

Inspection of a good school: St Oswald's CofE Aided Primary School

Grove Road, Mollington, Chester, Cheshire CH1 6LG

Inspection dates:

9 January 2020

Outcome

St Oswald's CofE Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Oswald's CofE Aided Primary School cares for and nurtures its pupils well. Pupils say that they enjoy school. Pupils feel very safe because they know that staff look after them and care for them.

The school's Christian ethos shines through all that the school does. The school's motto, 'Hand in hand, we love, laugh and learn' describes this welcoming place perfectly.

Leaders have worked hard to improve the school following a recent dip in outcomes. They now have much higher expectations of pupils. Teachers know the pupils well and make sure that lessons are interesting for them. Pupils are keen to learn. They are encouraged to achieve their very best and they do.

Pupils behave well around school. Adults sort upsets quickly. Pupils learn how to spot bullying. They say it is rare and they know that adults will always help them with any problems if they occur. Parents and carers agree.

There is much to interest and engage pupils at this school. Pupils from Year 2 upwards go on residential trips to learn outdoor and team building skills. All pupils go out on visits and they enjoy clubs such as choir and football. Pupils really enjoy the science club. They told me with enthusiasm about the amazing experiments that they can do.

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

Leaders responded well to the dip in standards that occurred recently. It gave them the chance to rethink the curriculum. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious and that it brings out the best in pupils. Outcomes across the school are secure once again.

Leaders are confident about the curriculum that they have chosen to offer pupils. They are knowledgeable about what should be taught and their systems to quality assure the

curriculum are effective. Leaders have also thought carefully about the order in which to teach topics and concepts. Leaders' plans set out the progression of knowledge and skills that are to be taught in a coherent way. The curriculum is particularly well planned and taught in English, mathematics, science and art. The revised curriculum is also increasingly effective in other subjects, such as history, geography and modern foreign languages. However, these have been put in place more recently. Leaders are determined to continue to develop these subjects so that they promote excellence in learning.

Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach. They help pupils to see connections in their learning and to build pupils' understanding. In mathematics, for example, new work builds logically over time. Teachers allow time for pupils to practise what they already know so that they commit new learning to memory. In Reception, early mathematics is also taught well. We saw children counting passengers on to their class aeroplane. Children found this a fun way to help them remember how to count up in twos. Overall, the changes to the curriculum and developments in teaching are improving pupils' achievement. Pupils now achieve well in mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2.

Books and reading are important in this school. Leaders offer ideas and workshops for parents to continue reading development at home. Pupils throughout school enjoy regularly hearing an adult share a story with them. I heard pupils laugh and cheer with delight as they listened to their teacher read. Key stage 2 pupils said that they enjoy reading. They particularly like the reading challenges that they are set. There is a good supply of books in the school. Teachers use stories to bring class topics to life and to enable pupils to try out different ways of writing.

The curriculum is equally well planned in the early years. Children learn letters and sounds as soon as they start in Reception. Reception staff focus on developing a love of reading in their children. Staff in the early years and in key stage 1 have specialist knowledge of the teaching of early reading. Most pupils reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check and achieve well in reading at the end of Year 2. However, the way teaching is organised in Year 1 does not always ensure that all pupils are having phonics taught to them at the exact level that they need.

Leaders and staff are committed to all pupils achieving their very best. They are quick to notice and help if a pupil is struggling. The very small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those that are disadvantaged, have their needs met successfully. Leaders ensure that these pupils have the same opportunities as all other pupils in school.

Pupils behave well in school. They are friendly and chatty with each other and with adults. Pupils were keen to greet us and were quick to open doors for any adults passing by. Pupils could recall very occasional incidents of bullying. They said that if it did occur, adults would deal with it quickly.

The school's Christian values are integral to pupils' learning. Pupils are keen to talk about how they practise their core values whenever they can. For example, the value of 'collaboration' is prevalent in the early years, where children learn to share and take turns.

Older pupils play and work 'cooperatively' too. In art, pupils were keen to share their creativity and craftsmanship. They used pencils with skill to shade pictures of The Beatles and sew Beatles jackets.

Leaders, staff and governors have worked hard to improve this school. Leaders have led from the front and inspired staff. Governors have played a helpful and active part in these improvements. Staff are very proud to work at the school and feel well supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a caring and nurturing ethos in the school. Staff are good at keeping pupils safe. The safeguarding and protection of pupils are important to them. They make sure that all their policies and procedures are in place and that everyone knows them.

Leaders work well with other agencies to support pupils and families. Adults in school also make sure that pupils and their families are well looked after. They act quickly if they have concerns.

Pupils learn how to stay safe and behave responsibly in different situations, particularly when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The organisation of phonics teaching in Year 1 does not ensure that all pupils are taught at the precise level that they need. This means that some pupils are not as successful at learning their letters and sounds as they could be. Leaders need to review the organisation of their focused phonics teaching sessions to make sure that learning is maximised for all pupils.
- The leadership, curriculum planning and organisation of the foundation subjects are good. However, leaders need to develop even further subjects such as history, geography and modern foreign languages so that all curriculum areas are planned and delivered to the same high standard. This will ensure that pupils' achievement continues to improve across all curriculum areas.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 22 March 2016.

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 the school and 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	130929
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10122077
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Marianne Sunter
Headteacher	David Wallace
Website	www.stoswalds.com
Date of previous inspection	22 March 2016

Information about this school

- This Church of England school is voluntary aided. It last received a religious education inspection carried out under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in January 2016.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, we spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life. We spoke with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. We also discussed the provision for pupils with SEND. In addition, we held discussions with staff which focused on safeguarding.
- I spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- We reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to school improvement, safeguarding and the checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- I spoke with parents at the start of the school day and we considered the 58 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- We also considered the seven responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 18 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- I talked with pupils about the books that they like to read.

- We looked in detail at reading, mathematics and art. For each of these subjects, we held discussions with subject leaders and teachers, visited lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work and talked with pupils. I also considered other subjects across the curriculum.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Suzanne Blay

Ofsted Inspector

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