

Inspection of St Vincent's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale

Edenfield Road, Norden, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 7QL

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 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

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including children in the early years, enjoy coming to school. They appreciate the positive relationships that they have with adults. Pupils know that adults will help them if they need any support. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils are confident and articulate. From the early years, children learn to develop their communication skills by posing questions to visitors. Older pupils form special friendship groups with younger pupils. They enjoy celebrating together. In this way, older pupils act as positive role models for their younger friends.

Leaders expect all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve well. Pupils live up to these expectations in those subjects where there is published data. However, in other subjects beyond English and mathematics, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. This is because the school's curriculum does not help pupils build up their long-term knowledge.

Pupils behave well. For example, they move around school sensibly and calmly. They show that they can 'walk with pride'. During lessons, most pupils concentrate and focus on their learning. They are keen to develop their knowledge.

Older pupils take part in a range of clubs, such as rugby, football and art. Pupils are proud of their sporting achievements. Many pupils develop their musical talents by learning to play an instrument.

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

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the school has prioritised developing pupils' learning in early reading and mathematics. In these subjects, staff understand what pupils need to learn and how new learning builds on what they already know. They carry out regular checks and use this information to make sure that pupils do not have gaps in their learning. As a result, pupils achieve well in these subjects. This is reflected in the 2022 published data for key stages 1 and 2.

In many other subjects, the curriculum is not well organised. The school has not given enough thought to the essential knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which this should be taught. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge logically and securely from Year 1 to Year 6. At times, pupils' learning is disjointed.

The school ensures that teachers receive helpful support to teach some subjects. However, the guidance that is provided for many subjects is underdeveloped. Subject leadership in these areas is not as effective as it should be. Consequently, teachers do not know exactly what they should be teaching or how best to deliver subject content. This also makes it difficult for teachers to check how well pupils are learning new knowledge. It hinders how well pupils learn in these subjects.

In contrast, the curriculum in the early years is ambitious and well organised. It clearly maps out what children will learn in all areas of learning. Children achieve well. They are well prepared for key stage 1.

The school ensures that there is a sharp focus on early reading. Children learn letter sounds as soon as they enter the Reception Year. They quickly develop the skills that they need to become fluent, confident readers. Children and pupils read books that contain the sounds that they know. This means that they experience success as readers. Occasionally, a small number of pupils do not keep up with the pace of learning within the phonics programme. The school prioritises these pupils so that they receive the support that they need to develop essential reading knowledge.

The school makes sure that pupils with SEND are identified as early as possible. It works with staff and external partners to give pupils the support that they need. This helps pupils with SEND to achieve as well as others in the school.

Pupils behave well. They attend school regularly. Pupils are proud of their school and value being part of the community. Everyone is welcome at the school, and pupils are supportive of one another. They learn about differences between people and families. Pupils show high levels of tolerance and respect for other people. They benefit from high-quality social and emotional support should they need it.

The school ensures that pupils develop empathy and are generous towards others. For example, pupils support their local community by holding fundraising events for charities. Each year, the school council creates a petition linked to helping others, which they then present in the Houses of Parliament. Pupils develop their leadership skills by taking on responsibilities, such as digital leaders and mathematics leaders. They are well prepared to grow up in modern Britain.

The staff enjoy being part of the school team. They appreciate the support and consideration that is given to their well-being. The school considers how changes may impact on staff workload. Staff appreciate how their views are sought and listened to.

The school holds meetings throughout the year to inform parents and carers about their children's education. Parents of children in the Reception Year value the wealth of information that they receive to help prepare their child to start school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In many curriculums, the school has not identified the key knowledge that it wants pupils to learn and when this should be taught. This means that pupils do

not build a secure body of knowledge over time. The school should ensure that subject curriculums are designed to enable pupils to know and remember more.

- The school has not developed subject leadership expertise. In turn, staff lack clarity about what they should teach and how to deliver subject content effectively. The school should ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills and expertise that they need to successfully implement the curriculum.
- The school does not ensure that checks on learning identify pupils' missing or insecure knowledge. This means that the school cannot address pupils' misunderstandings or gaps in knowledge effectively. As a result, pupils do not learn the essential knowledge from the curriculum. The school should ensure that staff check what pupils know and understand so that they learn more effectively over time.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	105831
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10256038
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	378
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Laura Coluccio
Headteacher	Mary Brooks
Website	http://www.st-vincent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher took up post in September 2023.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- This school is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school under the Diocese of Salford. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place before March 2026.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspection team spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher, as well as the school business manager.
- The lead inspector held discussions with the governing body.
- The lead inspector also met with representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to a range of pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector heard a range of pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a familiar adult and talked to older pupils about the books they read.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the results from Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys.
- Inspectors also considered the results from Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils to gather their views on the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils, and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interest first.

Inspection team

Sheena Clark, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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