

Inspection of a good school: Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Roman Catholic Primary School, Blackburn

Holmbrook Close, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 3UG

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 April 2022

Outcome

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Roman Catholic Primary School, Blackburn continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in the calm and nurturing atmosphere that leaders and staff have created. Pupils arrive at school each day happy and eager to learn. Children in the Reception class settle quickly into well-established routines. Pupils feel safe in school. They said that there is always someone to talk with if they have any worries or concerns.

Pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs. They know the importance of treating people with understanding and respect. Although pupils sometimes fall out with their friends, bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that it would be dealt with swiftly by staff should it occur.

Pupils try hard to live up to the high expectations that staff have of them. Pupils know that staff expect them to behave well. Pupils work hard in lessons. This helps them to be successful in a range of subjects.

Older pupils take their responsibilities as librarians or as part of the online protection squad seriously. Pupils relish the opportunities to visit places of interest, including trips to the theatre. Pupils are proud of their role in environmental projects that are helping to improve their local community, such as litter picking. Pupils enjoy the many sports clubs that they can join, including table tennis and tag rugby.

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

The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils well, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have identified the key knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn from the early years to Year 6. Learning builds carefully over time. The curriculum provides frequent opportunities for pupils to practise what they know. This helps most pupils to achieve well. Leaders frequently check how

well pupils are achieving across a range of subjects. They have identified that some pupils, particularly those in key stage 1, have not retained some of the knowledge that was taught during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is hindering the progress that these pupils make.

Teachers use a range of assessment strategies to check what pupils know and can do. This helps them to identify what pupils need to learn next. Leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge and resources that they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. Staff benefit from the opportunities to work together and share ideas and expertise.

Leaders are skilled in identifying pupils with SEND. Teachers provide pupils with SEND with a variety of resources and equipment. This helps pupils to successfully access all that school has to offer and for them to learn effectively alongside their classmates.

The development of pupils' vocabulary knowledge and communication skills are a priority for leaders. Staff use every opportunity to broaden pupils' vocabulary. In the Reception class, the love of songs and rhymes is fostered by well-trained staff. Children enjoy listening to stories and acting them out with their friends. Pupils in key stage 2 talked willingly about their favourite books and authors. Older pupils recommend books that they have enjoyed to others. The well-resourced library has a variety of books across a range of subjects. Pupils read widely and often.

The implementation of the phonics programme is effective. In the Reception class, children practise their phonics knowledge across a range of activities. They quickly learn the sounds that letters represent. The books that they read match the sounds that they know. This helps most pupils to become confident and fluent readers by the end of key stage 1. Pupils who struggle with reading benefit from the additional help that they receive. This includes pupils at the early stages of reading in key stage 2, as well as pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Pupils are polite and well mannered. They listen to the views of others and share their own ideas confidently. Pupils work hard in lessons and there is little disruption to learning.

The opportunities that leaders provide beyond the academic curriculum enhance pupils' personal development well. Older pupils contribute to the life of the school as members of committees. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to represent the school in sporting events and on trips. They enjoy the broad range of clubs that they can join such as gardening club and cookery club, where they learn how to prepare healthy meals.

Governors know the school and local community well. They use their knowledge effectively to hold leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive. Leaders are mindful of staff's workload. Staff appreciate the way that their well-being is valued and considered by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and their families well. They quickly identify any changes in pupils' manner or behaviour. Frequent training for staff ensures that they know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare. Vulnerable pupils and their families swiftly receive the help and support that they need from staff at school or from other agencies.

Leaders work with charities and a range of public services, to enhance pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Pupils are taught how to use social media safely. They also know how to report any situations that make them feel uncomfortable.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For some pupils, particularly those in key stage 1, the key knowledge that they were taught during the COVID-19 pandemic has not been retained. This hinders the progress that these pupils make. Staff should ensure that they revisit missed or forgotten learning so that pupils can overcome gaps in their knowledge.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2017.

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	119512
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10226156
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	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Father Ged Barry
Headteacher	Martina Staffa
Website	www.ourladyprimary.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders currently use one registered alternative provision.
- This is a Catholic school. The most recent section 48 inspection undertaken by the Diocese of Salford in January 2017.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector spoke with representatives from the governing body. The inspector also spoke with the headteacher, members of the leadership team and staff. The inspector reviewed a range of documentation relating to the curriculum and safeguarding.
- The inspector held separate telephone conversations with a representative from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. The inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke to staff. She also spoke to pupils about their learning and their experiences of the school. The inspector looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- The inspector considered the response to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She also spoke with parents and carers at the start of the school day. There were no responses to either the staff or pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Amanda Stringer, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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