

St Monica's RC High School

Bury Old Road, Prestwich, Manchester, Lancashire M25 1JH

Inspection dates

9–10 January 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders' view of the quality of education that the school provides is inaccurate. Leaders and governors believe that the school provides an acceptable standard of education. It does not.
- The board of governors is ineffective. It has not effectively held leaders to account for their work. Consequently, too many pupils fail to reach their potential.
- Leaders do not give governors accurate information about the quality of teaching or outcomes for pupils. There is too much focus on pupils' attainment rather than the progress that they make.
- Senior leadership is fragile; it lacks experience. The newly formed team requires significant training and development to improve the school at the pace required.
- Leaders do not use funding effectively. For example, governors rely on pupil premium funding to support the staffing budget. As a result, disadvantaged pupils do not receive their entitlement and they underachieve.
- Middle leaders are not consistently effective in their roles.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is inadequate. Leadership is ineffective.
- From higher-than-average starting points, the majority of pupils underachieve in mathematics. Pupils' progress is some of the worst progress in the country.
- Provisional GCSE information for 2017 shows that boys underachieved dramatically right across the school. Boys continue to underachieve considerably in relation to girls.
- Leaders do not know how well pupils are progressing across the school. Assessment and target-setting systems are weak.
- The monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment is not rigorous enough to improve the quality of learning and progress for pupils.
- Teaching is often poorly planned. It does not meet the needs of a significant number of pupils, especially boys and the most able pupils. It is characterised by low expectations.
- Some boys' behaviour at social times and in lessons is not good enough.
- Although reducing, leaders temporarily exclude too many pupils from school and from lessons.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher recognises the issues facing the school.
- The curriculum to supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils make better progress in music, physical education (PE), humanities and modern foreign languages. Girls make good progress in English.
- Pupils feel safe. Bullying is very rare.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Take immediate action to improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders provide governors with accurate information about the quality of education that the school provides
 - ensuring that governors challenge leaders and hold them firmly to account so that the school improves quickly
 - ensuring that leaders' self-evaluation is accurate and grounded in secure evidence
 - developing the newly formed leadership team so that leaders have the required skills and competencies to move the school forward
 - overhauling the leadership and management of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - developing middle leaders so that they are effective in their role, including in mathematics
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels have a secure grasp of how well pupils are progressing across the school through appropriate assessment and target-setting systems
 - ensuring that the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment leads to sustainable improvements for pupils
 - using additional funding, for example pupil premium funding and SEN and/or disabilities funding, to support the pupils for whom it is intended.
- Rapidly improve the progress that boys, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make right across the school.
- Take immediate action to improve the progress that pupils make in mathematics.
- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan effectively for learning and progress, taking account of pupils' different starting points
 - planning lessons that meet the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve
 - developing teachers' use of assessment to improve pupils' progress
 - ensuring that teachers address pupils' misconceptions in their learning as they arise
 - using teachers' subject knowledge to inspire and motivate pupils to make good progress across all subjects and key stages.

- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - eradicating low-level disruption in lessons, especially that caused by some boys
 - reducing further the proportion of pupils who are temporarily excluded from school and from lessons
 - ensuring that some boys' behaviour at social times is consistently good and that they self-regulate their behaviour.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to see how this aspect of leadership and management can be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders, including governors, have an inaccurate view of the quality of education that the school provides. Leaders believe that the school is highly effective and provides pupils with a top-quality education. This is incorrect. Too many pupils underachieve in relation to their starting points because of low expectations and aspirations, which lead to inadequate teaching.
- Leaders do not ground their own evaluation of the effectiveness of the school in secure and robust evidence. They undertake reviews of certain aspects of provision, for example mathematics. However, often these reviews lack focus and depth. As a result, leaders are too slow to act on the findings. Consequently, the overall effectiveness of the school has declined considerably.
- Although leaders now broadly identify the right priorities for improvement, key actions are not specific enough. For example, leaders acknowledge the need to ensure that all pupils, including boys, disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and the most able, make effective progress. However, there are no specific actions to be taken and no clear criteria to measure success. The improvement plan lacks clarity. There is also a lack of robust quantifiable measures of impact by which leaders and governors can assess the effectiveness of their work.
- Leaders are too slow to respond to key issues as they arise. For example, they have identified that pupils are often late to lessons because of the size of the site and the constraints of the school timetable. They have not yet taken any action to solve this problem.
- Leaders' evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not robust enough. It is overgenerous. Leaders do not use the findings from their observations of teaching and learning to effectively improve the progress that pupils make.
- Leaders have little awareness of the effectiveness of their assessment and target-setting systems. Target-setting fails to improve pupils' outcomes. The use of assessment across several subjects is often ineffective in helping pupils to take the next steps in their learning so that they make the good progress of which they are capable.
- Some middle leaders are not effective in their roles. Often, they do not have an accurate understanding of how to judge learning and progress in lessons. They focus too heavily on pupils' attainment. Several middle leaders told inspectors that they do not get the support that they need from senior leaders to improve outcomes for pupils.
- The leadership of mathematics is ineffective. Senior leaders have not been able to reverse the trend of exceedingly low outcomes for pupils in mathematics in relation to pupils' higher-than-average starting points. Consequently, pupils leave St Monica's RC High School having made inadequate progress in mathematics.
- Senior leaders and governors recognise the issues that they face in mathematics. However, they have not taken enough action to address those issues.
- The leadership of SEN and/or disabilities is ineffectual. Pupils continue to underachieve because of unsuccessful strategies to break down their barriers to learning. The special

