

Inspection of Upholland Roby Mill Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

School Lane, Roby Mill, Upholland, Skelmersdale, Lancashire WN8 0QR

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 November 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this welcoming and happy school. They said that they feel well supported and safe. Caring staff build strong and positive relationships with pupils, including children in early years. This helps pupils to feel valued for who they are.

Typically, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well across the curriculum. Pupils are eager to learn and they strive to realise the school's aspirations for their success. They make the most of the learning opportunities that the school provides for them. Pupils listen well in class, and lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

Pupils live up to the high expectations that the school sets for their conduct. They move around school in an orderly manner, and older pupils ensure that those younger than themselves are well looked after during lunch- and playtimes.

Pupils enjoy the range of activities on offer beyond the academic curriculum. For example, they look forward to educational visits to places of interest and attending the many clubs on offer. These activities include sport, cooking and calligraphy.

Pupils engage fully in the range of leadership opportunities afforded to them. These include running the lunchtime clubs for younger pupils, together with involvement in the school's various team roles. Older pupils recognise that these responsibilities will help to prepare them for later life.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum that is well ordered and carefully crafted to match the ages and stages of pupils' learning. Across subjects, the school has identified the key knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which this content should be taught. This begins from the moment that children join the Reception class.

The school has provided high-quality training so that teachers can deliver the curriculum effectively. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to explain new learning clearly to pupils. Alongside this, teachers design activities to enable pupils, including children in the Reception class, to remember the intended curriculum.

In most subjects, teachers use the school's assessment strategies well to identify the gaps in pupils' knowledge and to check their understanding of prior learning. However, in a small number of subjects, the school does not provide enough opportunities for some pupils to revisit essential knowledge and skills. On occasion, this prevents some pupils from having sufficiently secure foundations on which to build new learning.

The school ensures that pupils with SEND have their additional needs identified quickly and accurately by well-trained staff. Staff receive appropriate guidance to enable them to adapt their delivery of the curriculum to meet these pupils' needs. This allows pupils with SEND to learn alongside their classmates successfully and to achieve well.

The school has established clear routines and high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are polite and respectful. Pupils try their best to live out the school's values of 'love, hope and courage' each day. Staff apply the school's attendance policies and procedures consistently. The school supports families well to make sure that pupils attend school regularly.

The school has ensured that reading is a high priority. Skilled staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well. Children in Reception Year quickly learn the sounds that letters represent. Staff provide additional support for those pupils who struggle with reading. This helps these pupils to catch up quickly with their peers. The books that pupils read closely match the sounds that they have learned. This supports them in becoming confident, fluent readers by the end of Year 2.

Across school, pupils have access to a wide range of high-quality texts, both in classrooms and in the school library. Staff encourage pupils to read regularly for pleasure. For instance, the school sets up reading challenges to encourage pupils to read more widely and often. Older pupils understand that reading can help them to become more knowledgeable.

The school has designed a well-constructed programme to support pupils' personal development. Pupils understand how to keep themselves healthy, both physically and mentally. They also understand how to keep themselves safe when online. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. Older pupils have a clear understanding of why it is important to be tolerant and respectful of others. Pupils are very accepting of the differences between people.

Governors carry out their roles effectively. For example, they provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support to the school. Governors have a clear oversight of how well pupils are achieving.

The school has taken positive action to reduce staff's workload. For example, leaders ensure that meeting schedules are adjusted when needed. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the school does not provide sufficient opportunities for some pupils to revisit and consolidate earlier knowledge and skills. On occasion, this prevents some pupils from building securely on what they already know and can do. The school should ensure that, in these subjects, pupils are supported well to embed knowledge into their long-term memory.

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	119496
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10240757
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	18
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carole McCourt
Headteacher	Nicola Grand
Website	www.robymill.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 December 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Liverpool. Its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was in November 2023. Its next section 48 inspection is due from November 2028.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other members of staff. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the

chair of governors. She also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, and spoke to teachers and with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils reading with a familiar adult. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum with leaders in some other subjects.
- 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' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at various times in the school day. This included during lessons as well as at lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents and carers in their responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors spoke with parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Pat Speed, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

John Hanley

Ofsted Inspector

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