

Inspection of St Ignatius' Catholic Primary School

St Ignatius Square, Preston, Lancashire PR1 1TT

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 May 2022

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Early years provision | Outstanding |
| Previous inspection grade | Requires improvement |

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and parents and carers, appreciate the welcoming, family feel at St Ignatius' Catholic Primary School. Leaders' clearly articulated values, and warm and friendly relationships, are at the heart of this school. Pupils said that they are happy.

Pupils feel safe. New pupils settle quickly into a highly supportive learning environment. They know that staff care about them. Pupils trust staff to help them when they need support.

Children in the early years enjoy an excellent curriculum and they learn exceptionally well. Throughout the rest of the school, every pupil, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is expected to achieve highly. Staff are successful at making this happen. Pupils are keen learners. They said that their teachers make learning interesting.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils know how to spot the different kinds of bullying. They said that bullying is dealt with quickly if it does occur. Most parents agree.

Leaders take every opportunity to celebrate the many ethnicities and cultures that make up this vibrant school community. Pupils who are new to the country quickly feel included and thrive.

Many pupils contribute to school life by taking on additional responsibilities such as becoming school councillors and reading buddies.

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

The curriculum in the early years is incredibly well designed and delivered by staff. Children in the early years achieve very highly. They are exceptionally well prepared for the demands of key stage 1. This is because the curriculum in the early years has been expertly thought out to ensure that children learn as much as possible in this phase of their education.

Leaders have also ensured that the curriculum is well designed in almost every subject in key stages 1 and 2. They have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn. The key knowledge that staff must teach to pupils is clearly set out in most subject curriculums in these key stages. However, the curriculum is not as well designed in a small number of subjects. The knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn is not as clear as it could be. This occasionally hinders some pupils' ability to get the most out of the curriculum on offer.

Despite this, pupils achieve well across most subjects across key stages 1 and 2. In the main, the curriculum prepares pupils well for the next stages in their education and life in modern Britain.

Teachers' enthusiasm for the curriculum encourages pupils, and children in the early years, to engage fully in the activities on offer. Teachers, including those in the early years, explain new ideas clearly. They are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach.

Most teachers use assessment strategies well to establish what pupils know and can do. In the early years, teachers use assessment skilfully to address children's misconceptions. Across the school, teachers are successful in using this information to inform the next steps in their teaching.

In most subjects, pupils revisit and recap important learning. However, on occasions, teachers are not sufficiently trained to help pupils make connections between new and previously learned concepts and ideas. This means that some pupils are not always able to integrate new knowledge into larger ideas in sufficient depth.

A love of books and reading is an important feature of school life. Each classroom has a cosy place for pupils to relax and read good-quality books. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are eager to learn to read.

Children get off to an excellent start with learning to read from the moment they start school in the early years. Leaders have recently introduced a new phonics programme. Staff teach this with confidence. In the Reception class, children love the stories that their teachers read to them. They quickly get to know letters and sounds and how to blend them together to make words. The books they have to practise reading match the sounds they already know. This helps pupils become increasingly confident readers by the time they leave key stage 1.

Pupils who struggle to read benefit from additional support from well-trained adults. Adults help these pupils to catch up quickly with their peers.

Staff identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND well. These pupils are given the support that they need to access the curriculum and succeed, including in the early years. Leaders ensure that these pupils have the same opportunities to access the school's ambitious curriculum as their classmates.

Pupils behave well. They are polite, friendly and eager to talk about school life. Pupils listen carefully in lessons and are keen to participate in all that the school offers. In the early years, children behave exceptionally well.

Pupils develop into respectful and responsible citizens. Leaders and teachers actively promote pupils' understanding of diversity. Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Governors hold leaders fully to account for their work to improve the curriculum. Staff are well supported with their workload. They are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff and governors are well trained and knowledgeable about keeping children safe. The procedures in place to identify and report concerns are well understood by all staff.

Leaders are strong advocates for vulnerable pupils and their families. Where safeguarding needs are identified, support is timely. Leaders engage well with external agencies when needed.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including how to manage risks when online. For example, pupils learn about cyberbullying and can clearly describe how to stay safe when on the internet. Pupils know what to do if they have a concern about their safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In one or two subjects in key stages 1 and 2, leaders have not given sufficient thought to the essential knowledge that pupils must learn. Some pupils do not achieve as highly as they could in these subjects. Leaders should revise the curriculum content in these subjects so that teachers know exactly what knowledge pupils must learn and when this should be taught.
- Occasionally, teachers in key stages 1 and 2 miss opportunities to help pupils to make connections between elements of their learning. This means that some pupils do not recognise how to integrate new knowledge into larger ideas. Leaders should ensure that teachers are trained to help pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the key ideas and concepts contained within the curriculum.

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.

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.

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

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| Unique reference number | 119610 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 10226170 |
| 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 | 193 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Lyndon Jones |
| Headteacher | Christopher Hough |
| Website | www.saint-ignatius.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 12 and 13 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- This Catholic school is voluntary aided. It last had a religious education inspection, carried out under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, in June 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place by the end of June 2024.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their work and school life.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, who also represented the special educational needs coordinator. They also spoke with the early years lead. They held discussions with staff which focused on the well-being and safeguarding of pupils.

- An inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. An inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to school improvement, safeguarding and the checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the responses received via the free-text facility. They also considered the responses to Ofsted’s staff and pupil surveys.
- An inspector talked with pupils about the books that they like to read. An inspector also heard pupils read.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Sarah Barraclough

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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