

Inspection of a good school: St Peter's RC High School

Kirkmanshulme Lane, Greater Manchester M12 4WB

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 March 2022

Outcome

St Peter's RC High School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Peter's RC High School is a rich, vibrant community. Pupils embrace the school's values of love, achievement, responsibility and diversity. They take every opportunity to learn and be involved in school life.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils meet these expectations. They achieve well because they are keen to succeed. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), feel happy and safe and enjoy coming to school. They value the fact that staff are on hand to provide support when they need it.

Pupils have many opportunities to lead initiatives that are important to them. For example, they lead mentoring programmes, provide reading support for younger pupils and they have established mental-health support and diversity groups. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, drama, debating and chess clubs. Pupils, staff and the community are proud of the school's many sporting achievements.

Pupils behave well. They are respectful and considerate of each other's differences. Staff work hard to enable pupils to understand and manage their emotions. Pupils said that if bullying were to happen, staff would deal with it quickly and effectively.

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

Leaders ensure that all pupils enjoy an ambitious curriculum. This includes pupils in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision). Over the last few years, the curriculum has been increasingly well thought out. All pupils study a wide range of subjects in key stages 3 and 4. Pupils choose courses in Year 10 that are part of the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects. Increasing numbers of pupils choose to study languages.

Subject leaders have crafted a curriculum which enables pupils to build on their prior knowledge. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They typically explain new learning, skills and ideas to pupils clearly. Teachers revisit important aspects of pupils' learning. Teachers typically use discussions and questioning in lessons to check that pupils remember more. However, in a small number of subjects, pupils' learning is not secure. Some pupils cannot recognise or remember their learning across lessons and topics. This is because some teachers' checks do not identify the gaps in pupils' learning.

Pupils with SEND are identified early and accurately by leaders. Staff receive high-quality training so that they can support pupils with SEND, including those in the specially resourced provision, effectively in lessons and around school. Staff make sure that these pupils enjoy the same curriculum opportunities as other pupils in school.

Leaders are quick to identify pupils who struggle to read. They provide these pupils with high-quality additional support. Staff use a variety of reading strategies, including support for phonics, to ensure that pupils become more confident readers. These strategies help pupils to catch up with their reading knowledge and skills. Leaders have developed a whole-school reading strategy. They have purchased a range of new books and other reading resources. The school's library is a hive of activity each day. However, leaders' plans to foster pupils' love of reading are not fully embedded in some subjects. In these subjects, pupils have fewer opportunities to read regularly.

Careers education across the school is highly effective. Pupils learn interview skills and receive support in writing applications for employment or a college course. Teachers make sure that pupils know about the career options linked to the subjects that they study. Employers visit the school regularly to talk about career opportunities. As a result, Year 11 pupils find meaningful and sustainable forms of education, employment or training.

Pupils engage well with their learning. They listen attentively in lessons and work with sustained concentration. Lessons are rarely interrupted by pupils' poor behaviour.

Leaders make careful decisions about provision for pupils' personal development to ensure that they are fully equipped for life. Pupils play a pivotal role in deciding what is taught to meet their needs. For example, pupils are taught how to manage their fears and anxieties. Pupils constantly look out for one another. Girls in Years 10 and 11 have taken a highly active role in ensuring that their personal needs are looked after. The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum helps prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Leaders, including governors, teachers and support staff form a highly skilled, effective team. Staff morale is high. Leaders and governors are considerate of the well-being and workload of staff. Staff have access to a range of well-being services when needed. Leaders ensured pupils and staff were well cared for during the restrictions brought in due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Governors provide effective challenge and support to leaders. Governors are clear about the school's priorities. They meet all of their statutory duties.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders, including governors, provide staff with a full and timely range of safeguarding training. Staff are well trained in the use of the school's safeguarding systems. They are alert to any potential safeguarding issues and know how to pass on concerns to leaders. Leaders deal with any concerns quickly. They work effectively with external agencies to keep vulnerable pupils safe.

Pupils said they learn how to keep themselves safe. This happens through effective citizenship lessons, assemblies and opportunities to talk openly about issues that affect them. For example, pupils learn about healthy relationships and the dangers of drug misuse.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, some teachers do not use assessment strategies well enough to check whether pupils remember essential knowledge. This means that pupils sometimes move on to new learning too quickly. Leaders should ensure that all teachers understand how to use assessment strategies effectively to ensure that pupils build on what they already know.
- The reading strategy is not fully embedded across all subjects. This means that in a small number of subjects, pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop, practise and enjoy reading. Leaders should ensure that across all subjects, staff promote the benefits of reading. This will help pupils to further develop their reading fluency, comprehension skills and understanding of vocabulary.

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 evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2013.

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	131880
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10212436
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,016
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Crowe
Headteacher	Stephen Gabriel
Website	www.stpetershigh.com
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Peter's Roman Catholic High School is a voluntary aided Catholic school. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in December 2021.
- Leaders use one registered alternative provider for a small number of pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- The school provides a local authority commissioned specially resourced provision for pupils aged 11 to 16 with autism spectrum disorder. The unit has provision for 12 pupils. At the time of the inspection, there were 12 pupils on roll.

Information about this inspection

- 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, other senior leaders, the chair of the governing body, subject leaders and groups of staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector held separate telephone calls with representatives of the diocese and local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, history and art and design. In these subjects, inspectors held meetings with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and held discussions with teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors also spoke with subject leaders to discuss curriculums and visited lessons in other subject areas.
- Inspectors held meetings with the leaders responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements. They also scrutinised leaders' safeguarding records, including pre-employment checks for staff. Inspectors evaluated leaders' procedures for keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about their well-being and workload. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils from different year groups. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Gary Kelly, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jon Ashley

Ofsted Inspector

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