

Inspection of Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School

Kenilworth Road, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire FY8 1LB

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils experience a wonderful quality of education at this school. From the very start, pupils feel safe and secure here. In the early years, children skip happily into school each day, full of confidence for the day ahead. Older pupils are proud to be excellent role models for younger ones. Pupils know that their best interests are at the heart of every aspect of school life.

Leaders and staff have the highest expectations for pupils' achievement and for their behaviour. Pupils listen to their teachers attentively and respectfully. They work conscientiously and without disturbing others. Pupils of all ages achieve exceptionally well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils understand the rules and try to follow them to the letter every day. For example, children in the early years take care of the toys and resources in their well-organised classroom. Older pupils are courteous and well-mannered to adults and to each other. Leaders and staff act swiftly and effectively to put a stop to any bullying.

There is an impressive range of activities for pupils' personal development. As well as a wide variety of clubs and sports activities, pupils make a real contribution to the life of their community. For example, they work with coastal rangers to develop the sand dunes. They sing to residents in local care homes. These experiences help pupils to become well-rounded youngsters.

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

Leaders want the very best for pupils. They have designed a broad, exciting and highly aspirational curriculum that they have embedded and refined over time. Leaders have a clear vision for what they want pupils to know and to be able to do by the time that they leave the school. All staff share this ambitious vision for every pupil, including those with SEND. From the early years to the end of Year 6, pupils achieve extremely well.

Leaders have made sure that in each subject, the most important knowledge is broken down and ordered into smaller steps in each year group. This helps teachers to make sure that pupils learn all of this important knowledge in the right order. Teachers check that pupils have understood before moving on to the next learning. This ensures that pupils' learning is secure.

The training that leaders provide ensures that staff have strong subject knowledge. Staff use this expertise to design learning experiences for pupils that fire their interest and make them want to find out more. Through the well-organised curriculum, pupils have plenty of opportunities to keep revisiting their earlier learning, so that they do not forget it. Over time, pupils connect their learning and begin to understand bigger ideas.

Leaders have made sure that reading is at the heart of the curriculum. From the minute that they start school, children in the early years learn about phonics each day. Staff are experts at teaching children about letters and sounds. Children quickly learn to break down and build up sounds in order to read words successfully. Within a short time, they can read books matched to the sounds that they know. Any children at risk of falling behind receive prompt, effective help to catch up. By the time that they start Year 2, pupils read with impressive confidence and fluency. Older pupils read a wide range of texts, including poetry, novels and non-fiction books. This helps them to develop strong spelling skills and to read and write well in all subjects. Pupils across the school love reading and achieve exceptionally well in national tests.

Teachers work with leaders to gather a range of information from assessments. They use this information to help them to adjust teaching if necessary, and to make sure that the curriculum is having the impact that they intend for pupils.

Pupils with SEND benefit from the same excellent quality of education as their classmates. Leaders work with staff to quickly identify any pupils who may have SEND. They communicate effectively with parents, carers and a range of professionals to secure any extra help that these pupils might need. Pupils with SEND achieve similarly well to other pupils in school.

Pupils' behaviour is of the highest standard. Pupils know that staff expect nothing less. They apply themselves to their work with commitment and maturity. They do not disturb each other, for example, by chatting. These sensible attitudes, even in the early years, help everyone to get on with their learning.

Leaders' aspirations for pupils extend beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils are provided with a wide range of experiences that help them to develop confidence and character. For example, pupils learn to speak and perform in public through their work with professional theatrical companies. They learn to take account of others' views through debate. Pupils consider opportunities beyond school when they learn about science at a local university. In age-appropriate ways, pupils learn to appreciate the diversity of faiths, cultures and family structures in British society.

Governors are knowledgeable and insightful about the school. They hold leaders effectively to account for their work. For example, they ask leaders challenging questions about the quality of education that they provide for pupils. Governors and leaders are mindful of staff's workload and well-being in the decisions that they make. Regardless of their roles in the school, staff said that they enjoy working here.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide a range of safeguarding training for staff, including those new to the school. Staff know how to recognise the signs that a pupil might be at risk from harm. They are confident about how to report any concerns.

Leaders work with a range of agencies, such as local authority safeguarding and welfare services. This helps them to secure prompt support for pupils and families who need it.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to stay safe when they are working online. They know what action to take if they see anything that looks wrong.

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	119627
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10226358
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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dee Hills
Headteacher	Natalie Gregan
Website	www.ourladystarofthesea.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and a new chair of governors have been appointed.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Lancaster. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in December 2019.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other school leaders.

- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, both in person and remotely. The inspector also spoke on the telephone to representatives of the local authority and of the Diocese of Lancaster.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. They also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments.
- The inspectors spoke with some pupils about school life. They took account of responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspectors spoke with staff to discuss leaders' support for their workload and well-being. They took account of the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Amanda Whittingham

Ofsted Inspector

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