educational needs coordinator acknowledges that the pattern of underachievement seen at key stage 4 is replicated in key stage 3 because of poor-quality planning for learning for this group of pupils.

- Some parents and carers are worried about the support that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive. Complaints received during the inspection highlight parents' perception that the school provides inadequate provision for these pupils. These pupils themselves recognise the lack of progress that they make across a range of subjects. Inspectors concur with pupils and parents.
- The school has an appropriate ongoing teacher development programme, for example teaching and learning workshops, coaching opportunities and improving behaviour for learning sessions. However, these sessions have yet to have the desired effect on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. For example, inspectors saw very little evidence of teachers meeting the needs of different groups of pupils in lessons or in pupils' work.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, the leadership of the curriculum is not strong enough. There is a lack of analysis of the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning and progress. Leaders have not fully assessed whether the curriculum is challenging enough to meet pupils' needs, particularly the most able pupils.
- Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular provision. They enjoy the extra activities, trips and visits that leaders and teachers provide. These have a positive effect on pupils' social, emotional and cultural development.
- Leaders provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about British values. For example, pupils engage in a diversity week where they learn about how people are unique and have the right to be valued for their individuality. Pupils also engage in the youth parliament, and the student council leads on raising awareness about the effect of hate crime.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils take an active part in school life and engage in a wide variety of charity work. They also engage well in the Catholic life of the school. Leaders have introduced restorative justice to help pupils to see the effect of their actions on other people, for example on the rare occasions where pupils use homophobic language.
- The new headteacher, who was previously the deputy headteacher, is passionate and committed to the school's pupils. She is new to the role and recognises that she has inherited many issues that must change. For example, she wasted no time in commissioning a pupil premium review to begin to address the issues facing disadvantaged pupils. That said, she equally recognises that she has an inexperienced team and that it needs a lot of training and support. The headteacher acknowledges that, currently, the senior leadership team lacks strategic direction.
- Senior leaders have begun to take effective action to improve pupils' behaviour across the school. The deputy headteacher with responsibility for pupils' behaviour has a clear analysis and understanding of the quality of pupils' behaviour for learning. She uses this information well and, as a result, there has been improvement in pupils' attitudes to learning. That said, there is still some way to go to secure consistently good behaviour.

- The leadership of English is excellent. It focuses sharply around what will make the difference to pupils' progress. There is also a very strong focus on ensuring that teaching is highly effective.
- Newly qualified teachers and recently qualified teachers feel well supported by leaders. They are proud to be a part of the school.
- Leaders may not appoint newly qualified teachers to the school.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has overseen a decline in the standard of education since the previous inspection. Governors have not robustly held leaders to account for the quality of education that the school provides. Consequently, groups of pupils, including boys, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, underachieve considerably.
- Leaders do not always provide governors with an accurate picture of the progress that pupils make in their subjects. Reports to governors focus on attainment at the expense of progress. Consequently, governors have not had the information that they need to challenge leaders effectively. For example, governors have not addressed pupils' inadequate learning and progress in mathematics.
- Governors have not ensured that they use additional funding effectively. For example, governors use pupil premium funding to support the staffing budget instead of to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Governors recognise this and have plans to overhaul the school's staffing structure. To date, this has not taken place.
- Governors have not been effective in using the additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The quality of learning and progress for these pupils is inadequate.
- The governing body recognised that behaviour was declining and that leaders were excluding too many pupils. They have begun to improve this aspect of the leaders' work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are now effective.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have illegally excluded pupils, including pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, from school. Leaders placed pupils in the local public library on enforced study leave, excluding them from their lessons. This practice has now ceased.
- Leaders undertake all the required checks on staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with pupils. Leaders maintain these in a single central record appropriately. Staff receive regular training to ensure that they can recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse.
- Pupils learn about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism through their personal, social and health education programme. Following the Manchester terrorist attack, leaders also held a week of activities to help pupils to explore the key issue of

