

St Ignatius' Catholic Primary School

St Ignatius Square, Preston, Lancashire PR1 1TT

Inspection dates

12–13 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Following the previous inspection there was a marked decline in standards of attainment across the school. Outcomes at the end of key stage 2, particularly in reading and writing, declined.
- Although the improvements made by leaders are having a positive impact, a legacy of underachievement remains, particularly in key stage 2. There is more work to be done to ensure that pupils reach the standards of attainment of which they are capable.
- The relatively new governing body has an overgenerous view of pupils' performance over time. Governors do not make the most effective use of performance information, including comparisons with national averages.
- In some classes in key stage 2, teachers do not sufficiently challenge the most able pupils. As a result, they do not make the progress of which they are capable. Too few reach the highest standards of attainment by the end of Year 6.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have acted decisively to reverse the decline in standards. As a result of their actions, current pupils are making better progress.
- Recent appointments of new staff have strengthened teaching and learning. Enthusiastic and skilled staff provide an engaging and enriched curriculum.
- Leaders have improved the quality of provision for the youngest children. As a result, children in early years get off to a good start so that they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils achieve well in the phonics screening check in Year 1.
- This is a happy and welcoming school. Pupils are nurtured and well cared for. New pupils who speak English as an additional language settle very quickly and make good progress.
- Pupils are proud to be members of St Ignatius' Catholic Primary. They are a credit to their teachers and families, with their good manners and respectful attitudes to others.
- The vigilance of staff ensures that pupils are safe and well cared for.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Leaders' swift and decisive actions have ensured that more pupils come to school on time every day.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' outcomes in key stage 2 by:
 - making sure that the recent improvements to teaching and learning in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 2 are secure and sustained, so that all pupils overcome gaps in their learning and make the progress of which they are capable
 - providing opportunities to extend and challenge the most able pupils across the curriculum, especially in key stage 2.
- Ensure that governors have an accurate view of how well pupils are achieving compared to their peers nationally so that they can provide effective challenge to leaders in order to secure good outcomes for pupils across key stage 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Following the previous inspection, pupils' performance declined across the school. Since their appointment in 2016, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have been swift in bringing about improvements to reverse this downward trend. As a result, the quality of provision for the youngest children and those pupils who speak English as an additional language has improved considerably. Leaders have made sure that more early years and key stage 1 pupils are getting off to a good start in reading. Leaders have also increased pupils' attendance and raised standards of behaviour across the school.
- Leaders' recent appointments of new teaching staff have strengthened teaching and learning across the school. The leadership team has established a very harmonious and enthusiastic team of staff. Teachers are keen to achieve the very best for all pupils.
- Leaders have put in place well-planned training opportunities for staff and these have had a positive impact. For example, staff have developed their skills in teaching phonics. Consequently, more pupils now meet the expected standard in phonics in Year 1 and reading in Year 2.
- Leaders have planned an engaging curriculum which is broad and balanced. Pupils study a wide range of subjects, including religious education, Spanish and science. Staff develop pupils' thinking and reasoning skills through philosophy lessons. Leaders have improved music teaching by starting a school choir, which sings at school and local events.
- Pupils' intricate and attractive art work enhances the school environment. This term, pupils transformed the school into an art gallery, with the local community visiting to view the beautifully framed and displayed works of art.
- Leaders plan a range of engaging and aspirational trips and visits which develop and enrich pupils' learning across the curriculum. Pupils in Year 5 enjoyed a trip to the Harris Museum as part of their history project on Ancient Greece. Through close links with the local high school, pupils in Year 6 attend a science club each year. Pupils in key stage 1 were excited to go on a 'Wind in the Willows' theatre trip which brought their English lessons to life.
- A carefully planned curriculum supports the learning of pupils who speak English as an additional language, many of whom are disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have purchased additional resources and training to make sure that these pupils are getting exactly the right level of support to quickly develop their competence and fluency in speaking English. Teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to develop their vocabulary and their communication skills.
- Leaders use the sport premium to build pupils' confidence and widen their experiences. They develop pupils' skills in a wide range of sports and activities, including dance, tennis, cricket, football and gymnastics. During the inspection, pupils spoke with pride of their success in recent local competitions, including cricket, rugby, hockey and girls' football.
- Leaders use additional funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively to ensure that they quickly address any gaps in learning that these pupils may have.

