

# St Bartholomew's Catholic Primary School

School Lane, Rainhill, Prescot, Merseyside L35 6NN

## Inspection dates

14 to 15 May 2019

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b> |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b> |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Good</b> |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Good</b> |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Good</b> |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b> |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher and senior leadership team have high expectations for staff and pupils and provide strong leadership.
- Governance is a strength of the school. The governing body is effective in supporting and challenging school leaders.
- Leaders have created an inclusive environment. They provide a wide range of learning opportunities that help pupils develop into confident and well-rounded learners. Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education.
- Current pupils make good progress because teaching across the school is at least good and sometimes better. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use assessment well to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Pupils' writing is strong. There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to practise writing skills in other subjects.
- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that current pupils make good progress in reading. Pupils develop inference and deduction skills alongside a love of reading.
- Good leadership in the early years ensures that children achieve well and get off to a good start in their education.
- Staff morale is good. All staff members are proud to work at St Bartholomew's.
- Pupils are well cared for. They are respectful of one another. They have responded well to the school's positive ethos, which effectively uses Christian values to shape a caring and inclusive school.
- The curriculum provides interesting opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects.
- Subject leaders check on the quality of teaching, they organise training, and they provide other staff with advice. However, their role in modelling good practice and sharing the highly effective teaching in some areas could be developed further.
- Although fluency in mathematics is well developed, pupils do not have regular opportunities to develop their reasoning skills.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that subject leaders share examples of high-quality practice in their subjects with other teachers.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by developing pupils' reasoning skills in mathematics so that pupils can tackle more complex, unfamiliar problems with greater success.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The clear vision of governors and the headteacher has established a culture of ambition based on Christian values. Staff are positive about the leadership within the school and are proud to work at St Bartholomew's. As a result, morale is good and staff are committed to providing pupils with the best possible opportunities to learn.
- The leadership team is accurate and honest in its assessment of the strengths and areas for development in the school. Leaders' plans set clear priorities that are tackled effectively, resulting in improvements to the quality of teaching.
- Senior leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching across the school. They identify weaker practice and ensure that teachers receive support where needed. Leaders follow up to check that any support given is effective. Consequently, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Projects such as litter picking and visiting a residential home for the elderly teach pupils about their moral responsibilities. Equality and diversity are promoted well in lessons and by visitors to the school.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of British values, such as democracy. This is evident through opportunities to vote, for example when electing members of the school council. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders closely monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils receive tailored interventions that help to support their progress. Teachers review targets to check that pupils are making the progress they should do.
- Although the number of disadvantaged pupils is small, leaders ensure that the pupil premium is spent effectively. They do this by monitoring the impact of actions to overcome difficulties in pupils' learning. Evidence gathered during the inspection and the school's own assessment information show that differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils nationally are diminishing.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used well. As a result, pupils participate in numerous sporting activities and understand how exercise can help them to lead healthier lives. A high and increasing proportion of pupils take part in a wide range of school clubs and sporting events, such as fencing, cricket and dance.
- A large majority of parents are supportive of leaders and value the commitment of staff. One view, which is typical of many on Parent View, was, 'This is a school that cares for and nurtures children as well as educating them.'
- Leaders have developed an exciting curriculum that, in the main, deepens pupils' knowledge and skills. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to work with external experts in music and PE. Evidence from pupils' work shows that pupils develop and apply skills across a range of subjects. However, the development of pupils' understanding in some subjects, such as science and design technology, is stronger than in others. Subject

leaders have not had the opportunity to draw expertise from across key stages to ensure that the quality of teaching is equally as strong across all subjects.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are informed, supportive and appreciative of the school's work. They are well informed because they gather information about the school's performance from a variety of sources. They make regular visits and talk to staff. They question and explore the information provided by leaders to ensure that actions taken improve the quality of education.
- Governors have a secure knowledge of the information about pupils' achievement. They check that additional funding, such as the pupil premium grant, funding for physical education and sport and funding for pupils with SEND, is spent well and makes a positive difference for these groups.
- Governors undertake their range of responsibilities effectively. They fulfil all of their duties, such as ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders, including governors, place high importance on safeguarding. Staff at all levels receive regular safeguarding training. They know how to recognise and report concerns using the school's procedures.
- The designated leaders for child protection ensure that all procedures to keep pupils safe are implemented thoroughly. Records are well organised, and leaders ensure that actions are pursued diligently so that any child protection referrals are dealt with swiftly.
- Secure checks are made to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children in the school. Governors make regular visits to audit the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures, including the record of checks made on adults who work regularly with pupils.
- Leaders encourage pupils to talk about anything that worries them. Pupils know that they can talk to staff about any concerns and are confident that adults will listen and respond.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers have the skills to provide pupils with clear explanations and instructions. They plan learning that is well matched to the interests and capabilities of pupils.
- Teachers use technical language well to develop pupils' vocabulary. For example, younger pupils use geographical and historical terms to compare modern life to that of a child from the past in history topics they have studied.
- Some teachers use questioning effectively to deepen pupils' thinking and check their understanding in many subjects. This allows them to check routinely what pupils know

