

# Holy Rosary RC Junior Infant and Nursery School

Fir Tree Avenue, Fitton Hill, Oldham, Lancashire OL8 2SR

## Inspection dates

22–23 January 2019

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, pupils have not made good progress from their starting points, especially in mathematics at key stage 2.
- Teaching has not been strong enough over time. Teachers' expectations of pupils are not consistently high, particularly for the most able.
- The differences between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils nationally are not diminishing quickly enough.
- Leaders' plans for improvement are not sharp enough to allow them to measure the impact of their actions precisely.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average and the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent is high.
- The quality of curriculum leadership is inconsistent. Some aspects of the national curriculum have not been fully implemented.
- The proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been below the national average for the last three years.
- Governors do not effectively challenge leaders because they do not receive sufficient information about the progress of pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- Recent actions taken by leaders have begun to improve the quality of teaching and the academic progress of pupils currently in the school.
- Leaders have improved pupils' behaviour. Pupils' conduct is good and their attitudes to learning are positive.
- School leaders have secured a positive ethos underpinned by the school's Christian values. Pupils feel happy and safe.
- With external support, leaders have put in place stronger systems for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- As a result of effective leadership and teaching, children in the early years make good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Procedures to ensure that pupils are safe are thorough.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - developing the role of middle leaders in evaluating and improving standards, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics
  - ensuring that plans for improvement identify precisely how leaders will judge the impact of their actions
  - ensuring that governors have the information they need about the progress of all groups of pupils so that they can hold leaders more stringently to account.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that they are consistently good or better and enable pupils to make good progress by:
  - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations for pupils' learning
  - providing work that is appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils, including the most able.
- Improve outcomes for pupils by:
  - ensuring that gaps in pupils' learning of mathematics are filled, particularly in key stage 2
  - embedding the national curriculum so that pupils make stronger progress in subjects other than English and mathematics
  - ensuring that the use of the pupil premium funding enables disadvantaged pupils to make stronger progress
  - increasing the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Improve pupils' attendance and reduce the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The headteacher knows the school and pupils well. She knows what the school needs to do to improve and is committed to bringing about the necessary improvements. Along with governors and senior leaders, she recognises that pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics have not been good enough in recent years, although they are beginning to improve for pupils currently in the school.
- Improvement plans are not sufficiently precise to enable leaders – including governors – to evaluate the impact of their actions. Consequently, leaders do not have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness.
- Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. While there have been recent improvements, inconsistencies remain in teachers' expectations and the extent to which they challenge pupils.
- Leaders understand that weaknesses in the quality of teaching have had a negative impact on pupils' achievement over time. Leaders receive effective support from the local authority and have recently received support from a national leader of education appointed by the diocese. In the short time this support has been in place, it has had a positive impact on the quality of leadership and management and teaching and assessment. At all levels, leaders are developing stronger systems for monitoring and evaluating standards across the curriculum. However, some of these plans are at early stages of development.
- Leaders' use of the pupil premium funding has not successfully diminished differences between the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and those of other pupils nationally. Although leaders have identified potential barriers to disadvantaged pupils' learning, these have not been successfully addressed. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- The primary sport premium is used to promote pupils' physical development and to broaden the range of opportunities available. Pupils' enjoyment of exercise and sport has been heightened, for example through dance. However, leaders' understanding of the intended impact of some spending is not clear.
- Middle leaders have recently introduced new initiatives to monitor and improve standards across the curriculum. As these plans are at an early stage of development, it is too early to judge their impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- The quality of the school's curriculum is improving. Leaders have reviewed it to ensure that it is broad and balanced. While inconsistencies remain, pupils are starting to develop subject-specific skills more successfully, for example in history.
- Leaders work hard to improve pupils' attendance. They have employed an attendance officer in the school and have implemented a number of strategies. For example, all pupils receive an attendance report every half term. The strategies are starting to have a positive impact. However, the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is still too high.
- The headteacher – supported by leaders and governors – has improved pupils'

attitudes to learning. Over time, expectations of behaviour and conduct have risen. As a result, the school is a calm, inclusive and safe environment.

