

St Cleopas' Church of England Junior Mixed and Infant School

Beresford Road, Liverpool, Merseyside L8 4RP

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have successfully established a culture of high expectations and high morale. Everyone works hard to fulfil the school's motto, 'Live, laugh, learn'.
- Leaders' and governors' accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses has enabled them to take swift and decisive action to improve it since the last inspection.
- The changes that leaders have made to the quality of teaching and learning have had a positive impact on pupils' outcomes, including those of disadvantaged pupils. More pupils than the national average attained at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in the key stage 2 national tests in 2018.
- Governors ask leaders questions to hold them to account for pupils' outcomes and for their use of the pupil premium funding. However, they do not ask enough about the outcomes of more able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils feel and are safe in school and their parents and carers agree.
- Teachers plan lessons that help pupils to learn across a wide range of subjects. On occasion, however, the learning that teachers plan in some subjects does not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently. When this happens, they make less progress.
- Subject leaders make an important contribution to teachers' subject knowledge. Nevertheless, leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics do not have a clear enough overview of standards in their subjects to ensure that the most able pupils make strong progress.
- Children in the early years make strong progress because of the good teaching they receive. Most achieve a good level of development by the time they start Year 1.
- Leaders have established effective systems for supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This helps these pupils to make strong progress towards their individual targets.
- The curriculum that leaders provide prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain and ensures that they develop well socially, morally, culturally and spiritually.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes for the most able pupils by:
 - ensuring that leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics develop a stronger understanding of standards in their subjects so that they can make sure teaching routinely helps the most able pupils to make strong progress
 - making sure that governors ask even more questions about the progress of the most able pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, so that they can hold leaders better to account for pupils' outcomes in a wider range of subjects.
 - ensuring that in a wide range of subjects, especially those other than English and mathematics, teaching more consistently provides the most able pupils with work that is challenging, so that they make the progress of which they are capable.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors have worked tirelessly and with determination to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Their clear vision for the school has successfully established a culture of high expectation and high morale for staff and pupils alike. Pupils achieve well and everyone works together to fulfil the school's motto, 'Live, laugh, learn'.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses because they draw upon a wide range of information. This has enabled them to devise detailed plans for improvement which are sharply focused on improving pupils' outcomes. These plans are having a positive impact on the progress that pupils make across the school, especially in reading, writing, mathematics and phonics.
- Leaders have used high-quality training and professional development well to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in writing and in mathematics. They have made good use of the support provided by the local authority to help teachers improve their work. As a result, the quality of teaching across the school is now good and continues to improve.
- Leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils currently in the school make progress in reading, writing, mathematics and phonics that is similar to that of other pupils across the country.
- Leaders have established good systems for measuring the progress that pupils and groups of pupils make, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. This enables them to hold teachers to account and to take action where pupils are at risk of falling behind. Consequently, most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are making at least the progress that is expected of them and some are making progress that is better.
- Leaders, including subject leaders, carry out a range of activities to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across a range of subjects. They check the work in pupils' books and provide clear feedback and guidance to teachers and support staff so that they can improve their teaching. Despite this, leaders of some curriculum subjects do not have a clear enough overview of standards in their subjects to ensure that teaching enables the most able pupils to make the strong progress of which they are capable.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have made important improvements to the curriculum to ensure that pupils learn across a wider range of subjects, including geography, history, art, computing and design technology and science. They provide pupils with trips, visits and residential stays which deepen their understanding further. For example, pupils visit Chester Zoo, Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral and the local sports centre. They enjoy these experiences and say that they help them to remember what they have learned.
- Leaders are justifiably proud of the curriculum that they provide in French, where teachers' strong subject knowledge ensures that pupils learn and achieve well. Leaders

have a clear overview of standards in French. This helps them to make sure pupils make strong progress.

