

Inspection of a good school: St William's Catholic Primary School, Pilling

Garstang Road, Pilling, Preston, Lancashire PR3 6AL

Inspection date:

8 January 2020

Outcome

St William's Catholic Primary School, Pilling continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders provide a caring and nurturing school. Pupils and staff know each other well. They work cooperatively, following the school's motto, 'With God we are strong together.'

In reading and mathematics, most pupils make the progress that the school expects. Some pupils do not achieve as well in writing and other subjects. Leaders are developing the curriculum to ensure that pupils achieve well across all subjects.

Leaders have placed reading at the centre of the school's curriculum. Teachers share books and stories with pupils. Pupils value the regular time they have for quiet reading. They enjoy reading for pleasure.

Pupils are keen to contribute to school and village life. For example, the active school council organised a Christmas 'elf run' to raise funds for a local hospice. Pupils sing for the elderly and at village events. They develop as caring individuals.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of clubs, including those for gardening, sport and art. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about the school's garden. They enjoy growing vegetables, herbs and flowers.

Pupils behave well and show kindness to each other. Staff deal effectively with any bullying. Pupils feel safe. They enjoy coming to school.

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

The school has undergone significant changes in staffing in recent years. This means that most subject leaders are new to their roles. Leaders and the local authority are providing training for staff. This is to enable staff to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to lead subjects across the curriculum.

Leaders have recently revised the curriculum plans in subjects other than mathematics and English. Teachers are starting to identify the learning that they want pupils to retain and use in their future learning.

Pupils develop as fluent readers, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff make sure that pupils read often with an adult. Pupils' reading books match the sounds that they are learning so that they can practise and remember them. The phonics leader ensures that all staff use a consistent approach when teaching phonics. Teachers check the reading ability of pupils new to the school. They use these checks to plan teaching that builds on the letters and sounds that pupils already know. Pupils falling behind in their reading are given a range of effective support to help them catch up.

In writing, teachers make sure that pupils practise their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills daily. Staff make frequent checks on pupils' writing progress. They use this information to identify any gaps pupils have in their learning. When needed, staff provide regular additional support for pupils, including for those with SEND. Leaders recognise that the order in which pupils learn needs further development. This is to ensure that all pupils build on what they already know.

Teachers help pupils to develop a secure understanding of number. In early years, children were enjoying counting beans, sorting beanstalks into sizes and fishing for numbers. Staff make sure that children have lots of practice in writing numbers and counting accurately.

Leaders know that they have more work to do in planning pupils' learning in geography. Over time, pupils build their knowledge. For example, pupils learn the names of the counties and regions of England. They can name different continents. However, teachers' planning does not set out the steps that pupils need to take to enable them to learn more and remember more. This means that some pupils do not make the progress that they should.

Pupils are polite and welcoming. From Reception, children follow adults' instructions. Leaders provide the right support for pupils with additional behavioural needs. Pupils learn breathing techniques to help them relax and be ready to learn. Pupils appreciate the 'peace areas' in school. They can find a quiet and calm space, if needed. Pupils learn about the different forms of bullying. They are confident that staff will sort out any of their worries or concerns.

There is effective provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about other faiths, including Judaism and Islam. They visit the local church regularly. Staff plan regular visits to museums and places of interest.

Governors know the school well. They provide a useful balance of challenge and support for the headteacher. The school's plans for improvement lack essential detail, such as measurable targets. This makes it difficult for governors to evaluate the effectiveness of some of the decisions taken by leaders.

Leaders place a high priority on staff well-being. Staff feel valued by leaders. Teachers appreciate the opportunities they have to contribute to changes in the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training. This means that they are alert to dangers that pupils may face. Leaders work with a wide range of agencies and professionals to ensure that pupils and their families get support when needed. Leaders check the staff recruited to work in school to ensure they pose no threat to pupils.

Through the curriculum, staff teach pupils about the risks they might face in their everyday lives. Pupils learn how to stay safe, including when using technology, swimming and cycling. Pupils learn that they should speak to an adult in school if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' revised plans for the curriculum do not include the essential knowledge that they want pupils to remember for their future learning. This means that pupils are not making enough progress. Leaders need to ensure that the content of all subject plans is well chosen and carefully sequenced. Teachers should build pupils' knowledge from topic to topic and from year to year.
- Leaders are providing training for subject leaders to improve their subject leadership. Leaders need to ensure that subject leaders have the skills and knowledge necessary so that the improved curriculum is being taught as intended. Subject leaders need to check that pupils are knowing more and remembering more across different areas of the curriculum.
- Leaders have written development plans that set out the school's aims for improvement. These plans lack detail and do not help governors to hold leaders to account for their decisions. Governors need to ensure that the plans include timescales and measurable actions. This is to help governors and leaders measure the effectiveness of actions to improve the school's curriculum.

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 in April 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

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| Unique reference number | 119630 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 10122098 |
| 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 | 33 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Mark Butterworth |
| Headteacher | Miss Samantha Solloway |
| Website | www.st-williams.lancs.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 27–28 April 2016 |

Information about this school

- The school had a section 48 inspection on 25 October 2015.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the headteacher.
- We held meetings with two members of the local governing body.
- We checked the safeguarding policies and procedures and the single central record. We met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in the school.
- We met with parents and carers at the school gate to seek their views. We also considered 18 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, including free-text responses.
- We also spoke to staff to seek their views of the school. We considered eight responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- During the inspection, we spoke with pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 and observed playtime and lunchtime. We considered 25 responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils.
- We spoke with a representative from the local authority.

- We examined a range of documents. These included minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documentation. We met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in school.
- Geography, reading and writing were considered as part of this inspection. For each of these subjects, inspection activities included discussions with leaders, visits to lessons, discussions with teachers, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils about their learning. In reading, we also observed a member of staff listening to pupils read.
- We visited the Reception and Year 1 class to observe mathematics.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sally Aspinwall

Ofsted Inspector

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