

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Langho

Address: Whalley Road, Langho, Blackburn, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB6 8EQ

Unique reference number (URN): 119642

Inspection report: 13 January 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

Achievement

Expected standard 

By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. This is reflected in the high-quality work that pupils produce in these subjects. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well when compared to the same group nationally. Leaders' actions ensure that in these subjects, disadvantaged pupils have the knowledge they need to get off to a positive start in secondary school. Leaders make sure that pupils build the phonics knowledge they need to become fluent readers by the end of key stage 1.

In other subjects, pupils typically achieve well across different year groups. In most cases, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. That said, there remain a small number of subjects where pupils do not achieve as well as they could. For example, they have gaps in their knowledge and some skills are underdeveloped.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have established a broad range of systems that quickly pick up and address attendance concerns. High expectations and well-established processes ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need to secure regular school attendance. Leaders have been especially successful in making sure that disadvantaged pupils attend school as often as they can. Positive levels of attendance for disadvantaged pupils have been consistent over a number of years. This has also been the case for many other pupils who arrive at school on time, every day of the week. This helps them to benefit from what the school provides.

Leaders have created an orderly, safe and nurturing environment where bullying and discrimination is seldom seen. Generally, pupils' positive attitudes to learning help to create an environment that is calm and orderly. Pupils know and typically demonstrate the school's values in their interactions with others and as they work and play. Some older pupils are especially understanding and show consideration of their classmates' different needs and circumstances. Pupils know and trust that staff will help them with any worries or concerns. Those who need extra help in managing their emotions are supported well by caring staff.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. They have ensured that staff adapt the curriculum and its teaching when necessary so that all pupils can access their learning. Well-chosen resources help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged to fully participate.

Staff use the school's phonics programme consistently well to teach pupils how to read. They carefully check what pupils know and address any gaps that they may have.

Typically, teachers ensure that pupils build the important knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics. However, at times, gaps in key stage 1 pupils' writing knowledge

and skills are not identified and addressed as quickly as they could be. Although this is rectified in key stage 2, timely opportunities to address this earlier are sometimes missed.

In subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, teachers design learning activities that help pupils to connect learning and build an understanding of larger concepts. In a small number of subjects, leaders have recently introduced a new curriculum. However, there is variability in the depth of some teacher's subject knowledge. As a result, some aspects of this small number of subjects are not taught as well as they could be.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children get off to a positive start in the early years. This includes those who join the school in the Nursery Year. The school involves parents and carers in the run up to their child joining the early years. This helps children settle into school life successfully. Ongoing communication from staff keeps parents updated on how their child is progressing.

Typically, staff design learning activities that help children to develop the key knowledge set out in the curriculum. Staff introduce and explore interesting new words with children through books, activities and play. Children benefit from activities that help them to build up their balance and coordination. Staff use opportunities to help children to solve problems through cooperation with one another. Children learn the rules and routines set by staff and help out during tidy-up time.

Staff focus on helping children learn the different sounds that letters make. Children read books that are closely matched to the sounds that they know. Enjoyment of words and books is also reinforced through the range of nursery rhymes and stories that staff share with children. In the Nursery Year, children successfully develop the skills and knowledge they need in readiness for what comes next. Many children leave the Reception Year suitably prepared for the demands of Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their additional needs and barriers to learning quickly identified and addressed. Leaders work closely with parents and carers through this process. Leaders have responded well to the changing range of needs that pupils join the school with. Similarly, leaders are timely in their response to meeting the needs of pupils who are disadvantaged and those who may be experiencing personal times of challenge. When required, leaders proactively seek further specialist assistance. For example, they have ensured that focused emotional wellbeing support is available in school.

Leaders provide staff with appropriate training and support. Teachers use this, and what they know about pupils' needs, to adjust their teaching appropriately. Staff provide extra bespoke support for pupils with SEND to help them progress from their starting points. Leaders appropriately check the impact of the support that is in place for these pupils. They ensure that the pupil premium funding is used well to benefit disadvantaged pupils. Leaders

have ensured that alternative provision is used appropriately and suitably complements what is in place at the school.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders use approaches that provide them with a clear understanding of different aspects of the school's work. They know the strengths of the school and where there is further work to be done. Typically, where improvements are required, leaders have prioritised appropriate actions for improvement and followed up on these in a timely manner. Governors know the school and its community well. They understand the school's priorities for improvement and provide leaders with suitable levels of challenge and support.

