

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Holy Family VA RC Primary School

No 3 Lower Seedley Road, Salford, Lancashire M6 5WX

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Inspection dates:

26 and 27 March 2024

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding 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?

The school is ambitious for pupils' learning and wider development. Typically, pupils enjoy an education that is broad and usually purposeful. This helps them to achieve well in many areas. However, a minority of pupils do not overcome gaps in their communication and language or reading knowledge quickly enough.

Most pupils enjoy attending school. However, a small minority of pupils miss out on some of their education because they do not attend as much as they should.

Pupils show consideration and kindness to one another. They are polite and courteous to those around them.

Pupils enjoy interacting and playing together at social times, such as breaktime or lunchtime. Staff encourage pupils to take part in a wide range of games and activities. This makes social times calm and enjoyable. It also helps pupils to make and nurture their friendships. Pupils get on well with each other.

Pupils are excited to get involved in the wider life of the school. For example, they enjoy a broad range of clubs, competitions and other activities that support their personal development. They adopt a healthy balance of cooperation and competitiveness.

Pupils are keen to contribute to the smooth running of the school day. They enjoy taking on extra responsibilities, such as school councillors and games leaders. Through these roles, many pupils develop caring traits and characteristics.

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

Following some turbulence in leadership and staffing over recent years, the school, including members of the governing body, has re-established stability. The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. It has taken appropriate action to strengthen the quality of education.

Pupils across Years 1 to 6, and children in the early years, benefit from a broad, balanced and suitably ambitious curriculum. Staff ensure that pupils learn carefully identified subject content in a sensible order. As pupils move through the school, they revisit and build further on important subject content. This helps them to deepen their learning over time.

Staff help pupils to develop highly positive values and attitudes. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are keen to get involved. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 regularly demonstrate a strong desire to learn. These positive attitudes to learning mean that behaviour in lessons is calm and productive.

Staff have secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They introduce and explain subject matter well. In the early years, staff use their knowledge to provide a range of activities that help most children to master the early learning goals. In key stages 1 and 2, staff ensure that pupils benefit from tasks that help them to apply their knowledge well. Across the school, staff use assessment strategies confidently to identify what pupils know and remember.

Recent published data shows that, in 2023 some Year 6 pupils did not progress or attain as well as they should in reading. As a result, the school has reviewed and strengthened its approach to teaching early reading, phonics and reading for older pupils.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes benefit from suitable opportunities to develop their use of communication and language skills. This helps many pupils in key stage 1 to access the phonics programme. However, some of the support that some children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 receive to address gaps in their communication, language and phonics knowledge is not effective enough. This affects the confidence with which a small number of pupils read, which in turn, affects how well they learn across the curriculum.

The school understands the support that staff need to manage the recent increase in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school has carefully considered the staff's workload in managing these changes to its context. Staff accurately identify the needs that present barriers to pupils' learning and development. In the main, staff provide effective support to help pupils with SEND and EAL to progress well through the curriculum.

Most pupils attend school regularly. The school helpfully supports many pupils and their families when attendance is not as high as it should be. While this helps many pupils to

attend well, a minority do not. These pupils continue to be persistently absent from school.

Pupils benefit from high-quality personal development opportunities. They are well guided to make good choices and seek advice if they are worried or concerned. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to learn about how to look after themselves and others and how to be a positive part of their community.

The school places great importance on working in partnership with parents and carers. Staff ensure that parents are well informed about what their children experience at school. Parents benefit from a range of supportive workshops so that they can play a role in their children's learning. Most parents value and appreciate what the school does to keep them informed or address concerns if they arise.

Members of the governing body understand and undertake their duties well. Through their practice, they demonstrate a keen ambition to support and challenge the school to restore the highest possible quality education and care for all children and pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some of the additional support that pupils receive to address weaknesses in their communication and language skills or gaps in their reading knowledge is not as focused as it should be. This affects how well some of these pupils learn across the curriculum. The school should ensure that additional support for pupils is well matched to the particular barriers that impede pupils' development of communication, language or reading.
- A minority of pupils do not attend school as much as they should. This means that these pupils miss out on opportunities to learn and make as much progress through the curriculum as others. Leaders should ensure that pupils and families engage well with carefully matched strategies to improve attendance.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in December 2017.

## **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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136080
<b>Local authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10337685
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	238
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Maria Brierley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanna Riley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.holyfamilysalford.co.uk">www.holyfamilysalford.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	30 November and 1 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a voluntary-aided Catholic school. It is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in May 2017. The school is awaiting confirmation from the diocese about the timing of its next section 48 inspection.
- Over recent years, there have been significant changes to the context of pupils who attend the school. This includes an increase in the proportion of pupils with SEND and those who have EAL.
- At the time of the inspection, no pupils were being educated at alternative provision.

## 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 any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the headteacher and senior leaders. They also met with representatives of the governing body, the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector spoke with leaders responsible for SEND and reading. They also looked at information about the support for pupils who have additional needs.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class and around the school site. They also scrutinised behaviour and attendance records.
- The inspector spoke with pupils from all year groups and considered the responses of the pupils who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including the comments received by Ofsted's free-text facility. The inspector also considered the views of parents that were shared during the inspection.

## **Inspection team**

Michael Pennington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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