

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Our Lady's RC Primary School Wigan

Holly Road, Aspull, Wigan, Greater Manchester WN2 1RU

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Inspection dates:

29 and 30 March 2023

## **Outcome**

Our Lady's RC Primary School Wigan continues to be an outstanding school.

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

Pupils positively flourish in this nurturing and caring environment. They enjoy a vast array of exciting and stimulating activities in the school. Children in the early years blossom. They quickly become confident and resilient learners.

Leaders have the very highest aspirations for pupils, both in their academic achievement and their behaviour. Pupils are passionate about learning and relish every opportunity that staff provide. Their conduct and attitudes embody the school's mission statement: 'Learning and loving together, we grow with Jesus.'

Leaders provide extremely well for pupils' wider development. Pupils make an exemplary contribution to both their school and wider community. They spoke animatedly about taking part in the 'Big Sleep Out' as part of a fundraising project to support charities for the homeless.

Pupils bask in the warm and caring relationships that staff provide. Leaders and staff work tirelessly, so that pupils are happy and safe. Leaders deal swiftly and effectively with any rare incidents of unkind behaviour, including bullying.

Parents and carers who shared their views could not praise the school highly enough. One parent summed up the views of many, 'All the staff go above and beyond to provide an outstanding education for our children's futures.'

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

Pupils benefit from an exceptionally well-designed and highly ambitious curriculum, which expands pupils' minds and horizons. Leaders provide pupils with a vast array of experiences, visits and visitors to school to enrich the curriculum. This helps them to ensure that their curriculum is broad and balanced and prepares pupils extremely well for life in modern Britain.

Leaders have thought very carefully about how every piece of learning fits together to form a highly connected curriculum from the beginning of the Reception class to the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve very well.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They explain new learning to pupils clearly, so that they build on their knowledge in a logical way. Teachers use assessment information extremely well to adjust teaching and to address any misconceptions, so that pupils develop and remember a strong body of knowledge over time. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve extremely well across the curriculum. They were able to talk in detail about their learning across a wide range of subjects.

Leaders and staff are passionate about making sure that pupils develop a love of reading. Staff teach the reading curriculum particularly well. They provide pupils who are not keeping up with the demands of the programme with highly effective and timely support, so that they quickly catch up with their peers. Pupils read books which are well matched to their current level of understanding of sounds. This helps them to become confident and fluent readers ready for the next stage in their education.

Staff have considered carefully the range of books that they want pupils to experience during their school journey. This begins in the early years when children avidly listen to stories and sing along to much-loved nursery rhymes. Pupils read widely and often. They display a strong knowledge of different texts. For example, they spoke in depth about complex themes, such as love, death and betrayal in William Shakespeare's play 'Romeo and Juliet'. Pupils appreciate the many awards that they receive for reading, including the highly valued platinum award.

Staff's passion and enthusiasm for learning is infectious. Lessons are undisturbed because all pupils are engrossed in their learning. Classrooms are a hive of activity. Pupils behave impeccably well. They are wonderful ambassadors for their school. They enjoy warm and caring relationships with their classmates and staff.

Pupils with SEND thrive in the school. This is because leaders identify their needs and go out of their way to provide them with effective support. They achieve extremely well because staff have thought carefully about how to adapt their teaching of the curriculum, so that they can learn the same content as their peers.

Pupils enjoy an exceptionally wide range of sporting, musical and artistic activities. They excel in many areas beyond the academic curriculum. For example, pupils from the school won both first and second prize in a recent inter-school public-speaking competition. They have multiple opportunities to be active citizens and to learn about the wider world by taking part in local, national and international ventures and initiatives. They spoke animatedly about their long-standing links with another school in Tanzania. They also understand and respect the legal rights of different people based on characteristics such as race and gender.

Governors are highly committed to the school. They work tirelessly with leaders and staff to make the school the very best it can be. They are very considerate of staff workload and well-being. Staff are immensely proud to work at this school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors and staff leave no stone unturned in ensuring that every pupil in school is safe. Staff have developed extremely strong links with a very wide range of external agencies, so that pupils and their families get support in a timely fashion.

Staff are highly knowledgeable about safeguarding issues. They are well placed to spot quickly the slightest change in a pupils' manner or behaviour. They know what action to take if they have a concern or worry about a pupil's welfare or safety.

Pupils know about the dangers of using the internet. They show a mature awareness of healthy relationships. They learn about keeping emotionally healthy and enjoying a healthy lifestyle.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in February 2017.

## **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 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](#)' 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106490
<b>Local authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	10256092
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	209
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Claire Massingham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Horridge
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.aspullourladys.wigan.sch.uk">www.aspullourladys.wigan.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 and 15 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes in staffing. There is a new headteacher and one early-career teacher. There is also a new chair of governors.
- Our Lady's RC Primary School is a voluntary-aided Roman Catholic school, which is part of the Diocese of Salford.
- The most recent section 48 inspection took place in February 2016.
- Leaders do not make use of any registered alternative-education providers.
- Leaders run a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and she has taken this into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, she met with leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed

samples of pupils' work. She also observed pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 reading to familiar adults.

- The inspector considered other subjects in the school's curriculum. She talked to the leaders of these subjects. She also spoke to pupils about their learning in these subjects and looked at samples of work.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. She spoke with representatives of the local authority. She also spoke with a representative of the diocese.
- The inspector spoke with different groups of pupils to gather their views of the school and held discussions about their behaviour and learning. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtime.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also considered the responses to the Ofsted online surveys for staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. She scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. She also spoke with governors, staff, parents and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation provided by school leaders and staff. This included the school development plan, minutes of governing-body meetings, headteacher's reports and the leaders' self-evaluation document.

### **Inspection team**

Louise McArdle, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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