- Leaders strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through lessons, assemblies and events such as fundraising for refugees. The school's strong Christian ethos is evident in pupils' caring attitudes and their considerate behaviour towards others. Leaders make sure that the school is strongly inclusive and all are welcomed and valued. Pupils enjoy learning about other faiths, including Judaism and Islam. Pupils from different faiths value using the school's prayer room. Throughout the school, teachers use calming music for times of contemplation and concentration.
- Pupils across the school learn to understand and appreciate British values, including respect and tolerance. Local magistrates run a mock courtroom to enhance pupils' understanding of the law.
- Leaders and governors have taken decisive action to improve historically low standards at key stage 2 in reading. Investment in training for staff and new resources for the school, including the very well-stocked new school library, have improved the quality of provision for reading. Pupils now read with greater confidence and enjoyment.
- Leaders have developed a comprehensive assessment system which they use to check the progress that pupils make in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. They use this new system well to check on the quality of teaching and learning across the school. They also use this information to target any additional support required.
- Leaders, including governors, do not use information precisely in their improvement planning. Measures of success in the school's development plans are sometimes vague and not linked sharply enough to pupils' outcomes. This hampers their ability to evaluate the impact of their actions on pupils' performance.

Governance of the school

- The relatively new governing body shares the leadership team's aspirations for all pupils to achieve well. Governors receive regular information from leaders about pupils' progress. However, governors have an overgenerous view of how well pupils are achieving over time across the school.
- Governors monitor the school's budget carefully, including the sport premium. They ask the right questions about the difference this money makes to pupils' outcomes and staff development.
- Governors make sure that they seek the views of parents and carers and act quickly to address any concerns. For example, they are reviewing the school's approach to homework in response to parental feedback.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are thorough.
- Leaders and governors ensure that pupils' safety is a high priority and that staff are vigilant. They make sure that staff receive appropriate and regular training to identify any signs of possible danger or potential abuse. Leaders have created a culture in which pupils feel safe and know that they have someone in school to talk to if they are

worried. The school's learning mentor works closely with other staff to nurture vulnerable pupils and to provide support for them and their families.

- The procedures for reporting any incidents or concerns are very clear and applied effectively. Staff know pupils' families well and provide support when pupils are at risk of missing education by being frequently absent. The school works very well with parents and external agencies to make sure that pupils are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have put in place effective training and support for teachers to improve the quality of teaching across the school. As a result, teachers plan interesting lessons which engage pupils and help them learn well. Pupils enjoy their learning, concentrate well and develop their skills across different areas of the curriculum. This is helping current pupils to overcome the legacy of underperformance.
- Staff use their good knowledge of phonics to make sure that younger pupils quickly develop their early reading skills and achieve well. Staff check pupils' learning in phonics regularly and accurately to make sure that they teach pupils the skills that they need. Pupils, including the disadvantaged and those who speak English as an additional language, quickly develop fluency and confidence in reading.
- Staff have improved the way that they teach reading comprehension skills. Pupils develop a love of reading as staff give them frequent opportunities to read good-quality texts and novels. During the inspection, pupils spoke with enthusiasm about how they value their weekly visits to the new, well-stocked school library. In class, staff teach pupils reading skills which develop their understanding of what they are reading.
- These improvements are having a positive impact. Pupils' achievement in reading at key stage 1 is strengthening. The progress that pupils, including those pupils new to the school and those who speak English as an additional language, make in their reading in key stage 2 is also improving.
- Across the school, pupils who speak English as an additional language develop their language skills well. This is because teachers plan frequent opportunities for speaking and listening. Staff make sure that these pupils have a good understanding of vocabulary in subjects such as mathematics and science.
- The quality of work in pupils' books, learning in lessons and the school's checks on pupils' learning all show that improvements in writing have been embedded. Pupils write for a range of different purposes and use their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills in their writing.
- In key stage 1 and in most classes in key stage 2, teachers give pupils challenging work. For example, in mathematics teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to use their problem-solving and reasoning skills. Nonetheless, some of the most able pupils in key stage 2 have not been challenged enough. The work that this group of pupils receives has sometimes been too easy. This means that the most able pupils in key stage 2 do not always make the strong progress of which they are capable.
- Assessment has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers and other adults check pupils' understanding during lessons. Staff provide useful feedback to help pupils

develop their thinking and learning. Pupils told inspectors that they knew what to do next to improve their work.

