year 2 were also well below average.
- Currently, the proportion of pupils likely to reach the expected levels in phonics is well below average. Although they are able to identify individual sounds and combinations of sounds, they do not apply this knowledge to their reading. For example, when faced with the word 'station', they sound out each letter separately without realising that 'tion' makes one sound. Even when they divide words up correctly, they do not put the sounds back together again. As a result, their reading lacks fluency. They also have difficulty in applying their knowledge to their writing.

- The results in national tests for seven-year-olds have been significantly below average for the last five years and declined from 2014 to 2015. Last summer, results in writing were in the lowest 10% of all maintained schools in the country. Of the pupils who will be taking the tests at the end of this year, 60% are on track to reach the expected levels in reading and mathematics and 53% in writing. Therefore, performance of seven-year-olds continues to be low.
- The writing results for eleven-year-olds have been consistently below average for three years. Results in reading and mathematics for pupils of this age have fluctuated. Last year, they were in the lowest 10% of maintained schools across the country. Very few pupils achieved the higher levels of performance, indicating that the most able had not been challenged sufficiently. The predicted results for the current Year 6 pupils show that they are still not reaching the levels expected for their age.
- Pupils currently in key stage 2 are making insufficient progress and are not being challenged enough. The work produced by pupils in Year 4 is not of a very much higher standard than that produced in Year 3 and, in some instances, is worse. Across the key stage, there is little difference between the work produced by higher- and middle-ability pupils. Very few pupils make consistent progress and some are regressing. For example, in several books, the writing was less advanced in the range of ideas, vocabulary, and sentence construction than work produced two terms earlier. Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are making progress but at a very slow rate.

Early years provision

is inadequate

- The leader of the early years has been absent since before Christmas and there have been 10 teachers since September. It is currently being overseen by the assistant headteacher. She is providing support with planning and has reorganised the environment and resources, inside and outside. She has also drawn up an action plan which identifies what is to be done, but the plan gives little indication of the intended impact.
- Children come to the Reception class from a range of pre-school settings. Staff visit those settings to collect information on the children before they arrive. They also visit children's homes to establish links with their families. Once the children have entered the school, these links are further developed through parents evenings, informal 'drop-in' sessions and letters to the homes. Each child has a learning journal to record the work that she or he has done at school and at home. At present, only a few parents contribute regularly to these journals.
- The safeguarding procedures are effective and the site is secure. The risk assessment was reviewed in January 2016, for the first time since 2013. It will now be reviewed regularly, with the next date scheduled for September. There is a high ratio of staff to pupils and staff are appropriately qualified.
- Recently, the teaching assistants have focused on helping children to learn how to play. This has been successful. The children played sensibly, taking turns with equipment, sharing and cooperating well with each other.
- Since taking over responsibility for the setting, the assistant headteacher has experienced considerable difficulties in collating the information previously gathered about children. The inspectors were provided with several sets of information on children's attainment on entry. These were wildly contradictory and the leaders could not identify which information, if any, was accurate. Therefore, the school has no secure means of knowing what children's starting points were and how well they are progressing.
- For the last two years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been below average. It declined further in 2015, with a considerable worsening in boys' results. Boys performed less well than girls in all areas of the curriculum and boys and girls in the school were below the averages for boys and girls nationally. The results for disadvantaged children were consistently below those for other pupils in the school and across the country.
- The target for this year has been altered twice during the year. The current expectation is that 39% will achieve a good level of progress. Although this is an increase on last year's results, it is very far short of the national expectation.

School details

Unique reference number	105832
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10012166

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Post vacant
Headteacher	Sarah Joynes
Telephone number	01706 341560
Website	www.aliceinghamrc.rochdale.sch.uk
Email address	office@aliceinghamrc.rochdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 June 2014

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the government's pupil premium funding is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with English as a first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above average.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for attainment and progress.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the impact of pupil premium spending, provision for pupils with special educational needs or disability, and governance on its website.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, the headteacher was absent. Therefore, the inspectors had discussions with the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher.
- The inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. They observed learning in classes. This included a joint observation with the deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and talked to them about their work.
- The inspectors talked to parents as they brought their children to school and examined their responses to the online questionnaire for parents.
- The lead inspector met members of the governing body and spoke to representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with eight pupils chosen at random from Years 3 to 6.
- The inspectors also spoke to pupils in class and around the school.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, and policies.
- The inspectors also scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector
Ofsted Inspector

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