

Inspection of St Philip's RC Primary School

Cavendish Road, Salford, Greater Manchester M7 4WP

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 September 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding 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 November 2007.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils said that their school is an incredibly welcoming place to learn. They explained that they enjoy being with their friends and celebrating each other's achievements. Pupils are proud to belong to such an exceptional school.

At St Philip's, pupils blossom. They thrive academically and in their wider personal development. Pupils strive relentlessly to be the very best that they can be in all that they do. They are extremely well prepared for the next steps in their education.

The school's expectations for pupils' achievement are exceptionally high, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Across the curriculum, including in the early years, pupils' achievement is excellent. This is because pupils have an in-depth understanding of the topics and subjects that they study. They have solid foundations on which to build new learning.

Pupils' conduct in lessons and around the school is exemplary. This is because pupils have a deep understanding of the school's rules and routines. Added to this, pupils learn in an environment where there is respect for all.

Pupils relish the wide range of enrichment experiences on offer. For example, they benefit from an array of extra-curricular activities. Pupils also embrace leadership roles, for example as house captains. They described these leadership opportunities as an honour. Pupils are dedicated to making the school a harmonious place for all to learn.

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

The school ensures that pupils enjoy a meticulously crafted curriculum that fully meets their learning needs. The curriculum flows seamlessly from the early years through to Year 6. The school ensures that each subject within the curriculum has equal importance in pupils' learning. Leaders and staff identify the essential knowledge that pupils must learn with thorough consideration and with precision. The attention to detail given by the school to the order in which pupils learn new topics and concepts is exemplary.

Teachers are expertly trained to deliver the curriculum. They embrace ongoing professional development. Teachers demonstrate exceptional subject knowledge across the entire curriculum. They skilfully design learning activities to deliver new knowledge to pupils. The care and diligence that staff place on designing learning enables pupils to develop the security of subject knowledge that they require to excel.

Teachers carefully probe pupils' understanding of the topics that they have studied. Teachers check pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding with rigour. Adults address any misconceptions that pupils may have apace. The school's assessment systems are extremely well thought out.

Teachers identify and assess pupils' SEND extremely well. Teachers are highly skilled in adapting the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of this school, and, as such, pupils with SEND embrace the same excellent curriculum as their peers.

The school places the highest priority on ensuring that pupils learn to read with fluency and accuracy. Right from the Nursery Year, the school ensures that pupils develop their early language skills to great effect. Staff skilfully extend children's vocabulary. Adults take care to choose suitable poems, songs and rhymes for children to enjoy.

The teaching of phonics begins in the Reception Year. Staff are experts in enabling pupils to learn new sounds. The books that pupils read precisely match the sounds that they know. Pupils talked passionately about reading. The books and authors that they learn about inspire them. Pupils spoke with maturity and confidence about different texts and how they link to their learning across the curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite, courteous and well mannered. Lessons proceed without interruption because pupils are absorbed in their learning. In the early years, children focus fully on the task at hand. Pupils, including children in the early years, show admirable resilience when they find tasks more difficult. They take pride in the work that they produce, ensuring that it is of the highest quality.

The curriculum to promote pupils' personal development is praiseworthy. Pupils benefit from an exceptional set of experiences, which help them to be ready to live in modern day Britain. For example, pupils' spiritual understanding is developed in many ways. This includes through the work of the school's 'mission team' or through visitors to school, such as one from a local rabbi.

Pupils learn in depth how to look after their physical and mental health. The school ensures that every pupil gets the opportunity to represent their school at an external event. Pupils also work with the local community to learn about what life was like in the past. In addition, they have raised money for new school equipment by taking part in a sponsored well-being walk.

Governors, leaders and staff work exceptionally well together to ensure that pupils receive the highest quality of education. Staff report superior levels of support for their well-being. This includes how leaders plan deadlines to ensure that staff do not become overloaded.

The school works diligently with parents and carers. For example, the school provides parents with the relevant guidance that they need to actively support their children's learning at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Unique reference number	105968
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	10226159
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Riley
Headteacher	Ruth McNamara
Website	https://www.stphilipsrcprimary.com/
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 November 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Some new governors have been appointed since the previous inspection, including the chair of governors.
- This Catholic primary school is part of the Diocese of Salford. The last section 48 inspection took place in January 2018. The next section 48 inspection is likely to take place before 2026.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection that 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, art and design and physical education. For each deep dive, they met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils and looked at pupils' work. They also discussed learning in other curriculum subjects with pupils.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils in Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They met with the leaders for attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes and as pupils moved around the school building. They scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority, and he spoke with a representative of the Diocese of Salford.
- 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.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at the school. They spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors spoke with a group of parents while pupils were arriving at school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Stuart Perkins, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lindy Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Berry	Ofsted Inspector

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