

# Inspection of Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School

Downall Green Road, Bryn, Wigan, Lancashire WN4 0LZ

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Inspection dates: 20 and 21 April 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Early years provision

**Inadequate**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils do not benefit from an effective curriculum that helps them to gain the knowledge that they need to be successful learners. Leaders have low expectations for pupils' achievement, especially for those with educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are not well supported because leaders have not ensured that teachers know what essential learning they need to teach.

Pupils do not achieve well. Pupils with SEND do not get the additional help that they need to succeed. This is because leaders have not made sure that staff know how to identify or meet their needs.

Pupils are safe at school. Some parents and carers expressed concern about how well their concerns, including bullying, are dealt with. Poor record-keeping by leaders and a lack of clear communication about incidents makes some parents worry about their children's safety at school. However, inspection evidence found that leaders deal with bullying effectively.

Pupils and children in the early years do not have access to suitable opportunities that support their wider development. Children in the early years do not develop essential knowledge or attitudes that they need to be ready for key stage 1. Their understanding of the world around them is weak.

Many pupils said that they enjoy school much more now than they used to. Pupils and their parents commented on recent improvements at the school.

Most pupils mix sociably on the playground. However, there are times when some pupils do not enjoy playtimes. There is variation in staff's expectations for pupils' behaviour. Although many pupils behave well, some pupils cause low-level disruption that interrupts the learning of others. At times, staff do not ensure that pupils are considerate towards each other while they are playing.

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

The curriculum for all pupils, including children in the early years, is poor. It lacks ambition and does not enable pupils to build up their knowledge over time. As a result, pupils' achievement is weak. They are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leaders do not provide sufficient curriculum guidance for teachers and other adults in each subject in key stages 1 and 2 or in each area of learning in the early years. Leaders do not define what pupils should learn or the order that learning should occur. Consequently, teaching staff do not ensure that pupils acquire essential knowledge as they progress through the school. The curriculum does not match the demands of the national curriculum.

Pupils' weak learning is compounded further because some teachers lack secure subject knowledge. They are not sufficiently well equipped to teach what pupils should know. This results in pupils missing key subject content or developing misconceptions. Pupils have considerable gaps in their learning. They find it difficult to recall prior learning or to call on what they already know when they learn something new. In particular, pupils do not have the reading and mathematical knowledge that they need to be able to access other areas of the curriculum successfully.

Teaching staff do not check pupils' understanding effectively. Weaknesses in the curriculum means that teachers do not know what they should assess to make sure that pupils are learning key subject content. Leaders do not provide sufficient support for teachers to identify pupils with SEND. Similarly, leaders do not make sure that staff know how or when to intervene with pupils who struggle to learn or manage their own behaviour. In some classes, pupils with SEND frequently become disengaged in lessons because they are not able to access the curriculum. This interrupts their learning and the learning of others.

The school's reading curriculum is ineffective. Pupils do not develop their phonics knowledge as securely as they need to in the early years and in key stage 1. Leaders do not ensure that all teaching staff across the school are trained to help pupils to catch up when they struggle with reading. There is insufficient focus on practising and developing regular reading habits. The reading books that teachers provide for pupils in key stage 2 are often unsuitable. As a result, many older pupils do not have positive attitudes to reading.

Pupils have got into the habit of approaching learning in a lacklustre and half-hearted manner. There are high numbers of pupils who do not attend school regularly, many of these are vulnerable, or have SEND.

Pupils and parents told inspectors that expectations for behaviour, learning and attendance have improved recently. Staff are following new procedures more consistently. When they do so, pupils respond positively. Children in the early years and pupils across the rest of the school are keen to earn rewards for being ready to learn or for their consideration of others. However, despite these improvements, some pupils quickly revert to low-level behaviour in class or on the playground when staff do not intervene as well as they should. In some classes, pupils lose focus in lessons when their teachers move away to support another group of pupils.

Leaders do not promote pupils' personal development effectively. Many pupils do not benefit from experiences that support and enrich their learning or teach them about the wider world. They do not demonstrate respect for the achievements of others. Many pupils have low aspirations for their future.