- High-quality displays which are evident around school reflect leaders' efforts to create a positive and happy environment. Displays demonstrate leaders' commitment to the wider curriculum and the importance placed on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The vast majority of parents and carers feel that their children are happy and safe in school. All of those spoken to during the inspection would recommend the school to others.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are proud of their school. They provide pupils with a stable, happy and inclusive environment. They have maintained and strengthened this Christian community, despite the school losing its local parish. The school's strong Christian ethos very effectively promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher and other leaders on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Although they have a broad overview of assessment information, they do not have an accurate understanding of the performance of different groups of pupils. Records of meetings show that governors do not always probe beneath the surface and ask challenging questions about pupils' performance. They are aware of how the pupil premium funding is being spent but have limited knowledge about its impact on raising standards for disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors review the school's key policies and ensure that safeguarding systems are robust.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils are well cared for in school and their safety is a key priority. The school's pastoral care ensures that pupils and families are supported well.
- There are secure systems and protocols to record and act upon any concerns about pupils. There are established links with a range of external agencies which support the work staff do to keep children safe. Parents' positive comments demonstrate the confidence they have in the effectiveness of the school's approach.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and happy in school. They know about different forms of bullying and say that, if they have concerns, they know who to speak to and how to deal with them. They say that staff take concerns seriously and 'sort things out'.
- Staff and governors are trained appropriately to carry out their respective roles in keeping children safe. Policies, procedures and records are up to date and fit for purpose. These include risk assessments and an accident log. Staff are vigilant in monitoring pupils for signs of risk.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Requires improvement**

- Although improving, the quality of teaching and learning across the school is variable. Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This contributes to uneven progress across different subjects and explains why pupils' outcomes – especially in key stage 2 – have declined.
- Where the quality of teaching and learning is most effective, pupils build upon their previous learning. Teachers take account of gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, have high expectations of what pupils are capable of and match work closely to meet pupils' needs. This is not the case in all classes.
- Teachers now plan more precisely how to support and challenge pupils' number skills in mathematics. However, some of the most able key stage 2 pupils say they find mathematics activities too easy. Pupils do not have regular opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills so these skills are underdeveloped.
- The teaching of writing is developing well. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils across the school are making stronger progress. For example, they produced some high-quality work in Year 6 when writing about Macbeth because of high expectations and well-planned activities. However, pupils do not regularly develop, consolidate and apply their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills in subjects other than English.
- Adults are kind and caring and enjoy working with their pupils. Relationships are overwhelmingly positive. This is evident in the way adults and children interact with each other.
- Over time, the teaching of phonics has not been consistently good. This year, the school has implemented a systematic programme for the teaching of phonics. This is at an early stage of development but the approach is starting to improve standards.
- Recently, staff and leaders have worked to improve the accuracy of their assessment of pupils. They work with other schools and with each other to ensure that assessment information is more reliable. Staff now use this information carefully to review pupils' achievement regularly and identify where further improvement in teaching is needed.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders have created a welcoming and inclusive ethos. Pupils feel safe and trust that staff will support and help them with any concerns they have.
- A council led by two members of staff develops and promotes pupils' well-being. Each class teacher plans age-related activities to support and monitor it. As a result, pupils feel happy and well looked after.
- The school promotes '10 Values' – including kindness, respect and loyalty – which pupils know and discuss. These values form the basis of assemblies and personal, social and health education, and help leaders to promote fundamental British values.
- All pupils in key stage 2 take the 'Oldham Pledge' and work towards achieving milestones based on citizenship. This too helps prepare them for life in modern Britain.

- A breakfast club provides a friendly start to the day for the pupils who participate. Pupils were seen enjoying their breakfast, playing games and interacting with adults. Pupils are provided with opportunities to attend a range of after-school clubs, including dance and choir.
- Pupils know about bullying in its various forms because leaders provide them with activities which teach them about it in classes and assemblies. They say that bullying is rare in the school and they are confident that teachers deal effectively with any issues when they arise.
- Pupils enjoy taking on a variety of leadership roles. The older pupils take on roles such as 'chaplain' and 'play leader'. The chaplains lead prayers and organise hymns in assemblies. The play leaders enjoy organising play equipment at lunchtime and supporting younger pupils with play activities. They also give out rewards for good behaviour. This helps them to develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and others.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Leaders' actions to reduce persistent absence have had a limited impact. Consequently, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is decreasing too slowly. The attendance of pupils is below the national average.
- School records and discussions with pupils and leaders show that pupils' behaviour has improved over recent years. While incidents of poor behaviour still occur, they do so less frequently. As a result, there have been fewer fixed-term exclusions this year.
- Generally, pupils show good attitudes to learning, work cooperatively in lessons, listen to each other's points of view and help one another with their work. However, this positive behaviour for learning is not evident in every class.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in and around the school. They are polite and have good manners. They believe that most pupils behave well and that the school deals effectively with any poor behaviour.
- The vast majority of parents who spoke with inspectors or who responded to the online questionnaire agree that their children are safe, happy and well cared for in school.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Over time, pupils' results at the end of key stage 1 have been below average, although in 2018, the difference between the school's results and the national average diminished. The proportion of pupils who achieved greater depth in 2018 was above the national average in writing and mathematics and slightly below it in reading. This was an improvement on the proportions who achieved greater depth in these subjects in 2017.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils have not made consistently good progress. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was very low in 2016 and 2017. Although a much greater proportion of pupils achieved the expected

standards in reading, writing and mathematics in 2018, too many pupils still underachieve.

