

Inspection of Holy Family RC Primary School

Lime Green Road, Limehurst Village, Oldham, Lancashire OL8 3NG

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this nurturing school. They know that they are well cared for by school staff. Parents and carers appreciate the work of school leaders in ensuring that their children are happy and safe.

Pupils enjoy the different activities that leaders provide, such as sports clubs, reading clubs and the choir. They are keen to take on extra responsibilities. Pupil chaplains lead the school prayer in assembly, while older pupils hear their younger buddies read at lunchtimes.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils do their best to follow the behaviour code. They try to be ready, be respectful and be safe. Those pupils who sometimes struggle to manage their own behaviour are supported well. Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They explained that in the rare instances that bullying occurs, it is swiftly resolved by staff.

Leaders want the best for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, they have not been entirely successful in ensuring that pupils achieve as well as they should across a number of wider curriculum subjects. Curriculum development in these subjects is at a very early stage. Leaders' curriculum thinking is unclear about how pupils' learning can be best organised.

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

Staff in the early years have thought carefully about what they want children to learn. The curriculum in this part of the school is well developed. They ensure that children build on their learning through carefully chosen activities that prepare them well for Year 1.

Although the curriculum for pupils in key stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced, it does not allow pupils to build as well as they should on the strong foundations that they gain in the early years. Previous turbulence in staffing means that many subject leaders are new to their roles. Leaders' efforts to develop their subjects have been further slowed by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although leaders have developed a shared understanding of what should be taught, they are at the early stages of making sure that their intentions for pupils' learning are firmly in place across all wider curriculum subjects. This leads to an uneven experience for pupils.

In some subjects, leaders are clear about the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. In these subjects, pupils achieve well. Teachers regularly check what pupils know and remember. Pupils' prior learning is built on effectively. For instance, Year 4 pupils used their knowledge of the Stone Age to explain how our ancestors developed from hunter-gatherers to farmers. However, in other subjects beyond English and mathematics, leaders have not identified the learning that needs to take place clearly enough. This stops teachers from understanding what pupils have

learned in the past and what new knowledge they must gain in the future. This hampers pupils' progress. They do not achieve as well as they should in these subjects. Pupils do not have a secure enough foundation on which to build.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading. They ensure that all year groups are learning from carefully chosen books. Teachers read these books to pupils regularly. This helps pupils hear and learn new vocabulary. Older pupils explained that they enjoy reading. Children in the early years benefit from a language-rich environment. Their vocabulary is developed well through plentiful opportunities to explore books. Children learn phonics as soon as they enter the Reception class. Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained to deliver phonics effectively. Staff support pupils' reading with books that match their stage of development. They constantly check pupils' progress. Any pupils who struggle to read, including those in key stage 2, receive additional support. As a result, pupils become confident, fluent readers.

Staff have been trained to identify pupils with SEND quickly. Leaders work with specialist providers to ensure pupils with SEND receive effective support. Teachers adapt learning activities where necessary. This helps pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their classmates. However, the variation in the curriculum means that the achievement of pupils with SEND matches the same mixed picture as their peers.

Leaders' actions have helped improve pupils' behaviour. Children in the early years maintain high levels of concentration on their tasks. Pupils in the rest of the school work hard in their lessons. They are respectful to their peers and staff. At breaktimes, they play well together. Pupils enjoy receiving an orb of wonder, as a reward for their good behaviour. Leaders use the calming environment of the nurture room to provide well-being activities that help pupils better understand how to regulate their emotions. This ensures that pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour quickly re-engage in learning without disrupting others.

Pupils understand the diverse nature of the world that they live in. They learn about and show respect for other faiths and cultures. Pupils said that everybody is treated equally at Holy Family School. They enjoy making donations to the local food bank. Leaders enhance pupils' learning with a range of trips and visitors. Year 2 pupils recently visited a museum to learn more about the Great Fire of London as part of their history studies.

Governors and leaders show great consideration for the workload and well-being of staff. However, governors do not know enough about pupils' achievement in subjects other than English and mathematics. They do not ask enough questions about the quality of education, nor do they check carefully enough whether leaders' actions to improve pupils' achievement are making a difference.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. Well-trained staff know how to recognise the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff know that it is vital to report any concerns quickly. Leaders know their community well. They liaise effectively with a range of services. This helps them ensure that the most vulnerable pupils and their families can access the support that they need.

Pupils understand how to stay safe. Staff teach pupils how to work and play safely online. They help them understand the dangers of gangs and drug misuse.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects other than English and mathematics, the curriculum is underdeveloped. Leaders have not thought carefully enough about the key knowledge that pupils should learn. This means teachers are unsure of what subject content should be taught and when this should happen. This hinders pupils' progress, including pupils with SEND, as they move through the school. They do not have a solid enough bedrock on which to build future learning. Leaders must ensure that they design subject curriculums that enable pupils to remember a rich body of knowledge as they move from class to class.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles due to changes in staffing. These subject leaders have not been able to develop their curriculum area quickly enough. Leaders should ensure that these staff receive appropriate support to quickly implement curriculum changes. This will ensure pupils receive a more balanced curriculum across the school.
- Members of the governing body do not have a good enough understanding of the quality of education on offer at the school, beyond English and mathematics. They do not ask enough questions to ensure that leaders' actions to improve pupils' learning are making enough of a difference. Governors must ensure that they sharpen their skills in order to offer a suitable challenge that aids leaders in improving the quality of education.

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	105724
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10200798
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	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anne Ostermeier
Headteacher	Alison Booth
Website	www.holyfamily.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 and 24 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new deputy headteacher and chair of governors have been appointed.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The governing body manages the before-school provision.
- This is a voluntary aided Catholic primary school. The school had its most recent section 48 inspection in May 2019.

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.

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and four governors, including the chair of governors. They also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the Diocese of Salford.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes, lunchtimes and during lessons. Pupils also talked to inspectors about their views of their school.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and carers at the start of the school day and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. This involved visiting lessons with subject leaders, discussing curriculum plans, talking to pupils and teachers and looking at pupils' work. An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also held discussions with the leaders for geography and computing.
- Inspectors checked leaders' safeguarding procedures. They viewed a range of safeguarding documentation and looked at how incidents are managed and recorded.

Inspection team

John Tomlinson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joan Williamson

Ofsted Inspector

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