

Inspection of Mount Carmel Roman Catholic High School, Hyndburn

Wordsworth Road, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 0LU

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 September 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and happy at this welcoming school. They enjoy learning and spending time with their friends. Pupils value the support and care that they receive from staff. They are confident that adults in school will listen to them if they have any worries or concerns.

Teachers have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is reflected through the ambitious curriculum that leaders have designed for pupils. Staff encourage pupils to participate in clubs and activities, such as the eco-club, the school council and charity fundraising in the community. These opportunities help pupils to be responsible, more confident and independent.

Pupils understand leaders' behaviour systems and consider them to be fair. Pupils behave well. Mostly, corridors around the school are calm. Pupils told inspectors that staff will deal with any rare incidents of poor behaviour quickly and effectively.

Leaders, staff and pupils have created a respectful environment where bullying is not tolerated. Most pupils say that if any bullying happens, it is dealt with quickly and it stops. Pupils said that they rarely hear discriminatory language in school. They told inspectors that they aim to live up to the school's motto of 'a family of faith and learning'.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is suitably ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with SEND. For example, more pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, in Years 10 and 11, study a range of academic subjects than previously. More older pupils now opt to study a modern foreign language at GCSE than before.

Subject leaders have developed detailed curriculum plans that enable pupils to build on their prior learning well. For example, in mathematics, pupils combine their secure knowledge of number facts and methods in more complex activities. Most teachers ensure that pupils revisit earlier learning regularly. This helps pupils to remember important knowledge over time and achieve well across the curriculum.

Leaders have effective systems to check on how well teachers deliver the planned curriculum. However, in a minority of subjects, subject leaders do not use these checks well enough. This means that, from time to time, some teachers do not select the most appropriate activities to help pupils to learn important subject content.

Teachers use assessment strategies effectively to check whether pupils understand important concepts. Teachers use information from these checks well to adapt their teaching and address pupils' misconceptions. This helps pupils, including

disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with SEND, to overcome their mistakes and deepen their learning.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) uses appropriate and effective strategies to identify individual pupils' needs. The SENCo provides staff with detailed information so that they can help pupils with SEND to access the planned curriculum.

Leaders promote reading well across the school. Pupils read widely across subjects. They benefit from regular reading lessons to develop their vocabulary. However, leaders have not ensured that staff can support those pupils who struggle the most with reading. As a result, these pupils do not get sufficient appropriate support to develop their reading fluency and accuracy.

Leaders have ensured that staff use behaviour systems consistently well. During lessons, pupils can learn without distraction. They work hard and listen attentively to their teachers.

Leaders provide pupils with many opportunities to become well-rounded citizens. For example, pupils discuss and debate topics such as challenging gender stereotypes in their personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils also benefit from appropriate guidance to prepare them for the next stage of their education, employment or training.

Governors are ambitious for the school. They have challenged leaders' work to improve the quality of education and pupils' behaviour rigorously. Staff are extremely proud to work at the school. They value leaders' careful consideration for their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know how to identify and report any safeguarding concerns. Leaders refer any concerns quickly to external agencies when needed.

Pupils understand the risks that they may face. This includes potential risks that leaders are aware of outside the school. For example, pupils learn about dangers of joining gangs and how to stay safe online. Pupils feel safe in school and they are confident that they can get help from an adult if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A minority of subject leaders do not check effectively enough how well teachers deliver curriculum plans. This means, in some subjects, teachers do not always select the most suitable pedagogical approach to help pupils to learn and remember important knowledge. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders check on how well teachers deliver the curriculum so that leaders can support teachers to develop their subject and pedagogical knowledge.
- Leaders have not ensured that staff are trained to support those pupils who have gaps in their phonics knowledge. This means that a small number of pupils are unable to read with accuracy and do not access the curriculum as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that their plans to train staff appropriately are realised so that those pupils who need additional support with their phonics knowledge are identified and supported to catch up quickly.

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 Ofsted 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.

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	119804
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10200775
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	793
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Dabrowski
Headteacher	Xavier Bowers
Website	www.mountcarmelhigh.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new chair and vice chair of governors have been appointed by the governing body. Two new deputy headteachers and several other staff have joined the school.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider to contribute to the education of a small number of pupils.
- The school had its most recent section 48 inspection, undertaken by the Diocese of Salford, in March 2020.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of those responsible for governance. The lead inspector also met a representative of Lancashire local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Salford.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and senior leaders. They also met with other members of school staff.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, modern foreign languages, history and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, reviewed curriculum plans, and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors met with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning. Inspectors also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' curriculum plans and pupils' work in a range of other subjects. Inspectors spoke with subject leaders in some of these subjects.
- Inspectors considered a range of school documentation relating to governance, behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector checked leaders' documentation relating to safeguarding, including the single central record. An inspector spoke to a representative from the alternative provider used by the school.
- Inspectors considered the 97 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 55 free-text comments, the 45 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire, and the 84 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Linda Emmett, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Buckland	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Hollister	Ofsted Inspector
David Roberts	Ofsted Inspector

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