radicalisation and extremism. Pupils engaged with visiting speakers and undertook a range of activities, including writing poetry and creating a 'We are Manchester' display.

- The designated senior lead for safeguarding has a secure understanding of the school's most vulnerable pupils who are subject to safeguarding arrangements. Work with the local authority and other agencies to protect pupils is secure.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school because staff support them well. Leaders also engage well with parents and there is a range of additional information on the school's website to help parents to keep their children safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching has declined significantly. Leaders at all levels have lost sight of what constitutes effective teaching, learning and assessment.
- Teachers do not plan effectively for learning and progress. There is insufficient challenge in lessons for many pupils. Too many pupils underachieve in relation to their higher-than-average starting points because of poor-quality planning.
- Teachers do not use their subject knowledge to plan lessons that capture the interest of pupils, particularly boys. As a result, many pupils do not have a love of learning because they are uninspired. Boys, in particular, make poor progress across many subjects because they are bored.
- Teachers do not use appropriate strategies to ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. They do not adapt resources appropriately to meet pupils' needs. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make inadequate progress across the school.
- Teachers do not use teaching assistants effectively to improve the progress made by pupils, particularly those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Teaching in mathematics is inadequate. Teachers fail to provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills or their conceptual understanding.
- Teachers' use of questions to deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding varies greatly. In many lessons, pupils are insufficiently challenged by closed questions that do not allow them to develop a depth in learning. That said, teachers' use of questioning in English is much more sophisticated.
- Teachers' use of assessment is weak and lacks clarity and purpose. Often, teachers do not use the information about where pupils are in their learning to secure better progress. Inspectors observed more secure use of assessment in humanities.
- In some lessons, teachers do not address pupils' misconceptions as they arise. Consequently, pupils do not learn from their errors and progress slows.
- Occasionally, there is a lack of interaction between some teachers and their pupils. Where pupils underachieved in some lessons, inspectors observed teachers who were prepared to blame pupils for not completing the work rather than looking at the effectiveness of their teaching strategies.

- Teachers in English, humanities, modern foreign languages and music enabled pupils to make better progress. Teaching was particularly effective in promoting good learning and progress in performing arts and PE.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Some pupils, in particular some boys, do not self-regulate their behaviour at social times. On occasions they can be boisterous.
- Pupils have not yet developed consistently positive attitudes to learning. For example, some boys do not see the value of their education. Consequently, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Bullying is rare. Pupils say that, when it does occur, leaders and teachers deal with it efficiently and effectively.
- The personal development of the majority of pupils is good. Leaders give pupils plentiful opportunities to learn about tolerance and respect. Pupils, in the main, show respect for each other's views and opinions.
- Leaders provide pupils with plentiful opportunities to learn about the safe use of technology and how to stay safe online. The website also provides pupils with information and online systems to report any concerns that they may have.
- Careers advice and guidance are a particular strength of the school. The leadership of careers education is strong and the school has achieved a nationally recognised award in this area.
- Leaders work well to ensure that pupils who access alternative provision are appropriately cared for, make good progress and behave well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Leaders recognised the need to improve behaviour across the school and they have successfully introduced a new behaviour policy to simplify the system. That said, some boys still engage in low-level disruption in lessons because they are not motivated, particularly in mathematics.
- Leaders' own information shows that pupils' behaviour requires improvement. Although reducing quickly, there are still too many behavioural incidents recorded on the school's information systems.
- Leaders recognise that, in the past, too many pupils have been temporarily removed from lessons. They are now taking effective action to reduce this number.
- Too many pupils, particularly boys, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, receive temporary exclusions from school. Although leaders have taken decisive action to reduce the number, they have not yet made the link between poor-quality teaching and learning and pupils' disengagement. Leaders still

disproportionately exclude boys and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities from school.