Leaders and governors have prioritised meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. Collectively, they have responded appropriately to ensure that the changing needs of pupils with SEND are provided for in school. Overall, decisions are made in the best interests of pupils.

Teachers at the start of their career benefit from the guidance and training that are put in place for them by leaders. These help them to further develop their expertise. Leaders support staff in their different roles through a range of training opportunities. Staff appreciate the actions that leaders and governors take to listen to their feedback. This has had a positive impact on ensuring that staff have a manageable workload and feel supported in helping pupils get off to a positive start in their education. Staff feel listened to and valued. Many parents and carers told inspectors of their appreciation for the ways in which their children are nurtured and helped to reach their full potential at the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from a carefully considered approach to personal development and wellbeing. In the early years, children are supported well to develop their independence. For example, they learn how to put their coats on by themselves and the importance of washing their hands before eating.

Pupils develop an understanding of important moral values, such as knowing right from wrong. Leaders ensure that pupils learn the value of empathy and the merits of being kind. Pupils contribute positively to the local community. Examples of this include collecting donations for a local food bank and compiling donations of clothes for local charities. These experiences enhance pupils' understanding of compassion.

Pupils begin to develop their understanding of and respect for fundamental British values. Some activities in school, such as voting for members of the school council brings democracy to life. This is further developed when Year 6 pupils visit the Houses of Parliament.

Pupils learn the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, which is further supported through a school wide focus on daily exercise. Pupils understand ways in which they can support and manage their own mental wellbeing, linking this to diet and lifestyle choices. They develop an understanding of what makes a healthy relationship. Leaders ensure that pupils learn how to manage different risks outside of school. For example, pupils learn what they

should do in the event of a fire and how to keep themselves safe around local railways. Leaders focus on ensuring that parents and carers, as well as pupils, are kept up to date and aware of how to be safe online.

The school is effective at identifying and responding to pupils' changing needs. Carefully considered pastoral support provides help and guidance for pupils and their families during times of need.

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

Gratitude and respect are school values that pupils model well at this welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils understand the importance of treating one another in a way that they would like to be treated themselves. One pupil told an inspector how the school makes them feel 'included'. Pupils understand the importance of helping others. For example, school council members advocate fundraising for local and international charities.

Instances of bullying are very rare. On the occasions that it does occur, leaders deal with it quickly and effectively. Typically, behaviour in lessons and around the school is positive. This begins in the early years, where children learn to take turns and to follow adult instructions. Year 6 pupils help children in the early years settle into school and to understand expectations. They act as caring role models and show children what the school values look like in action. Pupils have a sense of belonging and safety at the school.

The support provided for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to make positive progress from their starting points. Pupils enjoy their learning and attend school regularly. When pupils leave Year 6, many are well prepared for their next stage of education in reading, writing and mathematics. This is also the case in a number of other subjects. That said, there are some specific parts of the curriculum where pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils benefit from a broad range of trips and visits, some of which expand their understanding of local history. For example, pupils learn about the role their region played in the textile industry. Interests and skills around textiles are further developed through the school's fashion club. Pupils benefit from a broad array of other clubs, including choir, running and gardening.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers across key stages promptly identify and address gaps in pupils' writing knowledge.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers have the subject knowledge they need to deliver all curriculum subjects as intended.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Cath Mehta.

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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

The inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. The most recent section 48 inspection was carried out in May 2019.

The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.

Since the last inspection, the school has appointed several new members of staff.

Headteacher: Miss Caroline Boden

Lead inspector:

David Robinson, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Ros Munro, Ofsted Inspector

Nicky Parkinson, 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 13 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

289

Close to 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: 272

School capacity

290

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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

6.45%

Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.3%

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

0.35%

Well below 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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

8.30%

Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below 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

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	71%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	71%	61%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	64%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	87%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	88%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	88%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	84%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	80%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	71%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	68%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	83%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	85%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	79%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	86%	73%	Above

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 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	82%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	73%	68%	5 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	73%	80%	-7 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	73%	78%	-5 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	82%	80%	2 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	3.8%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.0%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.1%	5.9%	Below

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)	6.9%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.6%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.5%	16.2%	Below

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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