and provide challenging work, especially for the most able pupils.

- Teaching assistants, on the whole, are deployed well and make good contributions to the progress of pupils they support. They are knowledgeable about how to use activities to promote pupils' learning. This helps pupils to consolidate their understanding and strengthens their progress.
- Reading is given a high priority across the school. Teachers work hard to ensure that they develop pupils' reading skills alongside fostering a love of reading. Planned activities across the curriculum link to good-quality texts. This has helped to produce strong outcomes in reading across the school.
- Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their favourite authors and the books they enjoy reading. Pupils in Year 4 also commented that their use of vocabulary in writing has improved as a result of reading different genres and authors.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. The systematic approach to teaching phonics contributes to the continuing rise in the proportion of pupils who pass the Year 1 phonics screening check. Leaders closely track the progress pupils make, providing effective interventions for any pupils at risk of falling behind.
- Pupils write with confidence and purpose. Teachers ensure that pupils develop and refine their skills by breaking down writing activities into clear steps. Pupils build on their understanding to produce final pieces of written work, often linked to other curriculum areas. For example, pupils in Year 6 wrote a critical evaluation of a science investigation based on their prior predictions.
- Teachers use their skills effectively to support pupils with SEND. Plans clearly identify small steps of learning that are regularly checked so that pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- In mathematics, teachers provide pupils with plenty of opportunities to develop their fluency. As a result, pupils develop confidence in working with numbers. Sometimes, teachers challenge pupils' mathematical thinking by asking them to explain and prove their answers. However, opportunities to develop pupils' reasoning skills in mathematics are at an early stage of development.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' social understanding and moral purpose are particular strengths of the school. Adults ensure that pupils develop positive habits that will enable them to make an effective contribution to society. The nurturing and inclusive culture of the school enables pupils to mature and develop into reflective individuals.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They know how to keep themselves safe in different situations. They understand how to keep themselves safe when online. Pupils know about bullying and the different forms it can take. They told inspectors that bullying was rare. Pupils also stated they could share any worries they may have and are confident that adults would address their concerns when they arise.

- The school is a nurturing and respectful place. Pupils are thoughtful and treat each other with kindness. They have many opportunities to take responsibility and develop their leadership skills, for example as sports leaders or members of the school council.
- Pupils take their responsibilities seriously because they understand the importance of representing others. Older pupils were particularly proud of their responsibilities as 'buddies'. They told inspectors they enjoyed being role models for Reception children and seeing them 'grow' over the year. Pupils are also proud that one Year 6 boy has learned sign language to support his younger 'buddy'.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school is calm and orderly and pupils conduct themselves sensibly when moving around the building. They are polite, well mannered and respectful of one another.
- Adults are good role models and have clear expectations for maintaining pupils' attention in class. Pupils respond quickly to adult direction and listen respectfully when sharing ideas. Learning is very rarely interrupted by poor behaviour.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their good rates of attendance, which are above the national average. Leaders are effective in checking that pupils attend regularly. Where concerns are raised, contact is made with parents and meetings held to ensure that help and support are offered.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- In the 2018 national assessments, a higher proportion of pupils than was seen nationally attained the expected standard in writing at the end of key stage 1. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading and mathematics was in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining greater depth was also in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2018, pupils at the end of key stage 2 made average progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining both the expected and higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above that seen nationally.
- The most able pupils make strong progress. Teachers' skill in questioning pupils to gain an understanding of their progress and to provide challenging tasks contributes well to pupils' academic development. This has contributed to pupils being well prepared for the next stage of their education by the time they leave the school.
- In writing, pupils develop stamina and fluency because teachers expect them to write at greater length. Leaders have focused on increasing the number of pupils who are working at greater depth. Work is well matched to pupils' needs. This contributes to current pupils making good progress in this subject.
- In mathematics, most work challenges and deepens pupils' thinking, helping them to apply their knowledge to a range of problem-solving activities. As a result, current pupils make strong progress. However, pupils sometimes have limited opportunities to develop their reasoning skills. As a result, they do not always improve their depth of understanding and extend their mathematical knowledge to new problems.

