

Inspection of a good school: St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School, Blackburn

Hawkins Street, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 2RY

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 June 2021

Outcome

St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School, Blackburn continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School is a welcoming school. Relationships among pupils and staff are positive and respectful. Pupils feel happy and safe at this school. They said that bullying is extremely rare. Pupils are confident that they can share their concerns with staff, and that staff will take appropriate action if required.

Teachers' expectations of pupils are high. Pupils are attentive and follow teachers' instructions quickly and carefully. Pupils know that their teachers want them to achieve well in all of their subjects. Pupils said that they get extra help when needed, including with their well-being.

Pupils benefit from teachers' strong subject knowledge. Teachers use their subject knowledge to inspire pupils. Pupils achieve highly. They leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils are extremely well mannered. They enjoy the wide range of opportunities available to them through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. For example, pupils learn about other cultures and religions, such as Judaism. Pupils in Year 6 told inspectors that they are enjoying learning how to debate.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils at this school. They have taken effective steps to ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Leaders have thought carefully about how to integrate literacy and numeracy across all curriculum subjects. For example, across the curriculum, pupils spend lots of time practising and increasing their subject-specific vocabulary.

In most subjects, leaders have identified the essential knowledge that they want pupils to remember over time. They have also considered the order in which to deliver this content. In a minority of subjects, subject leaders are finalising the exact knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Although pupils continue to progress well through the curriculum in these subjects, leaders recognise that with minor adjustments, pupils' progress could be even stronger. Leaders have also made sure that teachers use assessment purposefully. Across year groups, teachers regularly check that pupils remember the curriculum as intended.

Leaders and teachers are passionate about reading. They are determined that all pupils will quickly become fluent readers. As such, children begin learning letters and sounds in the Nursery Year by engaging in well-planned listening activities. In the Reception Year and key stage 1, teachers use consistent approaches to teach children and pupils new sounds. Consequently, all pupils are gaining the phonics knowledge that they need to learn to read. Pupils who find reading difficult are given daily support to help them to keep up.

Leaders foster a culture of reading. In the early years and key stage 1, teachers read daily to children and pupils during story time. In key stage 2, teachers set time aside each day for pupils to read independently. Pupils value this immensely. Older pupils enjoy using the library to choose books. Teachers also introduce pupils to books that help to develop their vocabulary. All pupils take books home to practise their reading.

Children in the early years are happy and well settled. This is because leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum to prepare children for the demands of Year 1. For example, leaders have developed a mathematics curriculum which sets out the important facts that they intend children to learn and remember. Teachers are knowledgeable. They plan a range of activities that help children to develop their speech and vocabulary. This means that children are well prepared for key stage 1.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teaching assistants know these pupils and their individual needs well. They work closely with teachers to ensure that pupils with SEND are well supported to access the curriculum. Consequently, pupils with SEND produce high-quality work.

During lessons and around the school, pupils are well behaved. They are kind to each other. This means that they can get on with their learning without interruption.

A strength of the school is that teachers are helping pupils to understand how to make healthy choices. For example, pupils enjoy the extra physical education lessons on offer to them as part of the curriculum. Similarly, pupils learn how to eat healthily. Teachers also provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to learn about, and debate, the wider world.

Governors support leaders to ensure that all pupils benefit from an effective curriculum. For example, governors and leaders have prioritised training to help staff to develop their own practice. Staff value this time. They say that this has positively affected their work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and their families well. They are alert to the dangers that pupils may face. Leaders have ensured that all staff have been trained to spot the signs of harm and staff know how to report concerns. Referrals to other services are timely and effective. Where pupils and families require extra support, staff work effectively with other agencies. This helps pupils to get the help that they need.

Staff teach pupils about the risks that they may face in the local community through the school's PSHE curriculum. Pupils know who to go to if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have implemented a curriculum in all subjects which covers the breadth of the national curriculum. In most subjects, they have thought carefully about the essential knowledge they want pupils to know and remember, and by when. Leaders should ensure that this essential knowledge is finalised in all subjects. This will allow teachers to sequence pupils' learning even more effectively in these subjects to help pupils know and remember more over time.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 30 March 2011.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school [here](#).

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	119514
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10194778
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	434
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carol Holding
Headteacher	Ann-Marie O'Neill
Website	www.stpetersrc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 June 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection in June 2016, a new headteacher has been appointed.
- St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School is part of the Diocese of Salford. The school's last section 48 inspection was in June 2016. The next section 48 inspection is scheduled for June 2023.
- The school uses alternative provision for a small number of pupils at St Thomas's Centre, Blackburn and The Heights.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, middle leaders and a range of teaching and support staff. An inspector spoke with the school improvement adviser, representatives of the local authority, a representative from the Diocese of Salford and five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography. Inspectors met with subject leaders, visited some lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers. An inspector also observed pupils reading to a member of staff.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6. Inspectors also observed playtime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including curriculum plans, behaviour and attendance records, the school's development plans, self-evaluation documents and safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the checks made on staff. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check the effectiveness of safeguarding in school. An inspector also checked the arrangements for pupils attending alternative provision.
- An inspector spoke with parents and carers to seek their views. Inspectors also considered the 95 responses to Ofsted's pupils' questionnaire and the 40 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. Inspectors also checked the views of the 41 parents in their responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. This included the 31 comments received via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Rachel Goodwin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Elizabeth Stevens

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021