

Inspection of a good school: St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Chorley

Eaves Green Road, Chorley, Lancashire PR7 3QG

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 February 2024

Outcome

St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Chorley continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a cheerful hive of focused learning. The gentle sound of music playing and some dimmed lights in the building add to the feeling of this being a peaceful place. Pupils walk along corridors sensibly. They settle quickly at the start of lessons. They are extremely polite and interested in meeting visitors.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are happy, feel safe and enjoy their learning. The school has high expectations of their education. It helps pupils to learn essential information. This means, for example, that older pupils understand the meaning of ambitious words, such as 'perils', 'multitude', 'inhospitable' and 'malevolent'. Children in the Reception class and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 achieve well.

Pupils learn quickly that their views are important to leaders and staff. They also know that the school cares deeply about how they feel about themselves and their lives. For example, it encourages them to take on roles helping others, such as being 'Wellbeing Warriors'. Pupils are proud to be part of this school.

Pupils benefit from the many extra opportunities that the school provides. For example, they learn pieces of classical music and then visit a philharmonic orchestra to see these performed.

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

In recent years, the school has revised and strengthened its subject curriculums successfully. For instance, it has taken subjects that were weaker than others and turned them into strengths of its work. The school has achieved this through skilful leadership, clear curriculum thinking and high-quality support and training for staff.

The school's curriculum is well thought out and, in most subjects, flows logically from the early years through to Year 6. In the Reception Year children gain a secure start to their

learning. Staff guide, support and extend children's thinking well in different areas of the curriculum. For instance, children become skilful mathematicians. They recognise the number of objects in a small group instantaneously, without the need to count them.

The school makes sure that staff revisit much previous learning with pupils. However, some subject curriculums do not build well enough on what pupils have learned in the early years. This means that, at times, pupils do not build on what they already know when learning new information.

Staff have expert knowledge of subject curriculums. They create meaningful activities that inspire pupils about learning. Staff check on pupils' knowledge and skills effectively. This happens when pupils first start at the school, as well as when they study units of work. Teachers establish the essential support that pupils need, helping them to learn new knowledge successfully.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND swiftly and accurately. It makes sure that staff understand and prioritise the academic and personal needs of these pupils. Teachers use this information to support pupils' learning effectively. Pupils with SEND progress well through the curriculum.

The school is ambitious for pupils' education. For example, it noticed that although most pupils were reading reasonably well, even more could be achieved. Consequently, it completely changed its approach to reading and adopted a new phonics programme. This change has resulted in greater consistency in the quality of staff's support for pupils learning phonics. Pupils learn to read with accuracy and fluency.

The school has established a love of reading among pupils. Pupils benefit from the wide variety of high-quality fiction and non-fiction books available to them, including in the popular, attractive library. Pupils also enjoy how staff read carefully selected books to them. Older pupils spoke with understanding about the works of a diverse range of authors.

Throughout the school, pupils behave well. They listen to staff and play their part in group discussions and activities. Staff can focus on teaching the curriculum. Pupils attend school regularly and enjoy how the school recognises and celebrates their good attendance.

The school provides pupils with a well-considered programme of personal development. For instance, they learn about the rich contribution of Chinese culture and languages in world history. Pupils learn to respect and understand diversity.

Governors maintain a clear focus on the school's routine work as well as the opportunities and challenges for its long-term development. The school considers the well-being of staff, who in turn feel very supported and valued. It acts to make certain that staff have a reasonable workload and enough time for teaching the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school does not build well enough on pupils' prior learning in the early years as well as it could. This means that some of pupils' learning is not built securely on what they already know. The school should ensure that all subject curriculums are clear and build in a logical order from the Reception class to Year 6.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 in December 2014.

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

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| Unique reference number | 119673 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 10321374 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 5 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 213 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Margaret Scard |
| Headteacher | Darren Darbyshire |
| Website | www.st-gregorys-pri.lancs.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 24 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- St Gregory's is a voluntary-aided Catholic school. It is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2023. The next such inspection is expected by 2028.
- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school club for pupils.
- The school does not use any alternative education providers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspector conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, he held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. He also listened to some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to staff.
- The inspector discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with the school as well as its provision for pupils' personal development, behaviour, early years and SEND.

- The inspector met with the governing body, including the chair of governors. He spoke by telephone with representatives of the local authority and archdiocese.
- The inspector reviewed responses from staff to an Ofsted survey.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at the school. There were no responses to the Ofsted pupil survey to consider.
- The inspector considered the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. He also spoke with some parents by telephone.
- 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.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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