

Blessed Trinity Roman Catholic College, A Voluntary Academy

Address: Ormerod Road, Burnley, Lancashire, BB10 3AA

Unique reference number (URN): 147581

Inspection report: 17 March 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders have created an inclusive culture in which staff are aware of the multiple barriers that pupils may face. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those known or previously known to children's social care receive appropriate support. Leaders' strong links with feeder primary schools and staff's proactive work with parents and carers helps them develop an individualised approach. Through improved systems and processes, pupils' needs are identified swiftly and accurately. Leaders have acted to ensure that staff are trained well to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Typically, staff support these pupils by using appropriate classroom strategies.

Leaders make careful use of additional funding to address gaps in pupils' learning and their wider development. For example, targeted support is used successfully to raise pupils' self-esteem and help them to be ready to learn. Leaders routinely review the impact of the support that pupils receive and refine approaches accordingly. For example, staff are provided with specific strategies and areas to target in tutoring sessions in English and mathematics. The school makes appropriate use of external agencies, including a small number of alternative providers, to support pupils to re-engage with their education. Leaders keep a close eye on these pupils' experiences.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders place the wellbeing of pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, at the heart of each decision they make. Leaders have a thorough understanding of the multiple barriers that pupils may face. They use their knowledge of the school's context to address pupils' barriers to learning, work effectively with parents and carers, and prioritise areas for improvement appropriately.

Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have put suitable processes in place to check whether their actions are leading to intended improvements. However, while they are taking appropriate steps to address limitations in provision, aspects of their work are still embedding. Some of their actions have not had enough time to have sufficient impact on some shortcomings, such as the quality of the curriculum and teaching and how well some pupils achieve.

Staff, including early career teachers, value the professional learning opportunities they receive to reflect on and refine their practice. Mostly, staff consider leaders to be mindful of their workload. They appreciate the care and support they receive from leaders to look after their wellbeing. Those responsible for governance provide appropriate challenge and support. Trust leaders, directors and local governors understand the school's context. They share leaders' resolve to create a school in which all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, can thrive. Leaders appreciate the support that they receive from within the trust to assure themselves of the impact of their work.

The personal development programme underpins leaders' vision of a community in which everyone belongs. Pupils are especially appreciative of the help they receive from staff and the ways in which their voices are heard. There is a comprehensive offer of early help available that includes internal support and the use of external agencies, such as in-house counselling services.

Pupils value the breadth of opportunities on offer alongside the academic curriculum. These nurture pupils' interests and talents, as well as preparing them for life beyond school. Opportunities include sports and creative clubs, as well as the option to take on leadership roles such as prefects. These experiences help to develop pupils' independence and social skills. Leaders keep a check on pupils' engagement with these opportunities, including for those pupils who are disadvantaged. However, the full impact of this offer on pupils' confidence, resilience and perspectives is inconsistent.

Through the religious education curriculum, pupils develop their ability to reflect on their own beliefs and the faiths of others. Mostly, pupils interact well with each other. They are tolerant and respectful of their peers. Some pupils have a mature understanding of British values such as democracy, the rule of law and individual freedom. However, other pupils' awareness of the importance of these principles is underdeveloped.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, manage risk and look after their health through the personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils understand consent and the dangers of substance misuse. For instance, older pupils can explain the dangers of drug misuse, alongside the negative impact of these on one's physical and mental wellbeing.

Pupils receive appropriate support and guidance to inform their next steps. A range of mechanisms support pupils to make informed decisions about their choices. These include careers fairs, engagement with local employers and visits from representatives of colleges.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils' achievement is variable. Some pupils progress successfully through the curriculum. However, others, including some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not build on their learning effectively. These inconsistencies in how well pupils learn are reflected in the quality of pupils' work. Some pupils are not supported well to address knowledge gaps and misconceptions. This means they are not well prepared for the next stage of education, training or employment.

The support and intervention that leaders and staff have put in place means that disadvantaged pupils' progress from their starting points is broadly in line with their peers nationally. However, outcomes for other pupils, including those with SEND, remain variable. Typically, pupils' rates of attainment remain below national averages, and this is reflected in

published examination results. Leaders have prioritised support for those pupils who have not secured the necessary knowledge in early reading, writing and mathematics. Increasingly, these pupils are better prepared to access the curriculum.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

While the rates of attendance for some groups, such as disadvantaged pupils, are improving, attendance rates overall remain below national averages. In particular, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school remains too high. In recent months, leaders have started to use information about pupils' rates of attendance more strategically. This is helping to inform leaders' decision-making about taking actions that have the most impact. However, this work is in its infancy and remains a key area for improvement.

