

Inspection of a good school: Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School

Lock Lane, Partington, Manchester M31 4PJ

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 October 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is a happy place for pupils to learn and play. They benefit from warm and caring relationships with staff and with each other. This helps pupils to feel safe and secure.

Pupils have mostly positive attitudes to their learning. They wear their badges with pride to show that they understand the school's values and aims. Most pupils respond well to the school's high expectations for their achievement. They learn increasingly well in some subjects. However, some curriculums are at a relatively early stage of development. In these subjects, pupils do not show a secure understanding of what they have learned over time.

Children in the early years quickly learn the school's rules and routines. Overall, pupils behave well. However, some pupils reported that, on occasions, some of their classmates struggle to make the right choices.

The school has strengthened its systems for making sure that pupils attend school regularly and on time. However, these improvements are very recent.

Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), participate fully in the life of the school. For example, pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about their roles as Minnie Vinnies. They enjoy doing good deeds for others and helping their local community.

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

The school has made sure that pupils study a full and rich curriculum. In most subjects, the main content that pupils should learn has been broken down into smaller chunks from

the early years to the end of Year 6. However, in some subjects, the most important content has not been broken down clearly enough. As a result, some staff are unsure of the essential knowledge to teach and revisit.

Typically, staff make effective checks to find out what pupils have remembered and understood. They use this information well to quickly spot and address misconceptions and to adapt future teaching. However, in some subjects, teachers' checks on learning do not identify well enough what pupils have understood and remembered over time. This results in some pupils not fully embedding important vocabulary or concepts that they need for later learning.

The school has prioritised the teaching of reading and has ensured that there is a well-structured programme in place. The school provides parents and carers with helpful advice about early reading so that they can support their children's learning at home.

Pupils show that they are increasingly able to read unknown words by using the sounds that they have been taught. The school quickly identifies any pupils who are not keeping up with the pace of the programme and provides timely support. However, some pupils who struggle with learning to read do not read as confidently or fluently as they should.

By the end of key stage 2, most pupils enjoy reading and can read with fluency and growing confidence. However, some pupils do not show a secure understanding of the books that they have read. Some pupils also said that they would like a wider range of books to enjoy.

The school has strengthened its systems for quickly and accurately identifying and assessing the needs of pupils with SEND. It has also recently developed its processes for ensuring that pupils with SEND can access the same content as their peers. However, some of this work is in the earlier stages of development.

Most pupils appreciate the school's efforts to bring about improvements to behaviour. This work is beginning to have a positive impact. However, some pupils report that their classmates sometimes continue to disrupt their learning in some lessons. Additionally, some pupils do not attend school often enough. This makes it harder for these pupils to keep up with their learning and to achieve well.

Pupils understand and respect differences between people. They told the inspector, 'We are all the same but unique in our own way.' Pupils and parents appreciate the many opportunities that the school provides for pupils to develop their skills and confidence beyond the classroom. Pupils enjoy attending different clubs and activities. They look forward to the Year 6 residential visit each year. They also proudly represent the school in cross country and other sporting events.

Governors provide strong support and challenge to ensure that the school improves further and sustains the recent gains in pupils' achievement and attendance. The school has taken effective decisions to enhance staff well-being and to reduce their workload. For example, staff particularly appreciate well-being tokens and the reduction in written marking methods.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not considered carefully enough the most important content and vocabulary that pupils need to learn. This means that some teachers do not have sufficient guidance about what to teach and when to teach it. The school should continue to further refine its curriculum thinking so that the most important content that pupils need to know is clearly identified.
- In some curriculums, teachers do not routinely check that pupils are developing a secure grasp of key concepts and vocabulary. This means that, in these subjects, some pupils struggle to make links with earlier learning and to make sense of new content. The school should make sure that checks on learning support pupils to know and do more over time.
- Some changes to the reading curriculum are relatively new and have not been fully embedded. As a result, some pupils struggle to read accurately, while some other pupils struggle to understand what they have read. The school should make sure that the reading curriculum is consistently well implemented so that pupils can read fluently and have a secure understanding and appreciation of a wide range of high-quality books and texts.
- The changes to behaviour systems are relatively new. This means that a small minority of pupils reported that their learning is sometimes disrupted by pupils who struggle to follow the school's high expectations. The school should continue to embed recent improvements so that the behaviour of pupils continues to improve over time.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means that they miss important learning. The school should build on the recent gains in improving attendance so that these pupils attend school as often as they should.

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 September 2018.

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	106346
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	10294248
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	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Martin Moran
Headteacher	Natalie Gaulton (acting headteacher)
Website	www.ourladyoflourdes-primary.trafford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided Roman Catholic school that is part of the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The most recent section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in February 2023. The next section 48 inspection is scheduled to take place in January 2028.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school offers a before-school breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, she met with leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples

of pupils' work. The inspector also observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector considered other subjects on the school's curriculum. She talked to the leaders of these subjects. The inspector spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work in these subjects.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. She spoke with a representative of the local authority and of the diocese.
- The inspector spoke with different groups of pupils to gather their views on the school and held discussions about their behaviour and learning. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtime.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, governors, parents and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first. The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school and scrutinised a range of documents in relation to safeguarding.
- The inspector considered a range of documents provided by school leaders and staff. These included the school's priority action plan, minutes of governing body meetings, headteacher reports and the school's self-evaluation document.

Inspection team

Louise McArdle, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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