- Learning in phonics is effective. As a result, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check is in line with the national average. Pupils quickly gain a secure understanding of letters and the sounds they represent. They use this knowledge to develop broader skills in reading and writing.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards reading. They read confidently and with expression. A focus on inference and comprehension skills has had a positive impact on current pupils' progress.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress from their individual starting points. Teachers make use of detailed support plans to break learning down into achievable targets. This enables staff to track pupils' progress accurately and to ensure that they achieve well.
- Work in books and the school's own information show that current pupils make good progress in a range of subjects. The curriculum provides pupils with a range of opportunities to explore their interests and improve their skills and knowledge. There are particular strengths in design technology, music and science.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Children start Reception Year with levels of development that are broadly typical for their age. They make good progress so that, by the end of the year, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development is higher than the national average. In this way, children are well prepared for Year 1.
- The leadership of early years is effective. The early years leader has an accurate understanding of assessment and uses this in planning activities that meet children's different needs. Combined with good teaching, this ensures that children achieve well across all areas of learning. The effectiveness of the early years has improved since the last inspection.
- Clear systems and routines help children to settle quickly. Adults establish positive relationships with children. This helps children to feel safe and confident. Behaviour is good and children are happy to follow instructions and to share and take turns.
- Adults show a high level of care for the children. They receive appropriate training to keep children safe, including paediatric first-aid training. Safeguarding is effective in the early years and all welfare requirements are met.
- Children benefit from a well-organised environment where they are encouraged to be active, curious and independent. Teachers use assessment effectively to match learning activities to children's abilities. For example, adults used a mini beast activity to develop children's number and multiplication work.
- Training has helped adults to respond to children's interests, while ensuring that children apply their basic skills. Adults ask open-ended questions to challenge children's thinking, particularly around developing early reading and mathematics.
- Teachers work with parents to help share learning experiences at home and in school. This contributes to all groups of children, including those who are disadvantaged, making good progress.



## School details

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Unique reference number | 104815    |
| Local authority         | St Helens |
| Inspection number       | 10087925  |

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                 | 5 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 305  |
| Appropriate authority               | The governing body   |
| Chair                               | Mr Brian Webster   |
| Headteacher                         | Mrs Claire Cropper   |
| Telephone number                    | 01744 678 550  |
| Website                             | <a href="http://stbartholomews.org.uk">http://stbartholomews.org.uk</a>          |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:stbartholomew@sthelens.org.uk">stbartholomew@sthelens.org.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | 10 to 11 June 2015   |

## Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also lower than the national average.
- The inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Acts 2005 and 2011 was conducted in May 2017.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including: information about pupils' attendance; pupils' assessment information; leaders' self-evaluation; school improvement information; and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors conducted meetings with leaders to review the impact of their work on pupils' learning and outcomes. Inspectors considered the school's current assessment information and conducted an in-depth analysis of pupils' work across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors visited classes in every year group. Some of these visits were conducted jointly with leaders.
- Records of behaviour logs and leaders' checks on the suitability of staff to work in the school were considered. Inspectors also met with leaders to review the impact of their work to safeguard pupils' welfare and promote good behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors held a meeting with members of the governing body. A discussion was also held with representatives of the local authority and the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to discuss their views on the school. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and at playtime.
- A group of pupils read to the inspectors. Inspectors also heard pupils read during visits to classrooms and talked with them about their attitudes to reading.
- Inspectors gathered the views of parents through informal discussions in the playground before school. Inspectors also considered 64 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, 28 responses to the online staff survey and 30 responses to the online pupils' survey.

## Inspection team

|                              |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Simon Hunter, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Vanessa MacDonald            | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Tina Cleugh                  | Ofsted Inspector        |

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