

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

Scholefield Lane, Scholes, Wigan, Lancashire WN1 3LP

Inspection dates:

22–23 January 2020

Outcome

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

There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a section 5 inspection now.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and happy school. All members of the school community live the school's motto, 'love, believe and achieve'. Staff have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils achieve very well across a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils are a credit to the school. They show tremendous respect and tolerance for each other. Pupils are polite to each other and to staff. They have a positive attitude to learning and take pride in their work. Older pupils have many responsibilities which they carry out diligently.

Pupils enjoy attending school and study a wide range of subjects. They enjoy many trips that support their learning, such as to museums. Year 5 pupils enjoy going on residential visits. On these occasions, pupils take part in a wide range of exciting activities, which prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Pupils eagerly take part in a wide range of after-school clubs to broaden their experiences and develop their life skills.

Pupils that I spoke with told me that they feel safe in the school. They said that they do not worry about bullying because staff sort issues out straight away.

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

Leaders, including governors, have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn during their time at school. They are committed to ensuring that pupils have the very best start to their education. All subjects are planned exceptionally well. Pupils experience a wide range of exciting experiences that broaden their horizons. All pupils are interested in their learning and remember a lot of relevant knowledge from the topics they have studied. In history, pupils' recall of historical knowledge that they had learned in previous years was very impressive. Several pupils told me interesting facts about the Romans, the Egyptians and the Mayans. They had a detailed understanding of chronology. In all

subjects, leaders have ordered knowledge and skills well so that pupils build on what they already know. The school provides an excellent curriculum for its pupils.

Leaders foster a love of reading among the pupils. Teachers make sure that pupils read a wide range of books and authors. They choose texts to develop pupils' understanding of the wider world. As soon as children start school, teachers help them to become good readers. Staff have strong subject knowledge and teach phonics systematically. In 2019, pupils achieved well in the phonics check at the end of Year 1. Pupils who struggle to read receive extra support. This support enables pupils to catch up quickly and become fluent readers. Teachers encourage pupils to read books that match their ability and appeal to their interests. This motivates pupils to read often and become confident readers.

The mathematics curriculum is planned in a logical order. This helps pupils make links between what they already know and the new concepts that they learn. Younger pupils use their knowledge of counting to help them answer more formal questions. Pupils that spoke with me have a secure understanding of number bonds. All knew their multiplication tables. Pupils achieve very well in mathematics.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They know that they are responsible for their own learning and are keen to learn. Pupils have access to a wide range of activities, which prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils enjoy a range of clubs after school, such as newsround writing club, dance, art and a whole range of sports. Pupils have some opportunities to learn about different faiths and cultures. However, more could be done to deepen pupils' understanding of the diversity of the world in which we live.

Leaders, including governors, are fully committed to providing motivating learning opportunities for all. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. This is because the curriculum is carefully planned and sequenced to help them succeed.

Children get off to a positive start in Reception and achieve well. The environment is bright and stimulating. Children settle and learn class routines quickly. There is a lot of space for them to play and learn. The early years curriculum is well designed and builds on what children know when they start in the early years. Staff take every opportunity to develop children's reading, writing and mathematics skills.

Leaders inspire teachers and staff members to learn. I found a positive team spirit in the school. Staff told me that leaders are supportive of their well-being and workload. Governors support the school well and are involved in all aspects of school life.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that concerns about pupils' well-being are taken seriously. They are knowledgeable about the local risks faced by pupils and their families. Leaders seek advice from other professionals to keep pupils safe.

All necessary checks are made on adults working at the school. Regular training means that staff are alert to signs that a pupil's welfare is at risk. Staff ensure that vulnerable pupils are monitored closely and well supported. Governors receive appropriate safeguarding reports.

Pupils told me that they feel safe at the school. They have regular drills to make sure that they know what to do in the event of an emergency. Pupils learn about staying safe in the wider world, including keeping safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although pupils have some opportunities to learn about cultural diversity, this aspect of the pupils' development is not as strong as it could be. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with even more opportunities to deepen their understanding of different faiths and cultures.

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 St Catharine's CofE Primary School to be good on 24 September 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 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 | 106464 |
| Local authority | Wigan |
| Inspection number | 10087906 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 204 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | David Ryder |
| Headteacher | Sue Pittendreigh |
| Website | www.stcatharinesprimary.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 24 September 2015 |

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary aided Church of England school. Its most recent inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 was in April 2016.
- The headteacher has recently taken up her position, starting in January 2020.
- A breakfast club is provided at the school, managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with teachers, support staff and subject leaders. I met with six members of the governing body and held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- I visited lessons in each key stage. I spoke to pupils from each key stage and viewed examples of their work. I spoke to pupils about behaviour and observed behaviour around the school and in lessons.

- I reviewed the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and information on the school's website. I examined records in relation to safeguarding.
- I considered the nine parent responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I read all the free-text comments from parents and carers. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day. I considered the 21 responses to the online questionnaire for staff.
- As part of this inspection, I looked carefully at phonics and reading in all classes. I also focused on mathematics and history. During these activities, I met with subject leaders and visited lessons. I also spoke with teachers and pupils. I looked at examples of pupils' work and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Andrew Morley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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