

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Herbert's RC School

Edward Street, Chadderton, Oldham, Lancashire OL9 9SN

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 December 2024

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have established the school mission, 'strong in faith, hope and love for the common good'. This mission influences staff and pupils to strive together for the highest moral and academic standards. Pupils know that their contribution to the school and the wider community matters. They are rightly proud of the difference that they make. St Herbert's is an exceptional school and a happy place in which to learn.

Pupils flourish academically and personally. Staff are ambitious for pupils. The school places no limits on pupils' development. The school has established a curriculum that enables pupils to acquire deep knowledge of the subjects that they study. The school enhances this curriculum by providing carefully planned visits. These visits inspire pupils' curiosity. For example, pupils hone their musical skills by playing alongside a professional orchestra. They find this learning captivating.

Pupils' behaviour and conduct is exemplary whether adults are present or not. They treat each other consistently with care and respect. Pupils know that their learning is important. They attend to this learning with determination and focus. Pupils are proud of their achievements and keen to share their learning. As a result of this culture of success, pupils are keen to learn and they attend school regularly.

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

The school has created an ambitious curriculum for pupils to study. Adults routinely help pupils to connect new learning to the things that they already know. Pupils talk confidently about what they know, for example, by explaining the connection between the

Silk Road trade route and ancient Islamic civilisations. Across the curriculum, pupils demonstrate deep and connected knowledge.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported to learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. The school makes sure that pupils' additional needs are identified quickly and accurately. This enables staff to provide exemplary support. Pupils with SEND master new knowledge quickly and they use this independently. Staff are ambitious for these pupils' development. Pupils with SEND achieve very well.

The way that the school's curriculum and teaching enable pupils to remember new knowledge is praiseworthy. Teachers build in frequent opportunities for pupils to practise knowledge so that they become fluent. In mathematics, for example, children in early years quickly master number. Older pupils use this knowledge to solve complex problems, for example adding and subtracting mixed fractions. Pupils develop secure knowledge across other areas of the curriculum. For example, in physical education, pupils explain in detail how to use a hockey stick with control and accuracy and how to perform a high-quality cartwheel. Pupils are inspired by the range of knowledge that they acquire in their engaging lessons. They behave exceptionally well. This enables everyone to focus intently on learning.

Children in the early years grasp phonics quickly. From the beginning of their time in the Nursery provision, staff help children to use a wide vocabulary. They expertly teach Reception-age children to read. Children become fluent readers. Older pupils receive an exceptional reading curriculum. They read widely and often. The school invests in carefully chosen literature. This inspires pupils to develop their knowledge further by reading a wide range of texts. Pupil librarians support reading by keeping the library well organised. Reading is everywhere in this school. If pupils struggle to master reading, they receive effective support to help them to catch up quickly.

The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is impressive. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to hold debates. Pupils know how to use the language of debating to offer their opinions in reasoned ways. They do this very effectively. Pupils link these debates to fundamental British values. They understand the importance of the rule of law and tolerance. Pupils develop a deep understanding of diversity. This informs the way in which pupils celebrate each other's differences. Many pupils contribute as school ambassadors. They eagerly show adults the exciting things that they do in school. Their enthusiasm is palpable. The school makes sure that pupils receive a rich range of opportunities to explore their interests. All pupils take part in a range of school performances. For example, some pupils sing in the school choir, others take part in Lego club or play in the school brass band. All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from these well considered experiences.

Those responsible for governance know the school well. They use their experience to challenge and support leaders in equal measure. Governors check carefully that the school is taking the right actions in the best interests of all pupils. The school delivers highly effective support and professional development for staff. This school ensures that

this support has a positive impact on pupils' learning, while considering workload and well-being for all staff. Staff are very proud to work at this inclusive school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness 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	105722
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10347978
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	327
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Devine
Headteacher	Susan Milligan
Website	www.stherberts.education
Date of previous inspection	27 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The school has a nursery provision for three-year-old children.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school clubs for pupils in the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with governors, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- 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 lead inspector scrutinised a range of other documentation, including governor meeting minutes and leaders' evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life.
- To gather parents' views, the lead inspector took account of the responses from Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.
- The lead inspector took account of the staff survey and met formally with staff to gather their views.

Inspection team

Jen Sloan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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