Inspection of school: Ursuline Catholic Primary School

Nicholas Road, Liverpool, Merseyside L23 6TT

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

Outcome

Ursuline Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has high expectations for what pupils should achieve. Pupils work hard in lessons and are engaged in their learning. They are happy and excited to come to school. Pupils achieve well in a range of subjects.

Pupils benefit from an atmosphere where everyone is valued and nurtured. Pupils are polite and respectful. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and caring. Pupils behave well and live up to the school's high expectations for their behaviour. The school's consistent routines, coupled with supportive relationships, result in calm and orderly classrooms.

Many pupils attend the extensive range of extra-curricular activities that the school offers. For example, they enjoy musical theatre, beach running and quidditch clubs.

Pupils enjoy many opportunities to develop their leadership skills. These include roles as school councillors, reading ambassadors and prefects. Pupils are proud of the responsibilities that they hold and the difference that they make to other pupils.

Pupils show an awareness of world affairs and express mature perspectives on a range of issues. As they move through the school, they develop into confident and thoughtful citizens.

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

The school has designed an interesting curriculum. The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The knowledge that pupils will learn is sequenced well so that pupils revisit, practise and consolidate important concepts. This allows them to deepen their learning over time.

In many subjects, the school supports teachers to understand and deliver the curriculum

effectively. In these subjects, pupils achieve well. However, a few subject curriculums do not outline what pupils need to learn as well as they should. This slows pupils' learning in these subjects. In addition, the school has not developed an effective approach to assessment in all subjects. As a result, the school does not have sufficient information to identify when pupils have gaps in their learning in some subjects.

Children get off to a strong start in the Reception Year. This is because there are high expectations for their learning and behaviour from the beginning of their school life. Interactions between staff and children are of a high quality, which results in strong language development. Staff use purposeful activities that help children to learn the curriculum.

In recent years, the school has introduced a new phonics programme. This has had a positive impact on how well pupils learn to read. The school ensures that pupils, including those with SEND, make rapid progress. The school identifies any pupils who need help to keep up with the phonics programme. These pupils receive additional useful support so that they catch up quickly with their peers.

The school considers how to develop pupils' enjoyment of reading carefully. Pupils read widely and often. For example, they enjoy visiting the school's inviting library. Pupils spoke excitedly about the regular 'book buzz' sessions where they read alongside their parents.

The 2023 published data indicates that the progress of pupils in reading was low. This data does not reflect the strength of the revised reading curriculum. Most pupils become fluent readers and demonstrate their phonics knowledge confidently.

The school expects pupils to behave well, and most of the time they do. Playtimes are calm and safe. During lessons, pupils are focused. The vast majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. The school works well with outside agencies to ensure that barriers to learning are both identified quickly and supported effectively. Staff are quick to step in if a pupil needs extra support.

The school prioritises pupils' personal development. Pupils learn how to stay physically active and mentally healthy. The school's pastoral team provides helpful support to pupils who experience difficulties. Pupils learn about cultures and religions that are different to their own and understand the importance of tolerance and respect. The school's personal development programme helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Staff value the supportive and collaborative working environment that the school provides. The school ensures that staff workload is considered carefully. Governors offer effective support and challenge and know the school well.

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 curriculum does not show the knowledge that pupils are expected to learn in sufficient detail. This sometimes makes it difficult for pupils to learn the curriculum as well as they should. The school should ensure that the curriculum outlines the knowledge that pupils are expected to learn clearly.
- In some subjects, assessment strategies do not enable teachers to check pupils' learning sufficiently well. This prevents some pupils from deepening their knowledge. The school should improve its assessment systems so that teachers are equipped to identify whether pupils have embedded their knowledge securely.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2015.

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	104937
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10347922
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	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Vine
Headteacher	Nichola Robinson
Website	www.ursulineprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 April 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The last section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in May 2024. The next section 48 inspection is likely to take place before 2029.

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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and the leaders for SEND, behaviour, attendance and pupils' personal development.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. 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 a sample of pupils' work.

- The inspector observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- 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 a group of governors. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority, the archdiocese and the school's improvement partner.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about their experiences of school life and their views of behaviour and bullying. He observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- The inspector spoke to staff about their workload and well-being. He considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

James Marsh, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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