

# Inspection of a good school: Our Lady's RC Primary School Manchester

Whalley Road, Whalley Range, Manchester M16 8AW

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Inspection dates:

22 and 23 May 2024

## Outcome

Our Lady's RC Primary School Manchester continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils appreciate being part of this warm and friendly school. They enjoy seeing their friends and their teachers each day. This helps them to feel happy and to have a strong sense of belonging. Pupils said that everybody is welcome at their school. Those new to the school settle well and quickly become part of the close-knit community.

The school is aspirational for pupils' achievement. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), rise successfully to these high expectations. They typically learn well. Pupils relish recognition for their efforts, such as by receiving certificates and participating in 'reward days'.

Pupils behave well during lessons and around school. They value the opinions of others. Pupils are caring and respectful to each other and towards staff. They told the inspector that everyone is unique and that it is important to 'be yourself'.

The school provides pupils with an array of rich opportunities that enhance their learning and support their wider development. For example, pupils visit theatres, museums and libraries. They look forward to competing in inter-school sports competitions and experiencing live music festivals. Pupils benefit from many after-school activities, such as clubs in arts and crafts, coding, music, gymnastics, chess and skateboarding.

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

The school and the governing body have worked together over recent years to further strengthen the quality of education for pupils. The curriculum is suitably broad and ambitious. Subject curriculums identify in a logical order the important knowledge that pupils should acquire.

The school provides effective training and coaching to further staff's knowledge of the subjects that they teach. In the main, staff provide clear explanations when delivering new curriculum content. They select well-chosen activities that help pupils to learn new

information and concepts. However, in some subjects, teachers do not give a strong enough focus on helping pupils to learn subject-specific vocabulary. This hinders some pupils in knowing the terminology that they need to consolidate and embed their learning.

Over time, teachers use effective strategies to check how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum. They use assessment information well to determine the content of future lessons. Nonetheless, staff are not persistent in identifying and addressing pupils' mistakes and misunderstandings within lessons. As a result, some pupils make errors that go unchecked. This limits these pupils in learning all that they should.

The school identifies pupils with SEND early. It has carefully adapted its provision to cater for pupils' additional needs. The school works well with external professionals, and with parents and carers, to support these pupils. This helps pupils with SEND to learn alongside their classmates and to benefit from the school's curriculum and wider offer.

Reading is a priority. Pupils regularly visit the school's well-stocked library. They experience a diverse range of carefully chosen, high-quality texts. Older pupils spoke eagerly about the different authors and books that they enjoy reading. In their roles as 'reading buddies', pupils share stories with younger peers to help foster a love of reading across the school.

In the Nursery class, staff develop children's communication and language skills through plentiful songs and rhymes. This prepares children well for phonics learning from the start of the Reception class. Pupils develop their fluency and accuracy in reading. They practise these skills by reading from books that are well matched to their current phonics knowledge. Staff help a small number of pupils who struggle with reading to catch up quickly so that they are ready for the key stage 2 curriculum.

Pupils develop highly positive attitudes towards their learning. From the start of the early years, children learn clear and well-established routines. This helps them to understand the school's expectations for their behaviour. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They attend school regularly and know why this is important. The school has an effective strategy in place to support a small number of pupils to improve their levels of attendance.

Pupils' education goes beyond the academic curriculum. They learn how to be safe and how to keep physically and mentally healthy. Pupils learn that their actions can make a positive difference in school and beyond. For example, they fundraise and collect food for charities. They also campaign in the local area to help to improve the environment. Pupils have opportunities to lead school worship and to support younger pupils in their roles as 'special friends'. They aspire to different careers in the future, including historian, illustrator, designer and film-producer roles.

Staff said that they are proud to work at the school and that they value being part of the team. They appreciate the school's consideration of their workload and well-being, for instance when any changes are introduced. Many parents commended staff for all that they do in supporting their children.

## 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, teachers do not emphasise subject-specific vocabulary often enough. As a result, some pupils find it difficult to use the correct terminology and to explain what they have learned. The school should ensure that staff support pupils in embedding subject-specific knowledge, so that they know and remember more.
- At times, within lessons, staff are not persistent enough in identifying and addressing pupils' errors and misunderstandings. This means that some pupils make some mistakes that go uncorrected. The school should support staff in checking and addressing these inaccuracies to help pupils to learn as well as they should.

## 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 July 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105543
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10347966
<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>	211
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Charles Flannery
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Gordon (executive headteacher) Anna Ward (head of school)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ourladys-pri.manchester.sch.uk">www.ourladys-pri.manchester.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of The Roman Catholic Federation of Holy Name and Our Lady's.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club for pupils.
- This Roman Catholic school is in the Diocese of Salford. The school's last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, was in November 2023. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place before the end of 2028.
- A significant number of pupils arrive at the school at different points during the year.

## 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 this into account in his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other school leaders. He held meetings with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons and spoke with teachers. He spoke with some pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. The inspector also looked at curriculum documentation and spoke with pupils about their learning in some other subjects.
- The inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read with a familiar adult. He discussed reading with a group of older pupils.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school, including at breakfast club and during lunchtime.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey to consider.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and documents pertaining to pupils' behaviour and levels of attendance.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. He also spoke with staff about their workload and their well-being.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. He considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

## **Inspection team**

David Lobodzinski, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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