

Inspection of St Patrick's RC Primary and Nursery School

Lee Street, Oldham, Lancashire OL8 1EF

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2023

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

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe in this diverse school community. Many pupils who attend the school speak different languages or they come from different backgrounds. In this welcoming school, pupils embrace each other's differences. They show respect for each other. Pupils also have strong relationships with staff. Pupils know that staff will listen to them if they have any worries.

Pupils arrive each day keen to learn new things. However, the expectations of some staff of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. This includes for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils do not always benefit from a consistently well-delivered curriculum. Some teachers do not check with sufficient rigour that pupils know more and remember more of the curriculum. Sometimes, teachers do not give pupils the most appropriate activities to help them to learn all that they could. These issues impede how well some pupils achieve across some subjects in the curriculum, including reading.

Conversely, pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils concentrate well on their learning. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well. This creates a calm and orderly environment, in which pupils can learn. When any incidents of unkind behaviour, including bullying, occur, leaders deal with these swiftly and effectively.

Pupils enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities that the school provides. This includes gardening, art and various sporting opportunities.

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

From the early years to Year 6, leaders ensure that pupils, including pupils with SEND, access a broad and balanced curriculum. From Year 1 to Year 6, leaders have set out the important knowledge that they wish pupils to learn. They have also established a logical order for new information to be taught. However, in the early years, it is not as clear what children should learn. Nevertheless, leaders are taking the necessary steps to define the curriculum for children in the early years' provision.

Typically, teachers' subject knowledge is secure. In many subjects, teachers are well equipped to design learning that meets the aims of the curriculum. However, sometimes, teachers do not select the most appropriate tasks to enable pupils, including pupils with SEND, to achieve consistently well. This is also the case in the early years, where the activities that teachers choose to help children to learn do not always prepare them as well as they should for the demands of Year 1.

Some subject leaders do not ensure that teachers know how to use assessment strategies consistently well. This means that, on occasion, some teachers do not know exactly where pupils have gaps in their learning. Added to this, occasionally, pupils' misconceptions go unaddressed. In the early years, at times, teachers do not check that children have secure enough foundations on which to build new learning.

Leaders have recently introduced a new phonics programme. All staff have been trained to implement the programme. However, the quality of the delivery of phonics is uneven across classes. Despite the recent training that staff have had, some teachers and teaching assistants do not have the confidence to deliver aspects of the phonics programme as intended. As a result, some pupils do not become confident and fluent readers.

Leaders have ensured that there are appropriate systems in place to identify pupils with SEND. Staff know these pupils well, and they take care to provide high levels of pastoral support. Pupils with SEND have access to the full range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities.

Pupils, including children in the early years, have positive attitudes to learning. For example, they are respectful of resources and playtime equipment. They understand the school rules. Typically, pupils learn without interruption. They attend school regularly.

Leaders have thought carefully about the provision to support pupils' wider personal development. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They also learn about different religions, faiths and beliefs. Leaders ensure that pupils get many opportunities to support their local community. For example, they raise money for charities. Pupils also learn about different fundamental British values, including the protected characteristics. Pupils can articulate with confidence how they live out the values of tolerance, respect and the rule of law.

Governors and leaders have taken some effective action to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. However, leaders and governors do not have a sufficiently deep oversight of how well teachers deliver the curriculum.

Staff report that leaders support them well with their well-being. Staff appreciate the steps that leaders have taken to manage their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate training so that they can spot the potential signs of harm in pupils. Leaders keep their safeguarding training up to date with the current guidance. This aids staff in identifying pupils who need additional support.

Leaders keep comprehensive records of their vulnerable pupils. They take timely and effective action to deal with any welfare concerns that arise. Leaders work well with different external agencies, when required.

Pupils learn about how to keep safe. For example, they understand how to protect themselves when online, when near water or when using a bike outside of school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not deliver the phonics programme consistently well. They do not demonstrate a secure understanding of the sounds that pupils must learn. As a result, some pupils do not become confident and fluent readers. Leaders and governors should ensure that staff receive the training and support they require. This is so staff can deliver the phonics programme with confidence and fidelity to the scheme.
- In a few subjects in key stages 1 and 2, and in the early years, leaders have not ensured that some teachers design the most appropriate learning activities to reflect the content of the curriculum. As a result, pupils', including pupils with SEND, do not achieve consistently well. Leaders and governors should ensure that teachers receive clear training and guidance about how to choose tasks that enable pupils to follow the curriculum consistently well.
- In a few subjects in key stages 1 and 2, and in the early years, some teachers do not use leaders' assessment strategies effectively enough to check on what pupils know and can do. This means that, sometimes, teachers do not establish where pupils have gaps in their learning or where pupils develop misconceptions. Leaders and governors should ensure that teachers use assessment strategies effectively so that pupils learn and achieve well.

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

Unique reference number	105726
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10255969
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	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Phil Sumner
Headteacher	Clare Mitchell
Website	www.st-patricks.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 and 12 February 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make any use of alternative providers.
- The school manages its own breakfast provision for pupils.
- This Roman Catholic school is part of the Diocese of Salford. The last section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place on 9 February 2016.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They met with a range of leaders, including those who are responsible for behaviour and attendance.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, they met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils and looked at pupils' work.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with a member of the Diocese of Salford, and he met with a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils in Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe. They discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders and staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes and as they moved around the school. They scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at the school. They spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors met with parents and carers at the beginning of the school day to gather their views about the school.

Inspection team

Stuart Perkins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ian Young

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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