

Inspection of St Richard's RC Primary School

Wilshire Avenue, Longsight, Manchester M12 5TL

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
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 happy and proud of their school. As members of the school houses, known as Mathew, Mark, Luke and John, they learn to connect together with other pupils and to enjoy friendly competition. Pupils understand and follow the school's rules. They behave themselves with impressive self-control from the moment that they enter the school gate. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and as they move around the school is impeccable.

Pupils are calm and learn to act responsibly. They actively encourage one another to become a 'walking superstar' and to travel to school on foot, by scooter or bicycle. Pupils develop a deep understanding of their responsibilities for the environment at school and in their local community. They understand the challenges that people face nationally and internationally about the climate. Pupils know the steps that they can take to reduce pressures on the planet's resources and climate.

Pupils respond positively to the school's high expectations for their academic learning, and they achieve well. Pupils learn that working hard is an important attitude for life. They are enthused by their learning in lessons as well as in clubs such as draughts, chess, 'read with the author' and a range of sports. Pupils enjoy very positive relationships with one another, staff and leaders.

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

Typically, pupils achieve well. Their attainment in some of the curriculum areas that are tested and assessed nationally is high. For example, pupils do well in their Year 4 multiplication tables check and go on to make strong progress in mathematics at the end of key stage 2. Pupils learn successfully because, in the main, the school has established a carefully thought-out curriculum that is delivered well. Staff use assessment strategies skilfully to check that pupils know and remember what they have been taught. Nevertheless, in a few subjects, some of the curriculum is less clear about the key information that staff will teach and assess. This means that, at times, some pupils learn less information than the school intends.

Staff follow the chosen phonics programme carefully. They act to provide weaker readers with the extra support that they need to keep up in their learning. Staff link their phonics teaching effectively with helping pupils to use new words and to write about their learning and ideas. Children's learning in the early years includes the important skill of holding a pencil accurately to write. Pupils learn to read, talk and write fluently. Throughout the school, pupils develop a love for reading. Starting in the early years, the school introduces children to many fascinating authors and their works.

Mostly, the school identifies and supports the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. However, some of the support that the school provides is not matched carefully enough to some pupils' individual

needs. This means that sometimes staff do not help pupils with SEND to learn as successfully as they should.

Pupils understand the school's high expectations for their conduct. They strive to become the best person that they can be. Pupils behave exceptionally well. They are extremely kind and thoughtful towards other people. Pupils greet others and politely hold doors open as they move about the school. They listen and respond very well to staff and to one another. Pupils focus on their learning without distractions.

Pupils want to come to school because their lessons are so enjoyable. Their attendance is high and celebrated by the school, such as through its well-organised assemblies.

The school provides pupils, including those with SEND, with a valuable range of activities that support their personal development. It teaches pupils about respect. This leads to the school being a harmonious place to visit, study or work. Pupils learn about the important contributions of authors and playwrights, such as William Shakespeare, to Britain's literary heritage. For example, Year 5 pupils work with actors to annually to perform a Shakespearean play in a public theatre.

Mostly, the school supports staff's work effectively. However, at times, the leadership of some aspects of the school's work is less secure. This holds back how well it supports some staff to develop their skills. On occasion, this affects how successfully some pupils learn.

Governors bring a wide range of expertise to their roles, supporting and challenging the school in equal measure. The governing body acts carefully on the school's long-term priorities.

The school has successfully re-established its work after the challenges that it experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teamwork, collaboration and mutual support among leaders and staff are well established. The school consults staff about their workload so that it can act when needed. Staff thoroughly enjoy working at the school.

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 few subjects, the school has thought less clearly about the knowledge that it wants pupils to learn. This makes it more difficult for staff to know what information to teach and assess. Consequently, on occasion, pupils learn some units of work less well than they could. The school should ensure that all subjects

are equally well considered. This will help staff to know what should be taught and checked to help pupils learn key knowledge successfully.

- At times, the school does not ensure that its support is well matched to the needs of some pupils with SEND. Occasionally, this affects these pupils' learning and they do not learn as well as they should. The school should support all pupils with SEND in line with their needs.
- Sometimes, the leadership of some aspects of the school's work is not as secure as it is in others. This affects how well it supports some staff to improve their work. At times, this weakness holds back some pupils' learning because staff are unclear about the most effective ways to work. The school should ensure that it develops its leadership expertise across all areas.

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	105544
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10294227
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	474
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tim Ferguson
Headteacher	Jon Murray
Website	www.st-richards.manchester.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 June 2012 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision for pupils.
- The headteacher and approximately one-half of the staff are new to the school since the previous inspection.
- This Roman Catholic school is in the Diocese of Salford. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in January 2018. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in the 2025/26 academic year.

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.

- The inspectors completed deep dives in these subjects: early reading, computing, geography, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. In some subjects, inspectors made visits to lessons. An inspector listened to some pupils read to staff.
- Inspectors also considered information about some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with the school about special educational needs, early years, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors held meetings with the school about its provision for pupils' personal development, including about relationships, social, health and economic topics. Inspectors considered some evidence of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, including pupils with SEND. Inspectors also spoke with pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes and as they moved around the school. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents and carers and considered parental responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their work at the school. The inspectors reviewed the responses from staff to Ofsted's survey.
- The lead inspector met with the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also considered information about the work of governors.
- Inspectors spoke by telephone with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.
- An inspector met with early career teachers, their mentors and induction tutor.
- 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.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Stephanie Swift	Ofsted Inspector
Lee Comber	Ofsted Inspector

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