- Pupils develop well socially, morally, spiritually and culturally and are prepared for life in modern Britain as a result of the school's curriculum. Pupils learn about other religions and cultures and about differences within their community and in the wider world. The experiences that leaders and teachers plan help them to develop an awareness of fundamental British values in appropriate ways. For example, pupils who spoke to inspectors demonstrated a strong understanding of democracy through their involvement in activities such as selection of the school's head girl and head boy and even of the headteacher.
- Leaders' good use of the physical education and sports premium funding is improving the extent to which pupils participate in sport in and out of school, including team sports and gymnastics. More pupils have opportunities to represent their school and to take part in competitions. Leaders have ensured that their use of the funding promotes equality of opportunity for pupils. For example, they listened to the views of girls who wanted to participate in football activities and responded by establishing a girls' football team. Pupils talk enthusiastically about these experiences and are proud of their achievements.
- Leaders provide parents with many opportunities to share in their children's learning. Parents attend workshops on reading and phonics, for example, and take part with their children in shared physical activity sessions. Parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View survey and who spoke to inspectors were highly appreciative of the improvements that leaders have made to the school. The overwhelming majority are of the view that the school is well led, and would recommend it to other parents.

Governance of the school

- Governors share the headteacher's clear vision and aspiration for pupils and have welcomed her strong focus on improving outcomes for pupils. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are not content simply to accept the information they receive without satisfying themselves that it is accurate.
- Governors are committed to improving their own effectiveness, for example by undertaking training to help them analyse information from the school's assessments. This has enabled them to hold leaders more stringently to account for their use of the pupil premium funding and for pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics. However, they do not ask enough questions to hold leaders sufficiently to account for the progress of the most able pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, in a wider range of subjects.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Governors and leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. There are robust systems in place for checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children. Leaders ensure that staff are trained to recognise the signs of abuse and neglect and to protect them from extremism and radicalisation.

