

# Inspection of a good school: St. William of York Catholic Primary School

Nugent Road, Bolton, Lancashire BL3 3DE

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Inspection dates:

28 and 29 March 2023

## **Outcome**

St. William of York Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

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

Pupils love attending this school. They flourish here. They said that if they tried to list the reasons why the school is special, it would take forever. Leaders have created an environment of mutual respect and kindness. The warm relationships between staff and pupils shine through their interactions. Pupils feel safe and happy.

Pupils are particularly proud of the diverse nature of their school community. They said that everyone is welcome and that it is easy to make friends. Pupils understand what bullying is and they know that it is unacceptable. If it happens, leaders take immediate and effective action to deal with it.

Leaders are determined that all pupils and children in the early years receive an education of the highest quality. Leaders are very successful in achieving this. They foster a culture where pupils are expected to try their best and to behave well. Pupils' conduct reflects these high expectations. They are incredibly well prepared for the next steps in their education.

Leaders place a high value on helping pupils to become responsible citizens. Older pupils embrace opportunities to serve others. For example, play leaders support younger pupils at breaktimes and pupils in the 'GIFT team' raise money for charity.

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

Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have thought meticulously about all aspects of curriculum design. As a result, pupils from the early years to Year 6 experience a very well-designed curriculum.

Leaders have precisely identified the knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn in each subject and the order in which they should learn them. This starts in the early years, when staff design learning activities which allow children to discover the 'golden threads' of knowledge. Throughout the school, teachers help pupils to build effectively on prior learning so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Teachers deliver the curriculum consistently well. They explain new concepts clearly. They regularly check that pupils acquire and can remember important knowledge. Where teachers identify gaps in pupils' learning, they design effective learning activities to address them. Teachers provide ample opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate their learning. Pupils, including those with SEND, build deep subject knowledge. They recall and apply their learning exceptionally well. Pupils delight in demonstrating their knowledge. For example, Year 5 pupils spoke eloquently about the impact of deforestation.

Staff support pupils with SEND exceptionally well. Leaders swiftly identify their needs. Teachers are skilled at making adjustments so that pupils with SEND successfully follow the same curriculum as their peers. These pupils achieve highly.

Leaders have ensured that reading is the bedrock of the curriculum. Pupils described reading as the key to their success. Children in the early years learn in a language-rich environment where they enjoy lots of songs, stories and rhymes. They begin learning phonics from the start of the Reception Year. Expert staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well. They quickly identify any pupils who fall behind and help them to catch up. Consequently, pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, learn to read very accurately, confidently and fluently.

Pupils take great pleasure in reading. One pupil said, 'If a book is good, you get lost in it and it takes you to a whole new planet.' Older pupils share their love of reading with younger pupils. For example, Year 6 storytellers regularly read to groups of key stage 1 pupils.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They have impeccable manners and are considerate of others. They are attentive and responsive in lessons. Teachers do not allow poor behaviour to disrupt pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy their learning and sustain concentration on the task at hand. The youngest children are very well versed in the routines that staff have created to promote highly effective learning.

Leaders enrich the curriculum through a very wide range of trips and projects. For example, the Destination Bolton project gave pupils the opportunity to explore the rich cultural heritage of their community. Leaders also provide an extensive array of opportunities for pupils to develop new interests, such as baking or learning to play the cello. The vast majority of pupils relish engaging regularly in extra-curricular activities.

Governors work highly effectively with leaders. Together, they have a clear and continuous focus on enhancing the education that they provide. Leaders prioritise training for staff. This gives staff the skills to enable all pupils to learn effectively. Staff feel valued by

leaders who are considerate of their workload and well-being. Pupils, staff and parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make pupils' safety their highest priority. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training to keep their knowledge up to date. Staff know pupils and their families well. They are alert to the risks that pupils face and they know how to spot if a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff report any concerns promptly. Leaders work well with external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils get the timely support that they need.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe through the wider curriculum. Staff teach them about looking after their physical and mental well-being. Pupils understand that they should tell a trusted adult if they have any concerns.

## 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 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.

## 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>	105226
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240664
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	236
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Gareth Smyth
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Lightbown
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-williams.bolton.sch.uk">www.st-williams.bolton.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	20 and 21 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a Roman Catholic school in the Diocese of Salford. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2017.
- School leaders make use of two registered alternative providers for a very small number of pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector spoke with some members of the governing body.
- The inspector spoke to representatives of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Salford.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their

learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector spoke to pupils about their experience of school. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- The inspector visited the breakfast club run by school leaders.
- The inspector checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the school's single central record. She met with leaders, staff and pupils to check on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of evidence, including records relating to pupils' behaviour and documents relating to school improvement.
- The inspector considered the responses shared through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.

### **Inspection team**

Sally Rix, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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