- Leaders have developed an improved system to check the progress that pupils make in their mathematics and English learning. Leaders and staff have regular meetings to identify any pupils falling behind and to quickly give these pupils additional support.
- Teachers plan lessons carefully for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Staff give this group of pupils additional support in class to help them make the progress that they should. The special educational needs coordinator keeps a close check on these pupils. As a result, they make good progress from their starting points.
- Inspection evidence and the school's assessment information show that disadvantaged pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics, reaching standards at least in line with other pupils in the school. Last year, disadvantaged pupils did not make the same progress as their peers in reading at key stage 2. Leaders have ensured that disadvantaged pupils have access to additional support to help them accelerate their skills in reading. As a result, teachers are closing gaps between these pupils and other pupils nationally.
- Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children are taught well. However, some parents would like their children to receive more homework.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school motto, 'We work hard, we care, we respect, we love', is apparent throughout the school. Pupils take pride in their work. Staff teach pupils to value differences and to welcome all. Pupils new to the country and to the school described how quickly they settled in and made new friends. Pupils value other cultures and religions, including Islam and Hinduism. Muslim pupils spoke with pride about helping out at the school's Eid party day.
- Pupils said that they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including online and in the wider community.
- Pupils value the calm and quiet areas in the school, including the prayer room, nurture room and the new school library.
- Through the curriculum, pupils develop a clear understanding of how to choose a healthy lifestyle, including diet and exercise. Improvements to the outdoor environment, including a running track and new netball court, promote pupils' fitness. School councillors talked knowledgeably about healthy eating and what they had learned in healthy-eating workshops run in partnership with Preston North End Football Club.
- The school's sports apprentice runs a wide range of activities to make sure that pupils stay active, such as before-school tennis lessons. At breaktimes and lunchtimes, he promotes pupils' fitness, organising and supervising games and activities.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and very welcoming. They have lovely manners and greet visitors warmly. A strong ethos of respect between staff and pupils is evident across the school.
- Pupils report that incidents of bullying are very rare and that staff deal quickly with any misbehaviour. Leaders have introduced a behaviour policy which pupils clearly understand. The impact of this new policy can be seen in a sharp reduction in the number of misbehaviour incidents recorded. Staff, pupils and parents agree that pupils behave well.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. In classes, pupils listen attentively and work well together. The learning-support mentor works closely with pupils, staff and parents to ensure that all pupils know how to behave and concentrate in class.
- Attendance is close to last year's national average and continues to improve. This is because leaders and the school's learning mentor have put in place successful measures to support and improve the attendance of those pupils who do not attend school regularly enough. These measures have had a significant positive impact and persistent absence has decreased, including that of disadvantaged pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- After the previous inspection, standards declined across the school. Senior leaders have acted decisively to reverse this decline, and their actions are having a positive impact on outcomes in early years and key stage 1. However, although in key stage 2 current pupils are making stronger progress, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standards by the end of Year 6 is typically below the national average, and has been particularly poor in reading and writing over time. Too many pupils currently in key stage 2 have gaps in their learning.
- By the end of Year 1, pupils' attainment in phonics is in line with the national average. Staff teach phonics systematically, carefully building on the sounds that pupils have learned in previous lessons. Pupils use their phonics knowledge in their writing. Staff provide those pupils working below the expected standard with carefully planned additional lessons to help them make good progress from their different starting points.
- In 2017, the attainment of pupils in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics had risen considerably from 2016 but was still below that of all pupils nationally. For current pupils, attainment in key stage 1 continues to improve. Staff give pupils, including the most able, challenging and interesting work, and current pupils are now making the progress of which they are capable. Teachers have maintained these improvements in standards and pupils continue to achieve well.
- The steps that leaders have taken to improve reading and writing at key stage 2 are making a positive difference. The school's own assessments show that the progress of current pupils in reading and writing at key stage 2 is improving. Leaders have raised the profile of reading across the school and staff make sure that pupils read widely and often. However, there is still more to be done to close the significant gap in outcomes in reading and writing compared with pupils nationally.

