

# Inspection of Sacred Heart RC Primary School

Knutsford Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7NJ

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Inspection dates:	25 and 26 February 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since September 2014. The school received monitoring inspection under section 8 of the Act on 5 March 2020. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

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

This is a school where pupils are treasured. Their academic achievement and well-being lie at the heart of the decisions that the school makes. Pupils feel happy and secure. They know that they are listened to as highly valued members of the school. Pupils are charismatic and vibrant. They talk confidently about the positive relationships that they have with adults and each other.

Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They show empathy and kindness in their approach to working and playing together. This is also evident in their warmth towards visitors and pupils who are new to school.

Pupils are highly engaged in their education. They strive to achieve well during their time in school. Around school, they are focused and work hard to meet the school's high expectations for their achievement. Many pupils do achieve well. They leave the school ready for the next stage of their education. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to help them to be positive citizens. They enjoy raising money for charities. Pupils learn about staying safe in their local area and when online. They enjoy learning the curriculum through first-hand experiences, such as listening to visitors and participating in trips and visits. This brings their learning to life.

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

The school has undergone significant changes in leadership and staffing in recent years. Different ways of working and adjustments to practice have taken place. The school and its governors take a determined, strategic approach to their work, this is paying dividends. They have developed a strong, shared vision. The school is mindful of the impact of any new approaches on staff's workload and, as such, their well-being. Consequently, staff morale is high.

Children in the early years get off to a positive start. They make strong progress from typically low starting points. The school places a high priority on reading, focusing on developing pupils' fluency and confidence. The 2024 provisional outcomes show that a higher proportion of pupils than the national average did not meet the national threshold for the phonics screening check. The school understands the reasons behind this. They have taken appropriate action to provide high-quality training for staff who deliver the phonics programme. The school quickly identifies pupils who struggle with reading and provides extensive support to help them catch up. Older pupils show genuine enthusiasm for reading. They express excitement about the diverse selection of books and their enriching visits to the local library.

The school is sharply focused on providing a well-ordered and effective curriculum. Throughout the school, staff deliver the curriculum with great enthusiasm and appropriate subject knowledge. However, due to the newness of some aspects of subject leadership, the school is still developing and embedding its leadership practice in some areas.

Typically, lessons support pupils in building on their prior knowledge. Staff use a variety of strategies to check pupils' understanding during lessons. Any misconceptions are addressed quickly. This provides effective support for most pupils, including those with SEND. The school swiftly identifies pupils' needs and, for the most part, puts effective strategies in place to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum. However, sometimes adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum do not fully meet these pupils' needs. This limits their success in a small number of subjects. Staff demonstrate remarkable expertise and compassion when supporting pupils with more complex needs. This helps pupils to be fully immersed in the life of the school.

A warm and nurturing environment permeates the school. Pupils, including children in the early years, are highly respectful of others. In lessons, they are focused and demonstrate qualities, such as determination and resilience. Pupils relish learning. They work productively, both independently and collaboratively. The school is aspirational for pupils. This transfers to pupils' self-belief and their desire to pursue healthy, successful futures.

The school demonstrates effective practice in making sure that pupils have regular attendance. Where appropriate, it offers a wealth of support to help families to improve their child's attendance. Consequently, very few pupils miss out on important learning.

The school has a well-established programme to enhance pupils' personal development. This starts at the beginning of the early years. Pupils learn about maintaining healthy lifestyles and enjoying positive relationships. They learn about people from different backgrounds, fostering both academic and personal growth. Some pupils take part in a range of clubs that the school offers, for example karate and ukulele. Across the school, pupils hold leadership positions to act as responsible role models for others, such as school councillors. Pupils feel assured that they have a strong voice in their school and that their opinions matter.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Over time, in a small number of subjects, the school has not made sure that staff have the specialist knowledge that they need to adapt learning for pupils with SEND. This hinders the achievement of a small number of pupils with SEND in some areas of the curriculum. The school should ensure that staff develop the requisite expertise in adaptive practice, so that appropriate adjustments are made to support pupils to fully access the ambitious curriculum and to achieve well.
- In a small number of subjects, the school is still developing its approaches to evaluating the impact of the curriculum on outcomes for pupils. This means that,

sometimes, the school does not know how effectively pupils are learning the curriculum content over time. In turn, this makes it difficult for the school to make informed decisions when deciding on relevant actions and next steps for these subjects. The school should ensure that it strengthens subject leadership expertise to effectively and swiftly bring about improvements where they are required.

## **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>	134479
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10348243
<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>	334
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Maree Jordan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Botham
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sacredheart-jun.manchester.sch.uk">www.sacredheart-jun.manchester.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2024. Several other leaders in school have taken up post since the beginning of this academic year.
- This a Roman Catholic school, which is part of the Diocese of Salford.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in November 2022. Its next section 48 inspection is due before November 2029.
- The school runs an on-site breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, Spanish, science and geography. They met with subject leaders and with teachers. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum in other subjects. They spoke with pupils, looked at documentation and reviewed pupils' work in these subjects.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors spoke with other leaders in the school.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors met with leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documentation relating to pupils' welfare and education.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils during meetings, lessons and at breaktimes. They also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including the free-text comments. An inspector also spoke with some parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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**

Sheena Clark, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lisa Woolley

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