

# Inspection of a good school: St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Langho

Whalley Road, Langho, Blackburn, Lancashire BB6 8EQ

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Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2021

## Outcome

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Langho continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are polite and articulate. They are happy and find it easy to make friends at the school. Pupils trust staff and tell them their hopes as well as their worries. Pupils are fully included in the life of the school by leaders and staff.

Pupils respond positively to the high expectations that leaders and teachers have of them. They spoke very positively to inspectors about their experiences in school. Pupils made comments like, 'It's a chance to explore possibilities; to find your strong points. School helps you with your weak points.'

Pupils live out the Catholic faith of the school in many ways. They care and value each other. Pupils learn to respect one another and adults. They raise funds for a range of local and national charities.

Pupils feel safe at the school. On the rare occasions that bullying arises, they are confident that staff will resolve issues quickly. Most pupils, including those in the early years, behave well and move around the school sensibly.

Pupils take part in many activities outside of the classroom, such as drama and yoga. Some of these activities had to be paused because of the pandemic. Pupils said how much they are looking forward to their usual range of activities restarting.

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

Pupils enthuse about their learning. They achieve well across subjects. Leaders plan the curriculum across subjects carefully. They set out the essential information that pupils need to learn in a logical order. Leaders and staff adapt work well to meet the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They give pupils extra practice where needed. That said, there is some variation in how well teachers plan individual units of work or activities for pupils. This sometimes means that pupils complete work that is interesting but does not build the subject knowledge that

they need. Leaders are taking action to remedy this issue. They have supported teachers to make better use of subject curriculum plans when teaching pupils. This is starting to have an impact.

From the early years, and throughout all year groups, staff place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' communication and language. Pupils understand and remember interesting new words, such as 'magnificent' in Year 1 or 'colossal' in Year 3.

Pupils learn mathematics successfully. For instance, Year 4 pupils remember well their previous learning about fractions. In early years, children can instantly recognise the number of objects in a small group without the need to count them.

Pupils read fluently and with confidence. This is because teachers make sure they have lots of opportunities to practise the sounds that they know. This includes those pupils who need extra help to catch up. Leaders have established many extra activities in order to promote and develop pupils' love of reading. For example, the popular 'reading rave' competition encourages pupils to read new books.

Pupils attend school regularly. As pupils behave well in lessons, disruption to their learning is minimal. Girls and boys told inspectors that pupils treat each other with respect. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils effectively with their behaviour.

Pupils are successfully prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn about different forms of prejudice and about people of different faiths and backgrounds. Pupils who met with inspectors spoke knowledgeably about the causes of racism. Staff ensure that pupils learn through debate, including about world issues. For example, pupils have discussed whether tourism should be permitted at coral reefs due to the impact of accidental damage and pollution.

Governors support leaders and staff effectively. They make regular checks on the work of the school. Governors challenge leaders, for instance about the effectiveness of the curriculum, to help the school to improve further. Governors and leaders ensure that staff consider the needs of individual pupils carefully, including pupils with SEND.

Most staff consider that they have a reasonable workload, and they feel supported regarding their well-being. Some staff would like even more help from leaders to support their workload. Leaders have put in place a range of well-considered support strategies to help staff in their work.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff, including in the early years, listen closely to what children and pupils tell them. They are vigilant for any signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. When necessary, leaders and staff act quickly to record information about an issue and link with other agencies to help to sort it out. Leaders ensure that staff complete regular training about safeguarding. Staff teach pupils often about how to keep themselves safe, including

online. They ensure that pupils know how to raise concerns about their lives, such as through speaking to staff or contacting a telephone helpline.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some teaching activities do not cover the planned curriculum thoroughly enough. This means that teachers may teach important pieces of knowledge too little or not at all. This hinders pupils' ability to know and remember what they have been taught. Leaders should ensure that teaching follows the planned curriculum closely in order that pupils learn as much as they should.

## **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 outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good 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 and 9 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119642
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10194856
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	274
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Cath Mehta
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Boden
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmaryslangho.co.uk">www.stmaryslangho.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	8 and 9 December 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- St Mary's is a Roman Catholic school.
- The school's last inspection of religious education under section 48 took place in February 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due before July 2024.
- The school offers ten pre-school places in an early years unit shared with the classes in the Reception Year.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff. They considered 21 responses from staff to an Ofsted questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences in school and reviewed responses from 80 pupils to an Ofsted survey.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents and carers and evaluated the responses from 58 parents to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered information from the diocese and spoke with the local authority about the work of the school.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of information about SEND, safeguarding, behaviour, bullying and provision for pupils' personal development at the school, including documents available on the school's website.
- Inspectors looked in depth at reading, mathematics and geography. They met with subject leaders, looked at school curriculum documents, checked samples of pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar member of staff and talked with pupils about their reading.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

### **Inspection team**

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joan Williamson

Ofsted Inspector

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