- Over time, too few of the most able pupils reach the standards of which they are capable in key stage 2. In 2017, the proportions reaching higher standards by the end of key stage 2 were below national averages in reading and writing. Leaders have taken steps so that teachers give these pupils more challenging work now. However, scrutiny of work and leaders' checks on progress show that in some lessons these pupils are not making the strong progress of which they are capable across the curriculum.
- A majority of disadvantaged pupils are also those who speak English as an additional language. Some of these pupils join the school from other countries and have very little or no fluency in English. Skilled staff help these pupils to quickly develop their communication and language skills and give them access to the curriculum alongside their peers.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive very carefully planned teaching to make sure that they make strong progress. Additional small-group teaching sessions support learning in class. Leaders work closely with outside agencies to ensure that outcomes for children looked after are also good.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are generally below those typical for their age. As a result of skilled teaching and effective leadership, they get off to a strong start and make good progress from their different starting points. The proportions of children reaching a good level of development have improved since the last inspection. Children are well prepared for moving up to Year 1.
- Staff have developed very close links with nurseries and with parents. This means that staff know children very well from the moment that they start school. Leaders hold useful parents' workshops and sessions to help parents know exactly how to support their children in developing their skills. Staff meet regularly with parents to share information about children's progress and to help parents support their child's learning.
- Developing children's communication and language lies at the heart of the well-planned and engaging curriculum. Staff ask children questions to develop their understanding in different areas of learning. During the inspection, children were excitedly retelling a story about pirates. They eagerly volunteered to dress up and were questioned by the class about life as a pirate. Through skilful questioning, staff helped children to understand the story.
- Staff are skilled in teaching phonics and children quickly gain confidence in reading. Staff use daily small-group phonics sessions to ensure that children practise and develop their skills. Staff regularly check children's learning and make sure that any children falling behind are quickly given additional support. Leaders have planned a very language-rich environment, with plenty of printed words on display and very regular opportunities to read.
- Across the early years, children have plenty of interesting opportunities to develop their skills in mathematics and literacy. During the inspection, children were enjoying counting and sorting dinosaurs, designing a pirate map and reading attractive and colourful books.

- The support for children who have English as an additional language is effective. Leaders work closely with a specialist professional to make sure that these children receive teaching which precisely matches their needs and they quickly develop their fluency in English.
- Leaders provide a very calm, secure and interesting learning environment which allows children to thrive. Staff have developed an exciting outdoor learning area which helps children to develop their learning across different areas of learning.
- Staff make sure that the curriculum is engaging and full of fun for children in Reception. For their learning about pirates, children helped to make a large pirate ship for their role play, complete with mast and sails. Other children were excited to plant the beautiful new garden area. Children have regular access to the large school playground and develop their physical skills by using a range of equipment, including bikes.
- Children are eager and cooperative learners. They listen with concentration and are keen to answer questions. Children starting Reception with challenging behaviour quickly adhere to the high standards expected by staff. Staff provide very effective and personalised support to ensure that children develop the skills to listen attentively and move calmly around the classroom.
- Leaders make sure that they meet all the statutory welfare requirements and staff adhere to the school's safeguarding practices and procedures. Children are safe and happy in the very nurturing, calm and welcoming classroom areas.

School details

Unique reference number	119610
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10046713

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lyndon Jones
Headteacher	Christopher Hough
Telephone number	01772 555252
Website	www.saint-ignatius.com
Email address	head@st-ignatius.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 November 2013

Information about this school

- St Ignatius' is smaller than the average primary school.
- The school population is represented by a number of minority ethnic groups, the large majority of pupils being non-White British.
- The majority of pupils in the school speak English as an additional language. This is well above the national average.
- There is higher-than-average mobility for pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is similar to the national average.

- The school meets the government's floor standards. These are the minimum standards and rate of progress expected in reading, writing and mathematics of pupils in key stage 2.
- There have been a number of changes in staffing. A deputy headteacher took up post in January 2016. A headteacher took up post in September 2016. Three new teachers have been appointed in key stage 2 this year.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in each year group and in a range of subjects. They conducted joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. They spoke to the virtual school's headteacher.
- Inspectors met with eight pupils from key stage 2 and talked with pupils in classes and around the school. The head boy and head girl took an inspector on a tour of the school.
- Inspectors heard a small number of pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Inspectors checked a range of pupils' books jointly with leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents and took into account 17 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including free-text responses.
- Inspectors took into account eight responses to the inspection questionnaire for school staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation and development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, school policies and procedures and the school's own assessment information. A range of documentation regarding safeguarding was scrutinised.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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