

Inspection of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Leigh

Windermere Road, Leigh, Lancashire WN7 1UX

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 July 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils enjoy coming to school each day. They look forward to their learning. Pupils value the positive relationships that they have with staff and with each other.

Pupils strive to meet the school's increased expectations for their behaviour and conduct. In the main, pupils follow the school's rules and are courteous. Pupils enjoy spending time with Daisy, the school dog. Alongside staff, she helps pupils who may need extra support to regulate their emotions and behaviour.

The school is ambitious for all pupils to achieve highly. Increasingly, more pupils build knowledge effectively in a range of subjects. However, some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are not currently supported well enough to achieve as well as they could. As a result, some pupils, including those in the early years, are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they should be.

Pupils appreciate the school's well-considered offer to enhance their learning and develop their character. They value visiting different places in the local area. Pupils enjoy their roles as play leaders, where they help younger pupils at breaktimes. Other responsibilities include supporting pupils who arrive from different countries to settle in quickly and feel welcome.

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

The school has made some key improvements to the quality of its curriculum, including in the early years. The knowledge that pupils should learn is identified clearly from the beginning of the reception class to the end of key stage 2. The school's curriculum development and staff training now mean that staff have greater clarity over what is taught and when.

In the main, staff select appropriate activities to support pupils to gain knowledge in a range of subjects. However, in the early years, sometimes staff do not choose the most effective strategies to enable children to develop their vocabulary and knowledge across the curriculum.

In a number of subjects, staff make effective checks on pupils' understanding. This helps them to address errors and gaps in pupils' learning. However, some pupils have gaps in their fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics that staff do not consistently identify or fill. This means that pupils are missing the key knowledge on which their new learning needs to build. As a result, a significant proportion of current pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Since the last inspection, the school has successfully improved aspects of its reading programme. For example, the books that pupils read as part of the school's phonics curriculum are well matched to the sounds that they know. Staff implement the phonics

programme consistently well. Pupils who struggle to read confidently are given effective support. Older pupils increasingly learn to read well and with confidence.

On the whole, staff make appropriate adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum to support the needs of pupils with SEND. However, some of the support for these pupils, particularly those with speech, language, and communication needs and those who speak English as an additional language, is not as effective as it could be. As a result, some pupils with SEND and those with additional needs do not learn as well as they should.

Pupils generally behave well and listen carefully to their teachers. Most play well together during breaktimes. Staff provide effective support to pupils if they struggle to manage their emotions.

Pupils benefit from a variety of activities to broaden their horizons. They show particularly strong knowledge of fundamental British values. Pupils respect people from different backgrounds and cultures to their own. Pupils appreciate the work that the school does to support them with their mental and physical health. They enjoy yoga sessions and opportunities to keep fit at breaktimes.

Governors have overseen significant changes to the school. The positive impact of recent changes is evident for many stakeholders. However, some staff expressed concerns around workload and morale. Leaders recognise there is more to do to ensure that the positive changes that have taken place become more embedded and impact positively on the school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not select the most effective approaches to support some children in the early years to develop their vocabulary and knowledge as well as they should. This hinders children's learning across the curriculum. The school should make sure that staff are supported to develop children's knowledge and language successfully, so that they are better prepared for key stage 1.
- The school has not ensured that staff successfully address gaps in some pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills. This means that these pupils do not have the tools that they need in order to access the next stage of their learning. The school should make sure that pupils have mastered basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and can apply these across the curriculum.
- Some of the support for pupils with additional needs, including those with SEND, is not as timely or as effective as it should be. This means that some of these pupils do not

achieve as well as they should. The school should improve the quality of support that pupils receive so that these pupils make strong progress through the curriculum.

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	106502
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10410035
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kathryn Perry
Executive Headteacher	Janice Taberner
Head of School	Jennifer Warner
Website	http://www.leighsacredheart.wigan.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 June 2023, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is a Roman Catholic school which is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Its last Section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in June 2024. Its next Section 48 inspection is due in summer 2029.
- The school currently makes use of one registered alternative provider.
- The school runs a before-school breakfast club.
- The school is currently led by a seconded executive headteacher and an interim head of school, who is the school's substantive deputy headteacher.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued 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 these subjects: English (including early reading), mathematics, science, history, art, and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- 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 the head of school and the executive headteacher and other leaders. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. She also spoke on the telephone to the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and considered the responses to Ofsted’s parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors spoke to pupils and to staff to gather their views. They also took into account the responses to Ofsted’s online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including those related to the governance of the school.
- Inspectors discussed the school’s approach to behaviour and attendance. They spoke with pupils about behaviour and observed them in lessons, when moving around the school and during lunchtime.

Inspection team

Louise McArdle, lead inspector

Nicky Parkinson

Liz Kelly

His Majesty’s Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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