

Inspection of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Manchester Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 3HS

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning and playing together. The school values of understanding, kindness, respect, faith, excellence and responsibility can be seen in action throughout the day. Everyone looks forward to celebrating these values on 'hot chocolate Friday'.

Pupils say that they feel safe here. They know what bullying is and why it is wrong. They say it happens rarely. Pupils are confident that adults will stop bullying if it happens.

In lessons, pupils listen carefully to their teachers. Pupils do their best to understand ambitious new ideas. They work together sensibly and share their ideas eagerly. They know it is important to keep trying if work is tricky. They say their teachers will help them if they need it.

Breaktimes are friendly and calm. There is plenty of space for everyone to enjoy their games. Pupils of all ages mix happily. Older pupils readily help and encourage younger pupils.

Pupils enjoy the clubs on offer. There are many sporting opportunities for all pupils. The choir is well attended and the pupils sing with great enthusiasm. Other clubs, including before- and after-school care, provide many ways for pupils to enjoy their time at school beyond the classroom.

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

Leaders have set out clear plans for an ambitious curriculum. Teachers usually put these plans into action well. Pupils practise what they learn so that they can remember it easily. For example, in mathematics, pupils work hard to calculate quickly and efficiently. This helps them to use what they already know when tackling new problems. Skilled adults sensitively help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to take part in lessons and to understand the learning. Overall, pupils achieve well as a result of effective teaching.

In some subjects, leaders have set out the most important vocabulary for pupils to learn. This helps pupils to understand tricky concepts such as 'reconciliation' and 'forgiveness'. In a few subjects, teachers do not always teach what has been planned. When this happens, pupils' understanding is not secure and adults do not notice or correct this quickly enough.

Well-trained staff help children learn to read from the start of Reception. Children quickly learn to read words and sentences. They get plenty of practice with books that match their phonics knowledge. This helps pupils to become confident readers. Adults regularly check what pupils know when they are learning to read. Leaders provide extra help promptly to enable pupils to catch up when needed. Pupils with SEND get personalised help with learning to read if they need it.

Books and reading are at the heart of the curriculum. In the early years, adults introduce children to a range of engaging books and stories. Adults link learning activities to these books. These activities help children to develop their understanding and vocabulary. Older pupils study a carefully chosen range of books. They listen, rapt, as their teachers read challenging books aloud in story time each day.

Behaviour around the school is good. From the early years, children learn to share and take turns. Relationships between adults and pupils are respectful and kind. A small number of pupils need extra help to manage their behaviour. This is carefully planned to help pupils learn to make the right behaviour choices. Lessons run smoothly as pupils are attentive and eager to learn.

Leaders ensure that learning includes wider life skills through carefully planned curriculums. Pupils learn from the start about the importance of healthy eating, regular exercise and staying safe online. They also learn about staying healthy mentally. Pupils start to understand money and learn about careers. They develop tolerance and respect for others. Older pupils take part in debates, such as whether graffiti is art or vandalism. Pupils take on responsibilities such as school council, prefects and sports captains. They can explain how they help others.

Leaders work together well to bring about improvements in the school. Staff are positive about the support they receive from leaders. They appreciate the concern of leaders for staff's well-being. Staff constantly strive to learn from each other and improve provision for pupils. Several staff commented, 'We put children first here.' Leaders at every level acknowledge that the school has been through a challenging period of change. Many parents commented positively on the school. A small group of parents feel that communication between home and school is not effective enough. These parents are not confident that they are working closely enough with leaders to get the best outcomes for their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know their families well. They identify when extra help is needed. Staff are well trained and look out for signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They record their concerns straight away. Leaders act on concerns and act promptly to keep pupils safe. They are persistent in following up concerns with external agencies to secure the help that is needed for pupils and their families.

Leaders ensure that pupils in school are safe. They carry out the right checks on adults working with pupils. Pupils learn how to stay safe and recognise a variety of risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Clear curriculum plans are in place. In a few subjects, these are not implemented well enough. When this happens, pupils find it difficult to complete activities and retain the important learning that leaders have planned. Leaders must ensure that all curriculum plans are implemented as intended.
- Following a period of change, a small proportion of parents lack confidence in communication with leaders. Leaders should review arrangements for communicating with parents and strategies to involve them in school life to enable parents to support their children at school.

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](#)' 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

Unique reference number	144987
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	10241327
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	450
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Phillip Maxfield
Headteacher	Sally Nutman
Website	www.olol.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Assisi Catholic Trust in May 2018.
- The school has recently incorporated the Nursery into its provision.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last section 48 inspection of this school took place in January 2017.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the senior leaders and teachers, including subject leaders.

- The lead inspector met with representatives from the board of trustees and the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in five subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education, science and music. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and, where relevant, looked at samples of work by pupils.
- The inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and other staff to discuss safeguarding.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, school development plans and safeguarding and behaviour records.
- The inspectors considered 123 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 84 free-text comments. They also considered 24 responses to the staff survey and 54 responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in their school. The inspectors also observed the behaviour of pupils at playtimes and around the school.

Inspection team

Lynne Williams, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Brenda Watson	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Shadbolt	Ofsted Inspector

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