

Inspection of a good school: Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Ward Street, Prescot, Merseyside L34 6JJ

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 July 2023

Outcome

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders, staff, pupils and families follow the school's vision of 'loving, learning and reaching out to all' each day.

There are strong relationships across the school. Pupils feel safe. They comment that they are looked after well by both their friends and staff. They know that their teachers act quickly and successfully to resolve any bullying should it occur.

Leaders and staff are highly ambitious for the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The academic, social and emotional support that leaders provide contributes strongly to how well pupils achieve. Pupils are able to do their best in lessons because classrooms are calm. Teachers' high expectations for behaviour are clear. Pupils behave well.

Pupils benefit from high-quality opportunities that enhance their learning and support their personal development. They participate in interesting visits, including those involving local organisations. They take part in residential visits. Musical, sports and arts-based clubs and lessons include the opportunity to perform in a local theatre and play a musical instrument.

There is a strong sense of community at the school. Pupils understand equality and diversity. They know that everyone is different and that all will be included in their school. Older pupils enjoy supporting others by, for example, acting as play leaders.

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

Leaders have designed a broad, ambitious and interesting curriculum for all pupils, including those with SEND. They have considered the local area and the experiences it provides to make the content of the curriculum relevant to pupils. From the early years onwards, leaders have identified the important knowledge and vocabulary they want

pupils to learn. They have sequenced the content of the curriculum thoughtfully to ensure that the new ideas that are introduced build on what pupils have previously learned. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Subject leaders provide valuable guidance to teachers about how to deliver curriculum content effectively. In most subjects, pupils identify links in their learning and are deepening their understanding over time. However, in a small number of subjects, teaching and learning are less well developed. This means that pupils' knowledge is not as secure over time in these subjects.

Leaders and pupils know how important it is to be able to read. Teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to read and to listen to stories. Leaders make sure that pupils learn phonics through a well-ordered curriculum. This begins in the early years. Any pupils who are at risk of falling behind in their learning of phonics are identified early. For these pupils, additional and effective support is provided by staff. Leaders ensure that reading books match the sounds that pupils know. By the end of key stage 1, most pupils are successful readers. Older pupils read fluently and with expression, intonation and a real sense of understanding.

Leaders and staff are skilled at identifying and supporting the specific needs of pupils with SEND. Staff have received effective training in educating pupils with SEND. They ensure that these pupils follow the same curriculum as other pupils. This helps pupils with SEND to achieve well.

Teachers make checks on how well pupils learn. These checks are effective in helping to identify which pupils need more help or guidance in lessons and over time. Staff deliver additional teaching to pupils to help them catch up and keep up with their friends.

Children in the early years are confident to follow routines. These help them to work and play together safely and purposefully. Pupils across the school concentrate on their learning, and there are very few distractions. They are keen to do their best. Pupils behave well.

Pupils learn about their rights and responsibilities as future citizens. They understand the importance of developing respectful relationships with people who may be different from themselves. Leaders have developed a highly effective programme of learning to support pupils' personal development. Leaders make sure that pupils understand a range of important issues, such as equality, diversity and fundamental British values. Leaders have made sure that the curriculum provides high-quality opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, links with the local theatre help to develop pupils' cultural understanding. Pastoral support for pupils is effective.

Governors know their school well. Governors hold leaders to account for standards and the quality of education in the school.

Staff talked positively about the strong and supportive teamwork that exists in the school. They know that leaders will consider their workload before new initiatives are introduced. They comment that they are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff have been trained to understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff know how to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders have established a clear system for staff to swiftly report any concerns they may have. They act quickly to help vulnerable pupils and families. Leaders also access additional help for pupils, including mental health support, from other agencies.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Leaders work with the police and other agencies to teach pupils about keeping themselves safe in the community. For example, older pupils are taught about the dangers of knife crime.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders' curriculum development is not as well developed as in others. This means pupils' knowledge in these subjects is not as secure as leaders would wish. Leaders should sharpen aspects of teaching that will help pupils to know more and remember more over time.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2013.

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	104459
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10291381
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	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anna Houghton
Headteacher	Haydn Boyle
Website	www.ourladysprescot.com
Date of previous inspection	17 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders make use of one registered alternative provider for pupils.
- This school is a Roman Catholic voluntary aided school. The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in February 2019.
- A number of new governors, including the chair of the governing body, have been appointed since the last inspection.

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 school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and with other leaders and members of staff. He spoke with members of the governing body. He also spoke with the school's improvement partner and representatives of the local authority and diocese.

- The inspector looked at a range of documents and spoke with leaders about the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. He talked with curriculum leaders of these subject areas. The inspector also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. He also observed some pupils reading to staff.
- The inspector also considered other subjects. He spoke with leaders about the curriculums in these subjects and their implementation. He also spoke with pupils and considered the work in their books.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class and as pupils moved around the school. He also observed pupils in the dining hall and playing outside at lunchtime.
- The inspector spoke with a group of pupils about their experiences at school.
- The inspector looked at the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. He also met with parents before school to find out their views of the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Ian Shackleton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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