- Attendance has improved considerably and is now above the national average. Leaders have also successfully reduced the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school.
- Pupils feel safe and are proud of their school. Most pupils wear their uniform with pride and take care of the school environment.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Leaders do not use the information that they have about pupils' learning and progress effectively. During the inspection, leaders were unable to give a convincing account of how well different groups of pupils were progressing in their learning.
- In relation to their higher-than-average starting points, over time pupils have made extremely poor progress in mathematics. In both 2016 and 2017, pupils made some of the worst progress in mathematics seen across the whole country. Current pupils are faring no better. Pupils are acutely aware that they are way behind in mathematics.
- Provisional GCSE results in 2017 show that the progress made by boys was extremely weak. In comparison to girls, boys underachieved considerably. Across a wide range of subjects, including English, they failed to make the progress of which they were capable. Although leaders are aware of this significant issue, current boys continue to underachieve in many subjects in relation to their higher-than-average starting points.
- The most able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in mathematics. Teachers do not routinely challenge the most able pupils to excel.
- The progress made by pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is inadequate. In 2017, these pupils underachieved considerably. Current pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities continue to make very weak progress across both key stages 3 and 4.
- In 2017, provisional information shows that disadvantaged pupils underachieved across several subjects and progress measures. They made particularly poor progress in mathematics. Leaders are not able to target funding effectively towards improving outcomes for this group of pupils because they are using it to 'prop up' the whole-school staffing budget. Current pupils, therefore, do not receive their entitlement. They are not making the progress of which they are capable, especially in mathematics.
- Many current pupils across key stage 3 underachieve in relation to their ability because teachers do not plan effectively for learning and progress. Work is too generic and is often repetitive. Some pupils repeat work that they have done in primary school.
- In 2017, provisional GCSE information shows that pupils made good progress in humanities, modern languages, PE and music. It also highlights that, in 2017, girls made excellent progress in English.
- Leaders ensure that pupils who start the school below age-related expectations in English and mathematics catch up quickly.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils progress to employment, education or training. However, pupils are not fully prepared for life in modern Britain because many do not reach their potential.

- Pupils in alternative provision make secure progress.

School details

Unique reference number	105366
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10044551

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Singleton
Headteacher	Anne-Marie Hainsworth
Telephone number	0161 773 6436
Website	www.stmonicas.co.uk/
Email address	stmonicas@bury.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 February 2013

Information about this school

- St Monica’s RC High School is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school is the lead school in St Monica’s Catholic Teaching School Alliance.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for SEN and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than the national average.
- Leaders currently make use of Park House Spring Lane School, a specialist alternative provider in Bury.

- Following the retirement of the previous headteacher, the deputy headteacher took up post as acting headteacher from September 2017. This post was made permanent in October 2017. There are currently three deputy headteachers, two of whom are acting deputy headteachers.
- Leaders and governors took the decision to close the school's sixth form from August 2017.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2016. The floor standards set the minimum expectations for progress and attainment in key stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out following a number of complaints made to Ofsted which raised serious concerns. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the concerns raised about pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare and the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school.
- This inspection was conducted without notice. Following wider concerns about the quality of education that the school provides, the inspection was deemed a full section 5 inspection under section 9 of the Education Act.
- Inspectors formally observed teaching in a wide range of lessons across key stages 3 and 4. Shorter learning walks across a series of lessons were also undertaken.
- Inspectors undertook an in-depth analysis of pupils' work in several subjects across the school. This was jointly conducted with a senior leader and middle leaders. In addition, inspectors looked at a wide range of pupils' work in lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, members of the governing body, middle leaders, teachers, newly qualified and recently qualified teachers and teaching assistants. A telephone call was made to the local authority school improvement officer.
- The lead inspector considered three additional complaints from parents that were received during the inspection.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised by the inspection team, including the school's own self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, the school improvement partner's reports, departmental review documentation, records of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, records of ongoing teacher training, minutes of the meetings of the governing body, information about how well current pupils are progressing in their learning, analyses of past pupils' performance, and behaviour and attendance records.
- Observations of pupils' behaviour were undertaken before the start of the school day, at the end of the school day, between lessons and during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors met formally with a wide range of pupils from key stages 3 and 4, including pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- As this inspection was conducted without notice, the school was not obliged to inform parents. Therefore, there were insufficient responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

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