Most pupils show positive attitudes to their learning and are clear about staff's expectations. Pupils respond respectfully to their teachers, and they benefit from the supportive relationships staff have forged with them. Typically, staff apply the school's behaviour systems consistently and the atmosphere around the school is calm. Those pupils who find it a challenge to manage their own behaviour receive appropriate support from staff. This helps these pupils to resolve conflict with their peers and improve their conduct. As a result, the number of pupils receiving repeated suspensions has reduced. Pupils are confident that bullying or unkind behaviour will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively by staff.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

The quality of the curriculum and teaching is inconsistent. While some teachers choose appropriate activities for pupils, others are less well versed in designing lessons that develop pupils' knowledge. For instance, some teachers do not select approaches that support pupils to revisit and apply their earlier learning to new concepts. Similarly, some teachers do not use assessment well to check that pupils have understood earlier content. This prevents teachers identifying and addressing misconceptions. It also limits how well pupils can apply what they have learned.

Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of the curriculum and teaching, particularly regarding those areas that require further development. For instance, training has been provided so that teachers have the subject expertise they need to deliver the curriculum and have greater clarity about the ordering of activities. However, the impact of leaders' actions to improve the teaching of the curriculum is not evident throughout the school.

Mostly, staff use information about pupils' additional needs appropriately to adapt activities and resources. Leaders have prioritised the development of pupils' knowledge of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning to read and write receive carefully tailored support that helps them access the wider curriculum.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils benefit from a warm and accepting school community, irrespective of their background or previous experiences. The pastoral and therapeutic support pupils receive help them to overcome personal challenges and be ready to learn. They value the care that staff afford them and the guidance they receive if they have a problem. Staff support pupils to understand the importance of compassion and mutual respect. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils' behaviour has improved. Increasingly, well-practised routines help pupils to behave calmly in lessons and around school. Staff have forged supportive relationships with pupils. This means that typically, classrooms are places where pupils have the space and time to learn. Staff ensure that pupils who struggle to manage their own conduct receive appropriate support. This helps pupils to manage their emotions and make positive choices. Incidents of bullying are taken seriously by staff and dealt with swiftly.

Pupils have access to a wide range of activities, such as theatre workshops, choir and dodgeball. Leadership opportunities such as being a prefect, an ambassador, or serving as a representative on the school council help to build pupils' confidence. The personal development offer helps pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to develop a sense of belonging. It prepares them for life in a diverse society. Although staff work with parents and carers to remove barriers to participation, some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means that these pupils do not make the most of what the school offers.

Many pupils value learning, attend regularly and enjoy school. However, their experiences across classrooms remain uneven. Consequently, over time, some pupils do not build on their prior knowledge successfully. Inconsistencies in teaching hinder some pupils in applying their earlier learning to new concepts. This prevents them from achieving as well as they should.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure they further reduce rates of persistent absence, including for vulnerable pupils, to ensure that all pupils benefit fully from the personal development programme and academic curriculum, achieving better outcomes.
- Leaders should ensure that staff deliver the curriculum in line with leaders' expectations so that pupils are supported appropriately to develop detailed knowledge and skills and achieve well across all subjects.
- Leaders should ensure that assessment systems are embedded and used to help teachers identify where pupils need support to address gaps in their knowledge and make strong progress from their starting points.
- Leaders should ensure that consistently effective teaching leads to improved pupil achievement in GCSE examinations, particularly in English and mathematics, so that all

pupils, including those with barriers to learning, are well prepared for their next stage in education or training.

About this inspection

This school is part of the Romero Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Katy Cox, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Angela Ager.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the principal, other senior leaders, a secondary consultant advisor from the trust, staff and pupils. The lead inspector spoke with the chair of trustees, the CEO of the trust, two members of the local governing board, a representative from the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Salford. A team inspector spoke with headteachers of two virtual schools.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of 4 unregistered alternative provisions.

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2023.

Headteacher: Deborah Williams

Lead inspector:

Emma Gregory, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspectors:

Stephen Cox, Ofsted Inspector

Chris Meldrum, Ofsted Inspector

Aly Spencer, Ofsted Inspector

John Cowper, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 17 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,273

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

1,280

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

35.82%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.69%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

15.71%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	27.3%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	32.0%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	36.1%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	37.6	46.0	Below
2023/24 (final)	40.3	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	41.4	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.32	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.25	-0.03	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	10.8%	25.8%	Below
2023/24 (final)	20.3%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	16.9%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	28.9	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	32.2	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	34.4	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.70	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.45	-0.57	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	10.8%	53.1%	-42.3 pp
2023/24 (final)	20.3%	53.1%	-32.8 pp
2022/23 (final)	16.9%	52.4%	-35.5 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	28.9	50.4	-21.6
2023/24 (final)	32.2	50.0	-17.8
2022/23 (final)	34.4	50.3	-15.9

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.70	0.16	-0.86
2022/23 (final)	-0.45	0.17	-0.62

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	88%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	90%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	94%	94%	Average

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	9.4%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	11.0%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	10.9%	9.0%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	30.3%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	32.1%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	31.2%	26.5%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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