

Inspection of a good school: St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Heywood Road, Prestwich, Manchester M25 2BW

Inspection dates:

5–6 November 2019

Outcome

St Margaret's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers are proud of this popular and caring school. Leaders value all pupils and meet their needs well. The school's motto, 'Aim high, never give up', is used well to challenge and inspire pupils. Most parents value and support leaders' high expectations of pupils. They say that their children achieve well.

Pupils love their time at school. They are happy and feel safe because they feel well cared for. Pupils told me that they have amazing friendships with each other and good relationships with staff. They say that their teachers are kind. They make learning fun and they always have time to listen.

Pupils are caring and considerate towards each other. Older pupils help younger pupils. They hold doors open for each other. Pupils were keen to say that bullying did not happen at their school. This is because they are all friends. Pupils said that, if they ever fall out, they can sort this out together.

Pupils enjoy the roles and responsibilities that they are given in school. They take these seriously. Pupils are able to improve many things in their school. For example, they make changes to the school menu and decide on different play equipment for the playgrounds. Pupils enjoy making their school a better place to be.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

St Margaret's is a popular school. Senior leaders, governors and staff have high expectations of all pupils. They provide an interesting, engaging and improving curriculum which prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. Pupils achieve well across the school. Pupils know how to behave. In lessons, there is little disruption to learning because pupils value their education.

Leaders have overhauled what is taught across the curriculum, particularly in subjects other than reading, writing, mathematics and science. In most subjects, teachers now plan lessons which build on what pupils already know and can do. In a few subjects, teachers do not use the information that they have about what their pupils already know and can do. Some teachers do not make sure that lessons build on previous learning as effectively as they should. Leaders have appropriate plans in place to address these shortfalls.

Across the school, pupils achieve well in mathematics. In 2019, at the end of Year 6, pupils' achievement was above the national average. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use this to plan activities which develop pupils' knowledge and skills well. Pupils get many opportunities to build on what they already know. They apply this knowledge in problem-solving and reasoning activities. Pupils enjoy learning mathematics because they say that teachers make it fun and challenging.

Leaders have placed reading at the heart of the curriculum. Leaders and staff make sure that they teach pupils to read as soon as they start at the school. Across the school, books and print are everywhere. Pupils enjoy reading. They told me how they particularly enjoy it when their teachers read to them. The teaching of phonics is strong. The books that pupils read are matched well to the sounds that they are learning. Pupils' progress in phonics is regularly checked. If pupils need help, it is given quickly so that they can catch up. In 2019, pupils' achievement in reading at the end of Year 6 was above the national average.

The leader of physical education (PE) has made sure that the curriculum plans in place develop pupils' skills well across the school. Teachers have had training and teach alongside the sports coach. This has improved their knowledge, skills and understanding. While many subject leaders are experienced and knowledgeable, some are new to their role. Leaders' plans show that they are supporting these middle leaders to develop their understanding of subject leadership.

Pupils' learning goes beyond the academic curriculum. Many pupils take part in clubs and activities outside school. Teachers plan trips, and visitors come to the school to make learning more relevant and fun. Pupils particularly enjoy the residential trip in Year 6. Pupils said that this made them more confident and determined to achieve.

In the Reception classes, children get off to a fantastic start. The learning environment has been carefully planned and is well resourced. Children listen to their teachers and play happily with each other. Children's early mathematics, language and communications skills develop well. This is because teachers plan a wide range of activities which children really enjoy. Most children reach a good level of development by the end of the early years. They are prepared well for Year 1.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils receive extra support and resources when required. This ensures that they can learn alongside their classmates. As a result, they make strong progress.

Leaders and governors keep an eye on teachers' workload to make sure that it is

manageable. Teachers value this and say that they feel well supported. Staff morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that keeping children safe is a priority. They give staff regular training and information. This means that everyone knows the signs to look for if they have concerns about a child. Systems within the school are effective and well known to all staff.

Leaders log all concerns and act when necessary. They work well with other agencies to ensure that children and families get the support that they need. The pupils spoken with during the inspection could explain how to keep themselves safe when they are online or when they are in their local community. Arrangements for safeguarding are checked regularly by the school's safeguarding governor.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have taken effective steps to implement an ambitious and balanced curriculum. However, because the changes made are quite recent in the foundation subjects, teachers do not use information about what pupils already know and can do in the same logical way as they do in reading, writing and mathematics. For these reasons, the transition statements have been applied. Leaders need to ensure that the revised plans become embedded and have the desired impact. This will ensure that pupils know and remember more in all subjects.
- Some subject leaders are experienced and highly knowledgeable about the subject that they lead. However, some foundation subject leaders are new to post and need further support and training so that they can check the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility and identify where further improvements are needed. This will help them to improve teaching further to meet the needs of all pupils.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 10–11

December 2014.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	105323
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10058042
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Louisa Murphy
Headteacher	Kathryn Perry
Website	www.st-margarets.bury.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	10–11 December 2014

Information about this school

- The school has a Church of England religious character.
- The school has a before- and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life. I spoke with members of the local governing body, two representatives from the local authority, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and members of staff.
- I reviewed a range of documentation, including documentation about attendance and safeguarding and the checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- I considered the 40 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, and the 17 responses to the online staff survey.
- I looked in depth at reading, mathematics and PE. This entailed discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of pupils’ work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils and listening to pupils read.

Inspection team

Julie Barlow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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