

# Inspection of Leyland St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School

Haig Avenue, Leyland, Lancashire PR25 2QA

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Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</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 attend this caring and welcoming school. Pupils, including children in the early years, quickly learn the school routines. They are well supported by older pupil 'buddies' throughout their first year at St Mary's. Pupils enjoy the company of Dora, the school dog, who helps them to settle into school.

Pupils feel happy and valued in the school's warm environment. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Pupils know that if they have any worries, staff will listen and help them.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), work hard and achieve well across a range of subjects.

Pupils are exceptionally polite and courteous to adults and to each other. They are eager to learn, and they show excellent attitudes in lessons. Pupils respond positively to the school's high expectations of their behaviour. For example, pupils move around the school sensibly and line up quietly at lunchtime.

Pupils make a positive contribution to the life of the school. Older pupils take on a variety of leadership roles. For example, they help to organise lunchtimes and complete jobs for the office staff.

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

The curriculum is broad. It has been designed to enable children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 to build their knowledge logically over time.

The school provides high-quality training and support that helps staff to deliver the curriculum well. Staff design appropriate and engaging activities that enable pupils to enjoy and deepen their learning over time. Staff check on pupils' learning regularly. Most staff identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and misconceptions and address these quickly. However, at times the checks on pupils' learning are not as effective as they should be. This means that some pupils move on to new learning before they are ready.

The school places a strong emphasis on the importance of reading. Children get off to a strong start in the Nursery class. They develop their listening, communication and language skills through a range of interesting activities, stories and rhymes. This prepares them well for when they begin to learn to read.

The school has adopted a suitable phonics programme that enables children in the Reception class and pupils in key stage 1 to develop their knowledge of letters and sounds effectively. Staff deliver the phonics curriculum well. This ensures that pupils typically become fluent and confident readers. Any pupils who are struggling to read benefit from extra sessions which help them to catch up quickly.

In 2023, the proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check and those who attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 was significantly below the national average. This was due to weaknesses in the previous curriculum. The school has taken swift and appropriate action to improve the design and the delivery of the curriculum in these subjects. As a result, pupils are currently achieving well.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND at an early stage. Staff work closely with parents and carers, and with specialist external agencies to provide the support that these pupils need to access the curriculum effectively.

Children learn the foundations of positive learning behaviours in the early years, where they concentrate on tasks for sustained periods of time. This continues throughout the school. Pupils, including children in the early years, behave exceptionally well. Staff help pupils to develop a mature understanding of healthy relationships. Staff also support pupils expertly to understand and manage their own emotions.

The school has been tenacious in reducing pupils' persistent absence over time. It identifies and addresses the reasons that prevent some pupils from attending school quickly and effectively. As a result, pupils' rates of attendance are high.

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from a range of visits and visitors. These opportunities help pupils to widen their experiences beyond the local area and give them aspirations for the future. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. Pupils raise money for a variety of local and national charities. They learn how to keep themselves safe and how to look after their physical and mental health. Pupils know the school values. However, some pupils do not have a well-developed understanding of fundamental British values.

Governors are well informed about the performance of the school. They offer appropriate support and challenge. Governors and staff are committed to making the school the best place it can be for pupils. Staff value the school's consideration of their workload. For example, they appreciate the time that they receive to work together when they design 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)**

- On occasion, in a small number of subjects, teachers are not quick enough to identify and rectify the gaps and misconceptions in some pupils' knowledge. This means that these pupils move on to new learning before they are ready. The

school should ensure that staff use appropriate assessment strategies so that they can help pupils to build their knowledge securely over time.

- Pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of fundamental British values. This limits some pupils' knowledge of British society. The school should ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values so that they are better prepared for life in modern Britain.

## 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>	119677
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10348205
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	260
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Steven Broomhead MBE
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise O'Mahony
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-marys-leyland.lancs.sch.uk">www.st-marys-leyland.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	11 and 12 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This Roman Catholic school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in June 2018. The next section 48 inspection will take place by 2025.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

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

- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders to discuss SEND, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with

teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' work, and evaluated the curriculums, in some other subjects.
- 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.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She spoke to representatives of the archdiocese and the local authority.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They considered responses from staff and pupils to Ofsted's online surveys.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school and their views of behaviour and bullying. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.

### **Inspection team**

Cleo Cunningham, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Wendy Tracey	Ofsted Inspector
Andy Reidel	Ofsted Inspector

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