- For the last three years, by the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress in reading and mathematics has been below the national average. Leaders and governors have not acted quickly enough to address this. In writing, pupils' progress has also been below the national average. However, there was an improvement in 2018.
- Work in pupils' books and the school's assessment information show that the progress and attainment of current pupils in most year groups are improving. For example, in Year 6, pupils are making good progress in descriptive writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The school's own assessments and work in pupils' books show that current pupils make better progress. However, the lack of precise assessment information in some subjects sometimes prevents pupils from making more rapid progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are making good progress relative to their starting points. Staff successfully support these pupils with a range of interventions, although the impact of some of these is not precisely measured. Parents of pupils with SEND speak positively about the support their children receive.
- The proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is below the national average and has declined over time. A new systematic whole-school approach to teaching phonics is in place this year. This is having a positive impact and pupils are developing their skills more successfully.
- The school's wider curriculum has been reviewed. At this early stage, there are variations in the quality of learning in subjects such as history and geography while the new approaches become embedded. Pupils' work shows that their progress in some year groups and subjects is improving but this is not the case in all classes.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The new leader of early years has a clear understanding of the learning needs of the children and the priorities for further improving the early years provision. Along with her colleagues, she has implemented changes to improve the quality of learning in both the indoor and outdoor areas.
- Children settle into Nursery and Reception classes quickly. This is a result of the effective transition arrangements that are tailored to the needs of each child, including those with SEND.
- A large proportion of children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with knowledge, skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. This is especially the case in the areas of language and communication, reading and personal, social and emotional development.
- Staff organise well-considered opportunities to develop children's motor skills in both the indoor and outdoor areas. During the inspection, inspectors observed teachers skilfully engaging pupils in a range of activities which developed their gross and fine motor skills using snow and clay. These opportunities – combined with the positive relationships between staff and children – ensure strong engagement and good

behaviour.

- Following three years of decline, there was an increase in the proportion of children reaching a good level of development in 2018. This represents good progress from low starting points when children enter the school.
- Observations, work analysis and assessment information provided by leaders indicate that the majority of current children – including the most able – make good progress during their time in the early years. This is because they are supported effectively by all staff who plan activities to deepen their learning.
- Children are provided with good opportunities to develop their reading and writing. Phonics is well taught in a structured and consistent manner, which is helping improve children's reading.
- Children are becoming confident with their mathematics as a result of well-planned activities and the effective use of questioning. For example, during the inspection, staff challenged the pupils to estimate as part of a counting exercise.
- Children are well supervised and cared for in a calm, safe and vibrant environment which has a range of areas in which children can develop their skills. This contributes to their good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the early years. All statutory requirements for the welfare and safeguarding of children are met.
- Teachers increasingly plan activities that stimulate and engage children. Pupils are keen to undertake activities independently. They also respond well when they are directed by adults. For example, the most able children respond well to effective questioning by teachers.
- Staff liaise closely with parents, who speak positively about communication between home and school. This supports the transition from home to school.



## School details

Unique reference number	105701
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10082067

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Devine
Headteacher	Tracy Cavanagh
Telephone number	0161 624 3035
Website	<a href="http://www.holyrosary.oldham.sch.uk/">www.holyrosary.oldham.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@holyrosary.oldham.sch.uk">info@holyrosary.oldham.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	10–11 September 2014

## Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background is near the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is near the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is broadly average.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a range of classes. They held a range of meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other staff, governors and representatives of the local authority and diocese. They also considered responses to the staff survey.
- A wide range of school documentation was scrutinised by inspectors, including safeguarding records, monitoring records, governors' minutes, self-evaluation documents and records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of pupils' work, including during lessons and in meetings with leaders. They observed pupils' behaviour at the breakfast club, at breaktime and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors gained the views of pupils by speaking to them informally during lessons and at playtime. The lead inspector also met formally with a group of pupils. The inspectors listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of 13 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered the school's parental questionnaires and spoke to several parents at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

Gary Bevin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

John Daley

Ofsted Inspector

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