Pupils do not develop healthy lifestyles or a wide range of talents or interests. They do not learn about faiths or cultures other than their own. Pupils are not well prepared to live in a diverse society.

Leadership across the board, including subject leadership, is weak. Leaders do not understand their roles or responsibilities. They have failed to take purposeful action to improve the poor quality of education that all pupils receive.

Governors do not hold leaders to account. They do not uphold their statutory duties in ensuring that all pupils benefit from a high-quality education. Substantial numbers of staff and parents do not have faith in leaders' ability to address the extensive and endemic weaknesses at the school without significant external support.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff and governors understand their roles in keeping pupils safe. Staff are vigilant to situations where pupils might be exposed to potential harm. The leaders responsible for safeguarding ensure that staff follow agreed procedures for sharing and recording their concerns. Leaders liaise well with external agencies when vulnerable pupils need additional support.

Pupils learn about keeping safe while they are online. They understand the importance of following rules to keep themselves and others safe. They know who to talk to if they have any worries.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Governors have too readily accepted what leaders have told them. They do not understand the extent of the weaknesses at the school or the impact this has had on pupils' achievement. Governors must ensure that they improve their oversight of the school so that they can hold leaders to account for their actions and the pace of improvement.
- Leadership is weak. Leaders across the board have done too little to tackle the considerable weaknesses at the school. As a result, pupils are not prepared for the next stage of education nor are they helped to become positive citizens for the future. Leaders must ensure that they have the expertise, knowledge and skills to swiftly bring about much needed improvement.
- The curriculum for children in the early years and pupils in Years 1 to 6 is weak. It does not identify what pupils should learn and when this knowledge should be taught. As a result, pupils do not build up a secure body of knowledge over time. They become confused and often forget what they have been taught. Leaders must, as a matter of urgency, review the curriculum so that children in the early years and pupils across the rest of the school gain the essential knowledge that they need to be successful.
- Leaders have not ensured that all staff have the subject knowledge that they need to effectively deliver a curriculum that meets the ambition of the national curriculum or the latest early years guidance. Consequently, many children and

pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders must make sure that all staff are well equipped to teach the year groups that they are allocated by leaders.

- Leaders' support for pupils' personal development is poor. This results in many pupils, especially the most vulnerable, having very limited knowledge of the opportunities that are open to them. This fosters low aspirations and stymies pupils from developing new interests or promoting their natural talents. Leaders must ensure that the provision for pupils' personal development improves so that pupils can flourish and be well prepared for the next steps in their life within a diverse society.
- Leaders do not ensure that staff have consistently high expectations for pupils' behaviour or attendance at school. Some staff do not intervene quickly enough when pupils' play is becoming too rough or when pupils' behaviour is disturbing learning. Consequently, some pupils display ambivalent attitudes to learning and they are not considerate enough to others. This affects how well pupils, especially those with SEND or other vulnerabilities, learn and play together. Leaders must make certain that staff follow agreed procedures to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and behave as well as they can.
- Leaders do not ensure that all teachers know how to identify or meet the needs of pupils with SEND. This means that these pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders must ensure that staff are supported to understand and meet the needs of all pupils in their class.

Leaders and those responsible for governance may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106489
<b>Local authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	10226302
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	89
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Reverend John Gorman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachel Keating
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ashtonourladys.wigan.sch.uk">www.ashtonourladys.wigan.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There has been considerable staffing turmoil at the school since the time of the previous inspection.
- At the time of the inspection, there was an interim arrangement for leadership.
- The school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The last section 48 inspection took place in May 2017.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- 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 spoke with the executive headteacher, the acting head of school and other leaders in the school, including the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation relating to safeguarding. This included: the school's central record of staff and visitors; staff training records; records of safeguarding and samples of the records kept on individual pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. They talked with the curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. Inspectors looked at samples of work from other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school. They considered responses to Ofsted's Parent View. They also considered the free-text responses from parents to find out their views of the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jean Tarry

Ofsted Inspector

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