

Inspection of a good school: Hope Primary School – A Joint Catholic and Church of England Primary School

Lordens Road, Huyton, Knowsley, Merseyside L14 8UD

Inspection dates:

17–18 December 2019

Outcome

Hope Primary School – A Joint Catholic and Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Being a pupil at Hope Primary is like being part of one big family. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. I watched as pupils at lunchtime chose from a wide range of games and activities. Some walked with Dexter the dog while others chose books and games from the reading and mathematics sheds. Staff really do care about pupils. As some pupils told me, 'We can rely on the staff.' A quote on a key stage 2 wall says, 'Don't let anyone ever dull your sparkle.' When staff speak to pupils, they are very encouraging. They instil a sense of belief. The result is that pupils are very happy and feel safe at the school. They know that staff will act to tackle any bullying should it happen. Pupils learn the knowledge that they need to keep themselves safe, such as when playing or working online.

Staff are ambitious for all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) also achieve well. Staff are determined that there is no limit to what these groups of pupils can achieve.

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

Reading is at the core of the curriculum. It has a very high priority. Books are everywhere. The school received a gold award for developing pupils' love of reading. Children in the early years get off to a good start. First, they learn the different sounds and letters. Then, they start to blend sounds to make words. By the end of Year 1, the proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the phonics screening check is improving each year. There is a good system of helping pupils who fall behind in their reading to catch up. Teachers match reading books well to pupils' reading ability. Pupils become more fluent when they read as they get older. Pupils of all ages sit and listen, captivated, to staff reading stories to them. Pupils with SEND achieve well in reading. Teachers make sure that they read a wide range of books. Disadvantaged pupils are supported well. They gain

a good understanding of a range of authors, including Shakespeare.

Leaders make sure that pupils can access the full range of national curriculum subjects. For most subjects, leaders have developed clear plans that help teachers to know what needs to be taught and when this should happen. Similar planning is underway in other subjects. However, there is more to do to make sure that pupils can build on their knowledge in these subjects as they move through school.

There is a clear and organised mathematics curriculum. Leaders have taken decisive action since attainment dipped at the end of Year 6 in 2019. The curriculum and how it is taught has improved. Teachers are well trained in how to teach mathematics. For instance, in the Nursery and Reception class, adults make sure that they spend a long time on a mathematics topic before moving children's learning on. Pupils gain an ability to explain their thinking and to become fluent in numbers. There is no low-level behaviour that disrupts learning. Even so, the teaching of the curriculum does not always help pupils to remember some important mathematical facts, such as the names of shapes. Some pupils do not remember key facts about measures. Some pupils' work is not presented well. This leads to inaccurate recording of fractions and shapes. Published data shows that over time, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, usually make good progress in mathematics.

In music, children in early years learn to experiment with sounds and different instruments. They start learning how to sing as a group. Pupils are keen and confident in contributing answers and ideas during music sessions. For example, in one lesson they responded well to the teacher's requests to hold their beaters and wait to start playing. Some pupils have a good memory for musical notes such as crotchets. But many pupils have forgotten some simple musical terms such as pitch and tempo. This is because the current curriculum plans do not build well enough on previous learning.

The headteacher provides high-quality leadership. He and the governors have staff well-being and reducing workload as a high priority. Staff turnover is low, and the results of the staff survey show a high level of staff satisfaction. Leaders have a strong focus on giving disadvantaged pupils the opportunities that they might not ordinarily get. This includes access to a 'beach school', theatre trips and visits to a range of places of worship. There is a very good focus, through books, on developing pupils' sense of right and wrong. There is also a strong focus on developing pupils' spirituality and cultural understanding. Equality and diversity and a sense of fairness are strong across the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a high priority. Leaflets and information are everywhere around the school. Staff know the pupils and the families very well. They are quick to identify when a pupil or a family needs help. They work very well with families and agencies, such as those dealing with health and housing. They are relentless and persistent when information is slow to be shared, for example by health professionals. Children looked after attend regularly and achieve well.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned or sequenced in some subjects, such as music and personal, social, health and economic education. It is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken that plans are in place to reshape the curriculum. They are in the process of bringing this about. It is for this reason that the transition arrangements have been applied. Leaders should ensure that they implement their curriculum plans so that teachers are able to build up pupils' knowledge in different subjects as they move through the school. They should also ensure that pupils remember important vocabulary to help with future learning.
- In mathematics, there is a well-developed scheme of work that builds pupils' knowledge. In some areas, however, pupils have not remembered important information. This is because it is a long time before these topics are revisited. Pupils' recording of mathematical calculations is untidy. This has a negative impact on accuracy. Leaders should review the order in which topics are taught to ensure that pupils can consolidate their mathematical learning. They should also seek ways to improve pupils' presentation so that it is mathematically accurate.

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 11 June 2015.

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	135796
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10087742
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	405
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tim Molton
Headteacher	John Casson
Website	www.hopeprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	11 June 2015

Information about this school

- There have been few significant changes since the last inspection except for the appointment of the headteacher.
- Hope Primary is one of only a few schools that is a joint faith school. As well as being a Church of England primary school it is also a Catholic faith school. It serves the parishes of St Dominic's and St Luke's. The school's section 48 inspection took place in November 2017.

Information about this inspection

- I looked in depth at three subjects: music, mathematics and reading. I met with the subject leaders, visited some lessons and looked at pupils' work. I spoke with pupils whom I had seen working in the lessons. I also heard some pupils read.
- To see how well the school keeps pupils safe, I met with the headteacher and learning mentors. I checked through the school's policies. I looked at information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and any exclusions. I also checked where the pupils had gone who left the school mid-year.
- I held a meeting with representatives from the local authority and diocese.

- I met with representatives of the governing body.
- I looked at the school's own survey of parents. There were 112 responses less than a month ago and the questions were the same as those asked on Ofsted's parent survey, Parent View. There were not enough responses on Parent View, but I took into account the written responses to Ofsted's survey.
- Less than 10 pupils completed the online survey. To gather pupils' views, I met several groups of pupils on both days as well as at breaktimes.
- There were 24 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Allan Torr, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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