

Inspection of Radcliffe Hall Church of England/Methodist Primary School

Bury Street, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 2GB

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Paul Wilson. This school is part of The Sycamore Church of England Trust Limited, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Ian Young, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Granby.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's motto, 'let all that you do be done in love' permeates the way in which pupils and staff treat one another. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from being part of a school that has high expectations for their academic success. Pupils achieve well, especially in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. Pupils also flourish socially and emotionally. They are cared for well.

Pupils said that they like their school, especially their teachers, who greet them warmly each morning as they arrive. Pupils and staff are pleased to see one another. Pupils, including those in the early years, settle quickly and are ready to learn.

Around school, pupils are polite and courteous. They are sensible as they walk down the corridors. They listen to one another's ideas and opinions.

Pupils who hold leadership positions wear their badges with pride. They make a positive contribution to the local area. For example, they recently chose to collect donations for a local foodbank. This is one way in which pupils enact their school values. Pupils enjoy participating in a range of extra-curricular opportunities, such as dodgeball, choir, gardening, craft and gymnastics.

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

Since becoming an academy, the school, in partnership with the trust, has been highly successful in ensuring that pupils receive a good quality of education.

Reading, including a love of books, is a high priority. In the Nursery class, children enjoy listening to stories and talking about their favourite characters. As they move into the Reception class, they are taught to link sounds and letters by well-trained staff. However, some pupils do not keep pace with the phonics programme. The additional support that they receive does not help them to catch up. This limits their success in meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Despite this, the carefully crafted reading curriculum in key stage 2 means that pupils make gains in their reading knowledge over time. By the time they leave Year 6, most pupils are confident and fluent readers.

The school has made considerable improvements to the curriculum. It is broad and ambitious. Subject curriculums identify the most important knowledge that pupils will learn. There has been careful thought about the order in which concepts are taught. In addition, the school has identified the important subject-specific vocabulary that pupils need to know to understand their learning. This helps pupils to start to talk about what they have learned with confidence and accuracy.

Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to explain key concepts clearly. They also check on how well pupils are learning the curriculum. The information from

these checks is typically used well to help move pupils' learning forward. For the most part, pupils, including children in the early years build well on what they know already and they achieve well. However, in some subjects, some pupils in key stages 1 and 2 find it difficult to remember some of their learning. This is particularly the case when pupils are thinking about what they learned some time ago. This is due, in part, to pupils having gaps in their knowledge from previous weaker curriculums.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND effectively. These pupils are supported well, so that they are able to access the curriculum. This means that, in the main, pupils with SEND are able to learn alongside their friends. When this is not possible, the school has put into place carefully-thought-out provision to meet individual needs. The school is committed to ensuring pupils feel included. This extends to the wider opportunities on offer, such as clubs.

The school has established an effective programme to promote pupils' personal development. This includes a new personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. Pupils learn to develop respectful relationships. They know how to keep healthy and to stay safe. Pupils learn about a range of religions and other cultures. They understand the differences between people. In turn, they are advocates for treating everyone equally. Pupils embrace the diverse nature of their school community. They respect each other. Pupils play and learn in harmony.

Most pupils behave well. They listen attentively in lessons. They are positive about their learning. At breaktimes, playleaders help to make sure that pupils have someone to play with. At lunchtimes, pupils sit together at tables and are encouraged to have polite conversation. As a result, social times are calm and enjoyable.

Staff's views are taken into account when introducing new initiatives. This helps to ensure that their workload is not heightened when change is introduced. Staff feel valued and they are proud to work at the school.

The parents and carers who shared their views with inspectors said that they are pleased with the positive changes that have happened since the school became an academy. They said that their children are happy and are learning well.

Trustees and members of the local academy committee work effectively together. There are secure systems in place, so that trustees are sure that the local academy committee and school leaders carry out their delegated responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not keep pace with the phonics programme. The support that they receive does not help them to catch up quickly enough to leave key stage 1 with secure reading knowledge. The school should ensure that teachers identify, and then address gaps in pupils' gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge, so that they can quickly catch up with their peers.
- In some subjects, pupils have not remembered some key knowledge over time. This is due to weaknesses in the previous curriculums, when pupils moved on to new learning before their understanding of concepts was secure. The school should ensure that pupils overcome gaps in their learning, so that they are able to know and remember more 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	147159
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10290358
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	284
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust:	Mark Granby
CEO of trust	Ian Young
Headteacher	Paul Wilson
Website	www.radcliffehallschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Sycamore Church of England Trust Limited.
- Radcliffe Hall Church of England/Methodist Primary School converted to become an academy school in June 2019. When its predecessor school, Radcliffe Hall Church of England/Methodist Controlled Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Manchester. In addition, it is part of the Bolton and Rochdale Methodist District.
- The last section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was carried out by the Diocese of Manchester in October 2021. The next inspection is due in the academic year beginning September 2026.
- The school has a breakfast club and after-school provision.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art and design, geography and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, spoke with some pupils about their learning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects. They reviewed curriculum documentation, looked at a sample of pupils' books and spoke with pupils.
- 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 during lessons, around the school, at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They talked with pupils and staff about behaviour and bullying.
- An inspector visited the after-school club.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys.
- Inspectors considered the views of the parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments. In addition, an inspector spoke with parents in the morning at the school gate.
- An inspector spoke with school leaders. This included the CEO, chair of the trust and a trustee.
- An inspector spoke with members of the local academy committee, including the chair of the committee.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.

Inspection team

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His Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Howard

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