

Inspection of a good school: Holy Family Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale

Great Gates Road, Rochdale, Lancashire OL11 2DA

Inspection dates:

11–12 March 2020

Outcome

Holy Family Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils who I spoke with told me that they enjoy school and appreciate the fun activities provided. Pupils know what staff want, and staff expect them to do well. They try hard and are proud of their work. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. They understand the importance of being competent readers. Pupils read often and particularly enjoy story time at the end of the day.

Pupils behave well in and around the school. They are polite, respectful and caring towards each other. Pupils work well together in lessons and are keen to support one another. They said that bullying is rare. When it does happen, staff deal with it successfully. Pupils told me that they feel safe in school.

Pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and exciting trips. They enjoy a wide range of clubs after school. These include sports clubs, art and gardening. Pupils relish taking on leadership responsibilities. They talk enthusiastically about being members of the school council and the eco council. Pupils have respectful and tolerant attitudes towards those with different faiths and cultural backgrounds. They treat others with respect and understanding.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that pupils find inspiring. There are curriculum plans in place for every subject. These plans outline what pupils should learn and in what order. The knowledge that pupils need to remember in each subject is clear. Teachers ensure that pupils learn almost all subjects in a logical order so that they build on what they already know. Pupils have a secure understanding of what they are learning in reading, writing and mathematics, and they achieve well.

Pupils enjoy history. In learning about the queens of England, Year 1 pupils spoke with maturity about how we can learn from the past to help us live today.

However, although detailed plans are in place for subjects such as art and design, design and technology and geography, teachers do not follow these plans in a logical order. As a result, pupils sometimes miss out on important learning that hinders their progress. Despite this, pupils I spoke with were passionate about these subjects. Pupils talked about their favourite artists, including George O’Keefe and Claude Monet. Pupils are keen to learn. Poor behaviour rarely disrupts learning.

Children in the early years get off to a positive start with their learning. Staff ensure that activities stimulate children’s interest. Children enjoy listening to and repeating familiar rhymes and stories. Children in the early years gain firm foundations in the core skills of early reading.

Pupils in key stage 1 build on these skills and read books that are well matched to the sounds they have learned. Pupils use their phonics knowledge to sound out unfamiliar words successfully. Adults are able to spot when pupils fall behind, and they give extra help when it is needed. Pupils consistently achieve well in phonics.

Staff and pupils share a love of reading. Pupils appreciate their teachers’ enthusiasm when reading stories aloud. Pupils enjoy guided reading sessions in class and also reading the books that they take home. Pupils are able to use and apply their reading and comprehension skills equally well in all subjects.

Pupils are keen mathematicians. Teachers use practical apparatus to help pupils understand mathematical concepts. Teachers constantly promote the accurate use of mathematical vocabulary. They regularly check pupils’ mathematical understanding and challenge their thinking.

Leaders hold the same high ambitions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff know these pupils well and adapt lessons effectively. Consequently, these pupils enjoy the same broad curriculum as their classmates and achieve well.

Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum that goes beyond academic subjects. Staff provide many opportunities to help pupils develop into responsible citizens. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, democracy, rights and responsibilities. They have many opportunities to develop their social and leadership skills and discuss moral issues. Pupils enjoy taking part in a wide range of interesting after-school clubs and trips. They develop respect for others by learning about different faiths and cultures. Pupils talked respectfully about visiting places of worship, including churches and mosques.

Staff who spoke to me told me that they enjoy working at the school. Morale is high. Staff feel well supported by senior leaders and governors. They believe that their well-being is a priority for leaders. They describe working at Holy Family as ‘a vocation to serve the pupils and their families’.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders made sure that staff receive regular safeguarding training. Staff know the school's safeguarding procedures well. They have a secure understanding of procedures to follow if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare. The school works well with external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive the support they need.

Records relating to the safeguarding of pupils are up to date and fit for purpose. Governors work with school leaders to ensure that safeguarding procedures are effective.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe at home, at school or when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have developed effective plans for all areas of the curriculum. These ensure that pupils have a rich educational experience. However, the detailed curriculum planning and assessment procedures have not had sufficient time to become embedded in practice across the school in some subjects, such as art, geography and design and technology. As a result, pupils do not achieve what they are capable of in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum plans are successfully implemented, drawing on the effective practice that is already in place in other 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 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 1–2 December 2015.

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	105830
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10111010
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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Maureen Conlon
Headteacher	Helen Arnold
Website	www.holyfamilyrc.rochdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 December 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- I held meetings with teachers, support staff and subject leaders. I met with four members of the governing body.
- I spoke to pupils about behaviour and observed behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- I reviewed the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans and information on the school's website. I examined records in relation to safeguarding.
- I considered the 14 parents' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and read all the free-text responses. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day. I also took account of the ten responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

- I carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. During the deep dives, I met with subject leaders and visited lessons. I also spoke with teachers and pupils. I looked at examples of pupils' work and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Andrew Morley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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