

Inspection of Blessed John Henry Newman Roman Catholic College

Broadway, Chadderton, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL9 9QY

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), feel well-cared for at this school. Most pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Recent changes to the systems for managing behaviour mean that pupils' behaviour has improved. However, some teachers do not apply these strategies well enough. Some pupils do not arrive to lessons on time. In some classrooms, low-level disruption interrupts the learning of some pupils.

In the main, leaders are quick to deal with incidents of bullying when they are reported. However, some pupils told the inspectors that, on occasions, incidences of derogatory language and homophobic comments are not resolved consistently well.

Leaders have high ambitions for the pupils at this school. This has led to considerable improvements in some aspects of the curriculum. Nevertheless, pupils do not benefit from a curriculum that is suitably broad and ambitious. As a result, some pupils do not gain a secure knowledge of some subjects that they study. This leads to an unevenness in pupils' achievement across different subjects.

Pupils value the range of extra-curricular activities offered at this school. This includes taking part in debating competitions, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award and the Cadet Force. Pupils are empowered to develop their confidence and social skills, through opportunities to lead environmental projects and culture days as part of their pupil leadership roles.

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

Leaders and governors have put plans into place to address the weaknesses in the curriculum design. In some subjects, they are moving forward with improvement quickly. However, in others, their curriculum thinking is less well developed. This means that the current curriculums are not sufficiently aspirational. They do not enable pupils to learn all that they should. This limits how well pupils can achieve in these subjects.

In some subject areas, leaders have defined the content that they want pupils to learn and the order in which this will be taught. Even so, teachers' delivery of the curriculum in these subjects is variable. Leaders are not quick enough to spot where this is happening. This means that pupils' learning is uneven across subjects.

In contrast, teachers' strong subject knowledge in other curriculum areas means that they choose activities that help pupils to understand the curriculum well. In these subjects, teachers use effective assessment strategies to identify and address gaps in learning. Consequently, pupils learning is more secure in these subjects.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. Pupils use the library resources well and they appreciate the wide range of books that they can take home to read. Teachers quickly identify pupils who find reading difficult. They are also well trained to deliver support programmes effectively to help pupils to catch up. Pupils mostly enjoy reading.

The methods to identify pupils with SEND are effective. Teachers have received training that equips them with the strategies that they need to support pupils with SEND. Teachers communicate with support staff well to help ensure that pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers and achieve well.

Most pupils want to succeed and achieve well. Many pupils behave well. However, the behaviour of some pupils interrupts the learning of others. Despite recent improvements to the systems for dealing with poor behaviour, teachers do not consistently follow the new approaches. This means that low-level disruption is not addressed as effectively or swiftly as it should. Pupils typically attend school regularly. However, some pupils are routinely late to lessons. This affects how well the pupils settle into class and engage with their learning.

Leaders have organised events to help pupils develop an understanding of the breadth of careers options. However, leaders have not ensured that pupils understand what it means to be a British citizen. In places, and especially in key stage 4, the delivery of the personal, social, emotional and health (PSHE) curriculum is limited in its effectiveness. There is limited breadth in what pupils learn. As such, some pupils are not prepared as well as they could be for life in modern society.

Leaders and governors work closely and have managed the many challenges faced within the school community. They have made significant changes to improve the leadership at the school. That said, there is variability in the strength and quality of leadership at different levels. Nonetheless, staff recognise the efforts leaders make to support their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders work carefully with the relevant authorities and professionals to ensure that the systems to safeguard pupils are effective. Staff receive updates and training on how to identify and respond to the risks that the pupils may face. This helps them to confidently report any concerns.

Leaders provide timely and effective support for pupils at risk of harm. They forge trusting relationships with parents and carers. This helps them to share information about pupils' needs effectively.

Pupils with vulnerabilities make use of the 'pastoral care centre' and the lunchtime well-being clubs to help them regulate their emotions and feelings. Pupils learn

about keeping safe by listening to various guest speakers and through assemblies. For instance, they know how to avoid risks such as knife crime and drugs.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not well designed and it lacks breadth and ambition. As a result, pupils do not receive the knowledge that they need to help them achieve well. Leaders should ensure that for these subjects, they design a curriculum that is ambitious and broad for all pupils.
- Teachers' delivery of the curriculum varies across some subjects, including PSHE. Pupils' achievement across subjects is uneven as a result. Leaders should ensure that teachers receive the training and support that they need to deliver the curriculum well.
- Some teachers do not use the new behaviour systems consistently well. Some pupils' disruptive behaviour and late arrival to lessons are left unchallenged. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers follow the new behaviour approaches so that pupils can learn without interruption.

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	136432
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10255958
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1516
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Cassin
Headteacher	Glyn Potts
Website	www.newmanrc.oldham.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	8 January 2020, 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 September 2015.
- The school is part of the Catholic Federation of Oldham Schools.
- One deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2022.
- The local governing body provide before- and after-school care for pupils.
- Leaders make use of one registered alternative provider and two unregistered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors also met with a range of other staff and leaders during the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke to representatives and the chair of the local governing body, as well as a representative of the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed pupils' behaviour during social times and during movement in school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, English, French, design and technology, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed samples of pupils' work and spoke with some pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
- In addition, inspectors met with other subject leaders and reviewed some other curriculum areas such as music, physical education and geography.
- The inspection team analysed safeguarding documentation, including the single central record. Inspectors spoke with a range of pupils, staff and leaders to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the leaders responsible for personal development, pupil premium, early careers teachers and reading.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including leaders' self-evaluation and attendance and behaviour records, governors' minutes and enrichment.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

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