- Staff are vigilant and know how to report any concerns about the welfare of pupils. Systems for working with a range of children's services are effective in ensuring that pupils receive the help they need. The actions that leaders take are timely and appropriate.
- Leaders have made sure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils say they feel safe in school and their parents agree.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers generally plan learning that keeps almost all pupils focused and engaged. Pupils settle quickly to learning and usually listen very attentively because they know that their teachers expect nothing less. Consequently, classrooms are industrious places where pupils learn well.
- Teachers provide opportunities in lessons for pupils to develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding. For example, during the inspection, in a mathematics lesson, pupils in Year 6 deepened their understanding of algebra and graphs through the more complex problems that their teacher provided. They have time to review what they have learned and to explain their understanding. This helps teachers to assess what pupils have understood and to take action if they start to fall behind.
- Work in pupils' books shows that teachers provide work for almost all pupils that is challenging and helps them to make strong progress, especially in English and mathematics. They make sure that pupils also have opportunities to practise reading and writing skills in other subjects, for example writing about events in history. Sometimes the work that the most able pupils receive in subjects other than English and mathematics does not challenge them enough to enable them to make the strong progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers provide pupils with experiences that build on their prior learning and which capture their interests. For example, after reading a newspaper article about recent research into the wearing of slippers in school, pupils engaged in lively discussion about whether or not this was a good idea. They listened carefully to each other's views before writing their own persuasive arguments. This enabled them to make progress in their writing as well as in their use of language and vocabulary.
- Teachers use questioning skilfully to encourage pupils to think carefully and to provide opportunities for them to explain their thoughts and ideas. This enables them to assess pupils' understanding and to adjust their teaching to address any misconceptions. Teachers provide feedback to pupils in line with the school's assessment policy. Work in their books shows that pupils use this feedback to improve their work.
- Teachers' high expectations ensure that pupils develop positive attitudes to learning. They quickly become immersed in their work, chatting quietly about the tasks they are undertaking and consulting each other, for example through 'talking partners'. Their teachers help them to see mistakes as an opportunity to learn and they develop confidence and self-assurance as a result.
- Teachers provide pupils with homework in line with the school's policy. Parents who spoke to inspectors were appreciative of the regular information that they receive from teachers about their child's progress in school.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders have established a culture that encourages parents, staff and pupils to communicate easily and to share concerns. Staff welcome the systems that leaders have put into place to collate important information about pupils and about any barriers to their learning. They say that these systems help them to see the 'bigger picture' for pupils and to make any adjustments to enable pupils to learn better.
- Leaders and staff have established good working relationships with a range of agencies, including the local children's centre. This enables them to share appropriate information and to secure help and support for pupils and their families where it is needed. This has a positive impact on the progress that these pupils make.
- The school's curriculum enables pupils to develop attitudes of care, concern and empathy. For example, pupils take part in charitable works and sometimes petition school leaders to allow them to raise funds for particular causes. These experiences enable pupils to develop as citizens and to understand the needs of others.
- Teachers make sure that pupils have plenty of opportunities to work together, for example to discuss aspects of their learning and to work out solutions to the problems that teachers set. In this way, pupils learn how to listen to each other and to take account of each other's views.
- Teachers and leaders challenge stereotypical behaviour and provide pupils with experiences that develop their awareness of diversity and difference. For example, during the inspection, pupils were able to share and celebrate the sporting success of individuals with disabilities during the 'British values' day. Pupils have an understanding of similarities and differences in families, for example where parents are of the same gender, and learn about different religions and beliefs within and beyond their own community.
- Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular and sporting activities. For example, pupils can take part in the choir, drama and fitness and computer clubs. Leaders provide pupils with experiences to develop their awareness of their mental health, for example yoga and mindfulness. These activities help pupils to develop personally and socially.
- Leaders ensure that pupils leaving key stage 2 are well supported in making a smooth transition to secondary school. Pupils are ambitious for their future working lives and have an understanding of how their teachers are helping them to prepare for the next stage in their learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are extremely polite and courteous to visitors, such as inspectors. They are keen to talk about their learning and can explain what they have understood. They are proud of their school and of their achievements.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in school and when moving between areas such as the playground and classrooms. They understand the clear systems that leaders have established for promoting good behaviour and know that their own behaviour can have an impact on other people. Those who spoke to inspectors explained how keen they are to compete with other classes for behaviour rewards because they know they will all benefit from the prizes of school trips and experiences that they might win.
- Pupils listen respectfully to their teachers and respond quickly to instructions because teachers have consistently high expectations of their behaviour. This has a positive impact on the progress that they make. On the rare occasions when they listen less well or lose focus, it is because teaching does not challenge or engage them sufficiently.
- Leaders and governors have high expectations for pupils' regular attendance and punctuality. The actions they have taken have successfully reduced absence for pupils currently in the school, including that of disadvantaged pupils. The school promotes good attendance through newsletters and communications with parents, and takes appropriate action to address persistent absence. Overall attendance is currently in line with national averages and continues to improve.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Information published since the last inspection shows that the changes leaders have made to the quality of teaching and learning have improved pupils' outcomes. In the key stage 2 national tests in 2018, more pupils than the national average reached both the expected and higher standard in reading and mathematics, and greater depth in writing. Pupils made progress in all three that was similar to that of pupils nationally.
- In the key stage 1 national tests the proportion of pupils reaching at least the expected standard in reading and writing was similar to the national average. In mathematics, it was just below the national average.
- Pupils across the school are making strong progress in reading. Leaders have made changes to the ways in which pupils learn to read, for example by using high-quality texts and a wider range of books. Pupils now read more widely as a result. Leaders had noticed that boys' achievement in reading was slightly lower than that of girls in the school and have taken appropriate action to use texts for reading that are more appealing to boys. This is having a positive impact. Boys and girls who read to inspectors did so with equal enthusiasm, enjoyment and fluency, and boys currently in the school are making similar progress to that of girls.
- Leaders have made important improvements to the teaching of writing across the school since the last inspection. Work in pupils' books shows that these changes are

helping pupils to produce more writing of a higher quality. They are developing a better understanding of vocabulary and are using this to make their writing more interesting and exciting for the reader. Most-able pupils usually receive work in writing that challenges them to achieve well. Pupils have opportunities to practise their writing skills across a range of subjects. Sometimes, where the work they receive in those subjects is not sufficiently challenging, pupils' writing lacks depth.

