

Inspection of Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School Blackburn

Lynwood Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 6HQ

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 February 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being part of this close-knit, family-orientated and nurturing school. All pupils, including the high numbers of pupils who join the school at different times in the school year, receive a warm welcome.

Pupils are proud of their school. They arrive each day eager to learn. They strive to live up to the high expectations that staff have of them academically, socially and emotionally. Most pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. Pupils feel safe. Pupils make friends easily because they care about each other. At breaktimes, pupils play happily with their friends from different year groups.

Pupils behave well. They are polite and move around the school in an orderly manner. Any arguments are quickly resolved. Pupils are confident that should any bullying occur, staff will make it stop.

Pupils enjoy a varied range of opportunities beyond the academic curriculum to broaden their experiences. Older pupils contribute to decision-making within the school through their roles as school councillors and play leaders.

Parents and carers are effusive in their praise of the school. Parents typically commented: 'This is a brilliant school.'

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

Governors, leaders and staff are aspirational for all children and pupils at the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. They have thought carefully about the knowledge that they want children in the early years to learn as well as the essential subject content that pupils in key stages 1 and 2 will know. The early years curriculum and the subject curriculums in the rest of the school are set out in a logical order. This helps children and pupils to build on what they know.

Some subject leaders successfully check on how well the curriculum is being delivered to help pupils learn the agreed content. This is not the case for all subjects. The COVID-19 pandemic has meant that the checks on some subjects were paused. This means that some subject leaders are less sure if the curriculums in these areas are being delivered effectively.

In some subjects, there are comprehensive systems in place to check pupils' progress as they learn more and remember more over time. However, these systems are still at an early stage of development in other subjects. This prevents leaders from gaining an accurate view of how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and present new learning effectively. Staff use a range of activities to check that pupils have understood what they are learning and to deal with any misconceptions.

Pupils achieve well. They can talk about their current and prior learning and they can connect what they already know to new knowledge. For example, some pupils talked about how their knowledge of solids, liquids and gases helped them to tackle work on reversible and irreversible change in science.

Children are introduced to the joys of books and storytelling as soon as they enter the Reception class. There is a successful approach to the teaching of phonics which starts in the early years. Well-trained staff deliver the phonics programme effectively. The books that pupils read are closely matched to the sounds that they know. Older pupils show a real love of reading. They talked confidently about their favourite authors and the different types of books that they like to read. Leaders make effective use of assessment information to give support to pupils who are falling behind with the reading programme.

Through well-established procedures, the needs of pupils with SEND are quickly identified, including in the early years. Pupils with SEND learn alongside their friends in the classroom. Suitable adaptations, through resources and staffing, ensure that pupils with SEND have the same opportunities as their peers. Leaders work well with outside agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support that they need.

Children in the early years settle quickly into routines that keep them safe and promote their development. They learn how to behave and how to treat others. This strong foundation is built on as pupils move through the school. Pupils' positive behaviour means that everyone can learn without disruption. New pupils to the school seamlessly adopt the behaviours that staff expect from everyone. This ensures that school is a calm place to learn.

Pupils' personal development is enhanced through a wide range of opportunities. They enjoy a varied range of clubs, visits and trips. Pupils' physical and mental health is given due consideration by leaders and staff. Pupils recognise the importance of taking regular exercise and eating a balanced diet to promote their good health. They learn about faiths and cultures that are different to their own. Pupils help to raise money for charitable causes to support others who need help.

Governors know the school well. They are supportive of the headteacher, but they are not afraid to ask deep and probing questions, particularly around the quality of education.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate all that leaders do to support their well-being and work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They are well trained and know how to spot the signs that a pupil may be in distress or in need of additional help. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow, should they be concerned about a pupil's welfare. Leaders offer effective levels of support to families in challenging circumstances. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe when they are online. They are aware of unacceptable behaviours, such as grooming. Pupils know what it means to be a good friend.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders have not checked closely enough that the curriculums are being delivered effectively. This means they are not as well informed about how well these subjects are being taught or how well pupils are learning. Leaders should seek to assure themselves that the curriculum in these subjects is being taught as intended and having the desired impact on pupils' learning.
- Systems to check the progress that pupils make through the curriculums are at an early stage of implementation in some foundation subjects. This means that leaders do not have an accurate overview of how well pupils are progressing through the curriculums. Leaders should develop their systems further to check that pupils are knowing and remembering key knowledge across the full range of subjects on offer.

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	119510
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10211695
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	172
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Crewe
Headteacher	Michael Parker
Website	www.sacredheartblackburn.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided school.
- The last section 48 inspection took place in April 2018.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, acting deputy headteacher and members of staff.
- Inspectors also met with two representatives of the local authority. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and with a representative from the Diocese of Salford.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including that relating to

safeguarding. Inspectors also spoke to staff about safeguarding and about their workload and well-being.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school, in class, in the dining hall and in the outdoor play areas.
- Inspectors talked with parents as they brought their children to school. They also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. There were no responses to the staff and pupil online questionnaires.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives into early reading, mathematics, science and geography. Inspectors spoke with subject leaders and teachers. They visited lessons and looked at examples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed pupils reading with a familiar adult. Inspectors looked closely at other areas of the curriculum.

Inspection team

James Marsh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sheila Iwaskow

Her Majesty's Inspector

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