

# Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Royal Cross Primary School

Elswick Road, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston, Lancashire PR2 1NT

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Inspection dates: 4 and 5 March 2025

## **Outcome**

Royal Cross Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

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

Pupils flourish in this happy, friendly school. All pupils are deaf, and some have other special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' hearing impairments have sometimes made learning difficult in the past. However, after joining this school, their learning comes on in leaps and bounds. Pupils thrive in the school's welcoming and caring atmosphere.

The school has the highest expectations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils strive successfully to meet these expectations. They commit to their learning in lessons and delight in their own successes. Pupils become strong communicators. They know how to ask for help if ever they do not understand something. Pupils achieve extremely well as a result of the excellent quality of education that they receive.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. For example, they pay attention in lessons and move calmly around school. The school is an orderly place.

There is a wonderful programme of activities in place to support pupils' wider development. For example, pupils develop relaxation and mindfulness through their yoga sessions. They learn about the environment through their woodland learning. Parents and carers are regularly invited to participate in these activities. This helps them to contribute to pupils' language development when they talk about these things at home.

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

The school has created a broad, exciting and aspirational curriculum that has pupils' very best interests at heart. The school draws upon a wide range of current research and practice to inform its thinking. This has enabled the school to ensure that its curriculum prepares pupils for future success and fulfilment in both education and wider life.

In each subject, important knowledge is broken down into small, well-ordered steps from the early years to the end of Year 6. The school works successfully with staff to ensure that all pupils learn in ways that are most appropriate for their needs. This helps to ensure that pupils build a strong body of knowledge in readiness for the next stage in their education, regardless of their starting points.

The school has a keen professional insight into the challenges presented to deaf children in a hearing world. Consequently, at the heart of the school's curriculum lies a passionate focus on the development of pupils' communication. Some pupils join the school having never heard language before. As a result of the excellent support that they receive, pupils' communication develops rapidly. They learn successfully and participate fully in school life as a result.

Reading has been given very high priority. The school has put in place a suitably ambitious phonics programme. Staff support pupils to learn the correct mouth movements in order to say sounds. This helps pupils to say sounds correctly, even when they cannot hear them. From the early years onwards, children and pupils develop strong phonics knowledge, which they use to read and write well. Older pupils broaden their reading experience through an ever-widening range of texts, including poetry, fiction and non-fiction. Pupils of all ages develop a love of reading.

Staff across the school teach the curriculum consistently well. The school provides staff with valuable training to develop their subject knowledge, such as in mathematics. They check regularly in lessons to ensure that pupils understand learning. Any misconceptions are addressed, so that pupils' knowledge is secure before they move on to new learning. The school's checks on learning help staff to make any necessary adjustments to their teaching.

The school has excellent working relationships with parents and a wide range of professionals, such as those from health services. These relationships underpin the school's effective work to ensure that pupils receive the help that they need to succeed and to achieve.

Staff set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and engagement. Pupils live up to these expectations and develop extremely positive attitudes to their learning. Most absences from school relate to pupils' attendance at necessary medical appointments. Nonetheless, the school expects pupils to attend school regularly, and the majority do.

Pupils are supported to recognise and appreciate peoples' differences and similarities. For example, pupils learn about different world faiths and cultures. Pupils learn to work safely

online. They show care and consideration for others. These important skills prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Governors hold leaders to account effectively for their work to improve the school. Leaders and governors are mindful of staff's workload when they make decisions about the school. Staff appreciate leaders' concern for their well-being.

## **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 outstanding 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 outstanding for overall effectiveness in March 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>	133688
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10348238
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	32
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Clive Gregory
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sofia Parveen
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.royalcross.lancs.sch.uk">http://www.royalcross.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and a new deputy headteacher have been appointed to the school.
- The school caters for pupils who are deaf or who have severe hearing impairments. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.

## 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other school leaders.

- The lead inspector met with governors, both in person and online. She also spoke on the telephone with representatives of the local authority and with a small number of parents.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also spoke with some pupils about wider school life.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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**

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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