

Inspection of a good school: Holy Infant and St Anthony RC Primary School

Mitre Street, Astley Bridge, Bolton, Lancashire BL1 6QJ

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 July 2021

Outcome

Holy Infant and St Anthony RC Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are both happy and proud to attend this school. They appreciate the warm and caring bond that they have with the staff. Teachers know the pupils well. They use this knowledge to make learning interesting and meaningful.

Pupils' behaviour matches the high expectations of leaders and staff. Pupils said that they enjoy the rewards and extra responsibilities that are a result of their positive behaviour. For example, the chance to be a head girl or boy, or to be a member of the school council, is something that they strive for.

Pupils feel safe in school. They understand what bullying is and the different forms that it can take. Pupils said that bullying in school is rare and dealt with effectively by their teachers. Leaders encourage pupils to respect each other and to always think of others. As one pupil explained, 'It doesn't matter where you are from or what religion you are, everybody is welcome.'

Pupils are encouraged to become valued members of the community. They spoke with enthusiasm about their efforts to raise money for a range of charitable organisations. Pupils' experiences are widened by a vast range of clubs, trips and other opportunities, such as meditation club, author visits and trips to The Anderton Centre. Leaders thoughtfully adapted activities during the pandemic restrictions so that pupils did not miss out.

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

Leaders have devised an ambitious curriculum that promotes pupils' enthusiasm for, and interest in, learning. Staff have high expectations for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders have ensured that their subject plans begin in the early years and are underpinned by the national curriculum. In most subjects, plans are well ordered, so that pupils can build their knowledge over time. Staff deliver the curriculum well. They use a range of assessment strategies to check what pupils know and remember. Staff welcome the support of the special educational needs coordinator to help them adapt plans for pupils with SEND effectively. As a result, most pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well.

A few subjects are less well developed. This is due to the disruption caused by the pandemic. In these subjects, new plans have not yet been implemented. This means that pupils' knowledge and understanding of these subjects is not as strong as it could be.

Pupils enjoy reading. Leaders have invested in training and resources to strengthen reading across the curriculum. The teaching of reading begins as soon as children start in the Reception Year. Children and younger pupils, including those with SEND, are supported effectively by well trained staff to develop their phonics knowledge. Teachers' accurate assessments enable them to select books that closely match the sounds that pupils know. Pupils who need to catch up quickly receive effective support. Consequently, pupils are becoming increasingly confident readers. Older pupils are enthused by the high-quality texts that teachers read to them. Staff also use these texts to improve pupils' vocabulary and comprehension skills.

The mathematics curriculum is logically ordered. This enables pupils to build on what they already know. In the Reception Year, pupils are secure in their recognition of numbers and can distinguish between odd and even. Pupils with SEND are supported effectively within the classroom. This allows them to engage in the same learning as their peers. However, pupils' recall of times tables is less fluent as there were reduced opportunities to practise during the pandemic. As a result, pupils are less efficient at applying this knowledge when solving more complex problems.

Throughout the school, pupils are polite and well-mannered. During break and lunchtimes, they play cooperatively and respectfully. Pupils possess a positive attitude in the classroom that means disruption to learning is very rare.

Governors are well informed about the school and support and challenge leaders effectively. Governors are mindful of the workload and well-being of the headteacher. They support leaders in providing meaningful opportunities for pupils. Examples include adventure activity days for the Year 6 pupils, who were also observed performing an amusing version of 'Sister Act' for their end-of-year play.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and governors have a comprehensive understanding of how to keep pupils safe. Staff are well trained and know how to identify any possible signs of abuse or neglect. Leaders' procedures for safeguarding ensure that any concerns that staff may have are reported and acted upon immediately. Governors check that the arrangements for safeguarding are robust.

Leaders and staff understand the risks that pupils may face within the local area. Teachers use this information diligently to inform their curriculum planning. As a result, they can teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, both in the outside world and online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' mathematical fluency is not as secure as it needs to be, due to the disruption caused by the pandemic. This means that pupils are less able to recall their times tables and number bonds quickly. Leaders and teachers should ensure that pupils are given further opportunities to practise so that they can recall this essential knowledge more quickly. This will enable pupils to be more efficient when applying this knowledge to mathematical problems.
- The plans for a small number of subjects are not yet fully implemented. As a result, pupils are unable to gain a greater understanding of the knowledge and skills required to succeed in these subjects. Leaders need to ensure that carefully sequenced plans are implemented as quickly as possible.

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. 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 in April 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 information from Parent View 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 [here](#).

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	105219
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10193954
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Marguerita Leyden
Headteacher	Helen McGrath
Website	www.holy-infants.bolton.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, one deputy headteacher has left the school and another has taken up post. Five teachers have been appointed to replace those who have left during this period.
- Holy Infant and St Anthony RC Primary is a voluntary aided Catholic school. The last section 48 inspection took place in July 2015. The next section 48 inspection is overdue because of delays caused by the pandemic. It is due to take place in the next academic year.
- The governing body manages the breakfast club and the after-school provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation. This included the school's single central record of all adults in the school and the training records of staff. Inspectors also spoke to staff to check their understanding of how to keep pupils safe.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders and other members of staff. An inspector also met remotely with six governors, including the chair of governors, a representative of the diocese and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors monitored pupils' behaviour around school, during lessons and at lunch and breaktimes. They also met with groups of pupils to hear their views about school life.
- Inspectors looked in depth at reading, mathematics and geography. This involved visiting lessons, speaking with subject leaders, looking at pupils' work and meeting with pupils and teachers. An inspector observed children and younger pupils read to a familiar adult. An inspector also held discussions with the leader for design and technology and science.
- Inspectors evaluated the seven responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, along with five responses to the free-text facility. An inspector also spoke to parents and carers at the start of the school day, to gather their views about the school. They also considered the 16 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

John Tomlinson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Neil Dixon

Ofsted Inspector

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