

Inspection of a good school: St Edward's Roman Catholic Primary School Blackburn

Blackburn Road, Darwen, Lancashire BB3 0AA

Inspection dates:

22–23 January 2020

Outcome

St Edward's Roman Catholic Primary School Blackburn continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Edward's has a calm and welcoming atmosphere. Trust and respect between staff and pupils are evident. Leaders have high expectations of pupils. They, along with staff and parents and carers, are proud of the school. Pupils enjoy the school. They attend regularly and say that they feel safe. Pupils also say that bullying and falling out are rare. Teachers deal with any problems swiftly. Pupils behave well in lessons and in other parts of the school.

Pupils take on roles such as reading buddies or school councillors. They know how they can contribute to society. Pupils take great pride in their work. They appreciate the wide range of after-school clubs, such as homework club and dancing. Pupils take part in a range of sporting activities and many represent their school in tournaments. Recently, the cricket team achieved success in local competitions.

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

The school is well led. Governors are clear on their roles and offer challenge and support to leaders. Teachers say they are supported well and feel valued. Some subject leaders have only been in post for a short period of time. They have designed a curriculum that develops pupils' knowledge and skills. However, the impact of the curriculum in these subjects is not clear.

The headteacher has raised the profile of reading. The phonics curriculum is well structured. Staff are well trained and skilled in teaching phonics. Pupils achieve as well as other pupils nationally in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils talk excitedly about the stories they have listened to. They always practise their reading with books that match the sounds they can read, at home and at the school. Pupils who struggle with their reading get the time and support to help them catch up. Pupils therefore develop into fluent readers and achieve well in this subject.

The mathematics curriculum is planned effectively. The subject is well led. Pupils achieve well, because new learning builds on what they already know. For example, key stage 1 pupils used their knowledge of shapes from the previous year to complete an investigation. Teachers revisit concepts if needed to help pupils remember more over time. Staff training ensures that they remain up to date and skilled in delivering the mathematics curriculum. Teachers have a clear understanding of what they want pupils to know and by when. Children get off to a good start in mathematics in the early years. This means they are ready for the Year 1 curriculum. Year 6 pupils achieved well in mathematics in 2019.

In history, leaders map out the skills and knowledge they expect pupils to gain from Reception to Year 6. Pupils are knowledgeable about the periods of history they have studied. They develop a good understanding of history. Teachers have improved the way that they check what pupils already know and can do. Pupils learn well in this subject because they enjoy well-planned lessons and activities. Pupils remember key facts in each year group.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils and are determined that they achieve their potential. Plans are adapted for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Support for disadvantaged pupils is also well targeted and effective. This contributes to strong achievement and progress for all pupils in most subjects.

Pupils have a positive attitude to learning. This reflects the work leaders have done around resilience. Pupils benefit from a wide range of activities and opportunities. They have the chance to meet visitors, such as authors of children's books. This enhances their learning and raises pupils' aspirations.

The curriculum enables pupils to explore and learn about different cultures, religions, artists and musicians. This helps them to understand how to make a positive contribution to society in the future. Pupils are particularly proud of their work to raise money for a food bank. Pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained and understand their roles in keeping pupils safe. Leaders have made careful checks on all adults who work in the school. Leaders have positive relationships with pupils and their families. They know them well and support them when necessary. Leaders work effectively with the local authority and other agencies. They ensure that vulnerable pupils get the help they need quickly. Pupils are aware of the dangers associated with the internet and social media. Pupils know how to stay safe while away from the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' learning is well sequenced. However, a minority of subject leaders are still new to the role. They do not currently have a strong influence over the quality of education in their subjects. Leaders should continue to embed the role of subject leaders, to ensure that the quality of education is monitored closely in all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 8–9 June 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	119666
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10122130
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Robert Beardsworth
Headteacher	Vannessa Knowles
Website	www.stedwardsrcdarwen.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 June 2016

Information about this school

- The last Section 48 inspection under the Education Acts 2005 and 2011 was on 14 June 2016.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life. I spoke with members of the governing body, representatives from the local authority and the Diocese of Salford, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of staff.
- I reviewed a range of documentation, including documentation about pupils' attendance, safeguarding and checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- I considered the 66 responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View and spoke to parents before the school day. I also considered the 27 responses to the online staff survey and 92 responses to the pupil survey.
- I looked in depth at reading, mathematics and history. This entailed discussions with subject leaders; visits to lessons; looking at examples of children's work; discussions with teachers; discussions with children; and listening to children read.

Inspection team

Simon Hunter, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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