- Pupils are making strong progress in mathematics as a result of the good teaching they receive. Leaders ensure that teaching consistently provides pupils with opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to solve a wide range of problems. Pupils deepen their understanding through extra challenges which are evident in the work in their books. They demonstrate skills in reasoning through their explanations of the methods they use to calculate answers and to solve problems. Consequently, all groups of pupils are making at least the progress that the school expects and some are making progress that is better.
- Leaders' effective use of additional funding means that disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND currently in the school make similar progress in reading, writing and mathematics to that of other pupils in school and sometimes they make progress that is better.
- Changes that leaders have made to the curriculum ensure that pupils progress steadily through the national curriculum expectations across a range of subjects including science, history, geography, French, art, computing and design technology. However, the work that they receive on occasions is not sufficiently challenging to enable the most able pupils to make the strong progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils across the school make particularly strong progress in French as a result of teachers' strong subject knowledge. For example, during the inspection, children in the Nursery showed their skill in answering simple questions in French about how they were feeling that day as their teacher took the register. Older children learn to speak and to write in French. Pupils in Year 6 undertake important assessments that are checked by the local authority primary languages team. The outcomes of these tests show that pupils are well prepared for their studies in modern foreign languages at secondary school.
- Younger children in the school are developing their phonics skills well as a result of good teaching. Children in the Nursery quickly learn to identify sounds in words through a range of games and activities. Older children learn to break up and blend sounds and letters in order to read and to write readable sentences and make good attempts at the spellings of more complex words. Pupils make strong progress in phonics and most are on track to achieve the expected standard in the national phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, which helps them to devise sharply focused plans for improvement. They share with their team a determination to improve the good provision even further and are not afraid to challenge themselves to change practice and try out new approaches

in order to improve outcomes for children.

- As a result of the good teaching they receive, children in the early years, including those who are disadvantaged, make strong progress from their typically low starting points. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has increased steadily over time towards the national average and continues to improve.
- Leaders and staff have successfully established strong partnerships with parents and a range of other agencies such as the local children's centre. This enables them to share important information and to secure support for children and families where it is needed, including for children with SEND.
- Leaders and staff make effective use of the information that parents provide about their children's development in order to plan better for their learning. Staff provide regular opportunities for parents to share in this learning. For example, parents can sometimes stay during sessions to play alongside their children and have opportunities to learn more about their children's early writing development. This enables them to find out more about how they can help their children learn at home.
- Adults have established simple rules and routines for children to follow. For example, children learn how to find and use the resources they need and how to tidy them away afterwards. They learn how to make sensible decisions about what to do, how to share resources and when they need to gather together on the carpet to listen to their teacher. These simple rules help children to learn to manage their own needs and feelings well and, as a result, behaviour in the early years is consistently good.
- Children have access to a wide range of resources indoors and outdoors that they can select for themselves, as well as to activities that adults lead. They develop curiosity and a willingness to try things out for themselves and quickly become engrossed in learning as a result.
- Adults ensure that children have opportunities to develop early literacy and mathematical skills in ways that help them to remember what they have learned. For example, during the inspection, a group of children in the Reception class learned more about how to add quantities together by exploring the different ways of splitting up groups of objects and putting them back together again. Children enjoyed making their own choices about the resources to use and could explain what they had done in ways appropriate for their stage of development. As a result, they made progress.
- Teachers and support staff work well together in classrooms. The training that leaders provide ensures that teachers and support staff have good subject knowledge, for example in phonics. Teachers communicate clearly their expectations for children's learning and this helps all staff to understand what they need to do to help children make strong progress.
- Leaders and managers have established effective systems for assessing children's learning and development. All staff contribute important and accurate information about what children actually say and do. This information helps teachers to plan well for the next steps in their learning.
- Arrangements for safeguarding children in the early years are effective and are aligned with those across the school. Staff are appropriately qualified and there are no

breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage.

School details

Unique reference number	104613
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10087804

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	285
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Mills
Headteacher	Lynne Gannon
Telephone number	0151 727 1725
Website	www.stcleopas.co.uk
Email address	info@stcleopas.com
Date of previous inspection	7–8 February 2017

Information about this school

- St Cleopas' is an average-sized primary school.
- The school roll is increasing.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.
- Fewer pupils than average have an education, health and care plan.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are fewer pupils than average for whom English is an additional language.
- The school has a Nursery class and offers part-time places for 15 hours per week.
- The school runs a breakfast club and a range of after-school clubs.
- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in all classes.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work across year groups and across a range of subjects.
- The inspectors listened to some pupils reading, spoke informally with pupils and observed pupils' behaviour in classes and around the school.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, governors, teachers and staff. The lead inspector also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement, safeguarding and recruitment information, behaviour logs, assessment information and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspectors spoke to some parents and took into account 37 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspectors also took into account 25 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Howard	Ofsted Inspector
Joan Williamson	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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