

Inspection of Our Lady and St Anselm's Roman Catholic Primary School, Whitworth

Lime Grove, Off John Street, Whitworth, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 8DB

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

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 Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are rightly proud to attend this happy and welcoming school. Staff foster warm relationships with pupils and have high expectations of their learning. Pupils work hard to successfully meet these expectations. They know that staff will listen to their concerns and help them if they struggle. Pupils enjoy school and achieve well.

Pupils display positive behaviour in lessons and around school. They support and encourage one another in their learning and their play. Children in the early years quickly settle into the routines of the school.

Pupils are determined that everyone is treated equally. They understand that this does not necessarily mean that everyone is treated the same. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive any additional help that they need to participate in all aspects of school life.

Many pupils make a positive contribution to the school community. They take on a variety of leadership roles. For example, the 'growing in faith' team accompany children in the Reception class on their first visits to church, providing reassurance and helping them to understand the expectations and routines. Sports leaders are trained by a sports coach to lead physical activities at lunchtime and the eco-team focus on improving the school environment.

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

The school is well supported by the governing body to deliver its ambitious vision for pupils' achievement. It has designed a broad and engaging curriculum, which is personalised to suit the school's context. The school ensures that it promptly identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND. It makes suitable adaptations to ensure that these pupils can successfully progress through the curriculum.

The school places a strong emphasis on the importance of reading. It is determined that no pupil leaves school without this vital skill. Starting in the Reception class, a structured and deliberate phonics programme enables children to progressively build their knowledge of letters and sounds. Throughout the school, staff adopt a consistent and effective approach to develop pupils' reading knowledge. They identify pupils who find reading more difficult and ensure that they receive the additional help that they need. Pupils practise their reading regularly, using books that match their reading knowledge. This rigorous approach ensures that pupils typically develop into fluent and enthusiastic readers.

In most subjects, the curriculum is well defined. Curriculum content has been broken down into manageable steps that pupils should learn. This helps staff to design learning that builds on what pupils already know. However, in one or two areas, the small steps of knowledge have not been identified. This hampers the

efforts of staff to develop pupils' understanding in these areas. Consequently, some pupils' knowledge of these aspects is not as secure as it should be.

Staff are highly knowledgeable. In most subjects, they use their expertise to design learning that is accessible and engaging. Staff methodically check that pupils' prior knowledge is secure before moving their learning on. They use effective assessment strategies to identify pupils' misconceptions, acting swiftly to address them before they become embedded.

Throughout school, pupils benefit from a calm and purposeful environment. Staff share clear expectations for the positive behaviours and attitudes that pupils should adopt. Pupils endeavour to be 'safe, ready, respectful' in classrooms and during social times. Staff go to great lengths to welcome new children into the Reception class. They get to know children well and quickly address any barriers that may hinder their learning. Parents and carers value regular opportunities to share in their children's learning activities, such as joining in with 'welly walks' in the local area.

The school's work to secure high rates of attendance is successful. Through rapidly identifying and addressing any issues that may limit pupils' attendance, the school ensures that the number of pupils who are regularly absent from school stays low.

The school has a broad and rich programme to support pupils' personal development. Pupils learn to value one another's beliefs and opinions. For example, in art, they are taught to be respectful and considerate when critiquing each other's artwork. The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' knowledge of safety, including online safety. It trains pupil leaders to educate their peers about the potential risks of using the internet and social media, and how to report any concerns when online.

The school's mission, 'growing together in faith hope and love', is equally applied to staff as to pupils. The school supports staff by seeking out development opportunities and checks that staff have the necessary time to fulfil their roles effectively. Staff enjoy working in the supportive and collegiate environment that the school facilitates.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In one or two areas of the curriculum, the school has not precisely defined the content that pupils should learn. From time to time, this hampers staff's efforts to develop and extend pupils' knowledge. The school should ensure that it clearly defines the intended knowledge that pupils should acquire across the curriculum, so that staff can better support them to learn well.

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	119697
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10290069
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	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Wiggett
Headteacher	Joanne Rainey
Website	www.olsa.lancs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 October 2011

Information about this school

- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club for pupils.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- This Roman Catholic school is part of the Diocese of Salford. The school's last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in April 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection is due to take place by the end of 2025.

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.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, including the headteacher, and a range of staff. They also spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation documents, improvement plans and minutes of meetings of the governing body. Inspectors also reviewed records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 spoke with pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some staff and pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and for staff.

Inspection team

Charlotte Oles, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gareth Counce

Ofsted Inspector

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