

# Inspection of St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale

Kirkway, Middleton, Manchester M24 1FL

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Inspection dates:	11 and 12 March 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to belong to this caring school, which puts them at its centre. Pupils want everybody to feel happy and welcome. They respect people's many differences. A typical comment was that 'everyone should have the chance to be who they want to be'.

The school has high expectations for what pupils can achieve academically and socially. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to these expectations. They typically achieve well. Pupils appreciate recognition for their endeavours, including certificates and being mentioned on a 'wall of fame'.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are keen to learn and work hard because they know this will help them succeed. Pupils understand why the school's values such as forgiveness are important to pursue in school and in their wider lives.

The school affords pupils with many experiences for their personal development. For example, pupils look forward to residential trips and visits such as to a sculpture park, the theatre, the opera and a local university. Clubs reflect pupils' interests, for example darts, cricket, drama, basketball and choir. Older pupils contribute to the school's newspaper. Pupils learn about mindfulness during well-being sessions. Visitors to the school expand pupils' learning, including in specialist art and basic first aid. These experiences help to broaden pupils' horizons.

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

The school has overhauled its curriculum to ensure that it is broad, balanced and knowledge rich. It has made sure that learning is well ordered so pupils can develop a secure understanding across a range of subjects. Pupils learn well. Children in the early years benefit from a strong foundation in learning, which prepares them well for key stage 1.

Staff develop their subject knowledge through an ample programme of training and coaching. Teachers choose suitable learning activities that help pupils to understand new ideas, vocabulary and concepts. They use a range of effective strategies to check that pupils understand and remember what is taught.

The school has, rightly, recognised that pupils have not achieved as well as they could in their written communication. Recently, improved approaches have started to positively impact pupils' writing. However, some pupils have misconceptions and inaccuracies in their written communication, which staff do not consistently rectify.

The provision for pupils with SEND is strong. The school identifies pupils' additional needs quickly, beginning in the early years. Staff work effectively with parents and carers and external agencies to help pupils with SEND benefit fully from the school's offer.

A love of reading permeates through the school. Texts have been chosen carefully to add to the richness of the curriculum. Pupils take care of a well-stocked library. They enjoy

listening to class stories each day and performing them. Older pupils, including those who are 'reading champions', spend time helping nurture younger pupils' knowledge of reading. Pupils are enthusiastic when talking about their favourite books and authors.

Children in the early years are immersed in plentiful stories, rhymes and songs. They learn phonics from the beginning of the Reception Year. Staff have received training that enables them to deliver the phonics programme typically well and with fidelity. Pupils read from books which contain the sounds that they already know. Staff support children who find reading difficult to help them read as well as they should.

Pupils contribute well to the calm and purposeful atmosphere in the school. They consistently rise to the school's highest expectations for their behaviour. For example, at breakfast club, a buzz fills the air while pupils play together and chat leisurely over breakfast. Pupils also attend well. The school works closely with parents to reduce a small number of pupils' levels of absence.

The school has a rich programme to provide for pupils' personal development, which is interwoven seamlessly into school life. Pupils take active roles in supporting the well-being of their classmates, and in contributing to the school and wider community. For example, pupils have responsibilities as 'Mini Vinnies', buddies, school councillors and well-being ambassadors. Pupil chaplains lead whole-school collective worship. Pupils take pride in helping others. They raise money for charities, litter-pick in the local community and sing at hospitals and care homes. Eco-councillors raise awareness for reducing waste. For instance, they dispense household products into recycled containers to sell to parents.

The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. Governors are fully committed to supporting and challenging the school to aid continual improvement. Staff feel appreciated and valued. The school seeks staff's opinions and provides them with time to execute their roles 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 the past, the school did not focus sharply enough on raising pupils' achievement in writing. As such, some pupils have misconceptions in their written communication, which staff do not consistently identify or address. The school should build on the recently improved approaches to better support pupils' accuracy and fluency in their written work.

## 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>	105817
<b>Local authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	10377917
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	212
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Maria Sowerby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanne Clinch
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stpetersrc.rochdale.sch.uk">www.stpetersrc.rochdale.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils. An external provider, which is registered separately with Ofsted, offers an 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 2024. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place by the end of 2029.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. In each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and visited a sample of lessons. They spoke with teachers and with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work. They also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult. He discussed reading with a group of older pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school, including at playtime, at breakfast club and during lunchtime. Inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils about their experiences at school and considered the responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and documents about pupils' behaviour and levels of attendance.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and their well-being. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. An inspector met with some parents at the start of the school day.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. They 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	His Majesty's Inspector
Ian Hardman	His Majesty's Inspector
Andy Taylor	Ofsted Inspector

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