

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

Barton Lane, Eccles, Manchester M30 0FL

Inspection dates:

28–29 January 2020

Outcome

St Andrew's CofE Primary School 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?

St Andrew's CofE Primary School is a happy place. The pupils that I spoke with are proud to belong to a school where the differences between people's culture and beliefs are celebrated. Pupils told me, 'We welcome everybody; we are all friends'. This sentiment is shared by many.

Over time, pupils have not had the chance to thrive academically. They do not achieve as well as they should in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly by the end of key stage 2. Until more recently, leaders and teachers have not had high enough expectations of pupils.

Children do not learn as well as they could in the early years because the curriculum requires further development. Similarly, across the school, the curriculum is not adapted effectively for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils behave well. They are polite and eager to learn. Pupils are kind and friendly to each other, both in their work and play. Pupils live up to the school's Christian values of love, honesty, respect and forgiveness in all that they do.

The pupils told me that they feel very safe in school. They know that adults care for them and that adults are always there to help them if they need it. Leaders pride themselves on the school's deeply caring and nurturing atmosphere.

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

Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Over time, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has declined by the time they leave Year 6. They do not do as well as other pupils nationally because of a legacy of weak curriculum planning in some subjects.

In the short time that the newly formed leadership team has been in the school, they have taken positive steps to improve the quality of the curriculum. For example, they have improved the curriculum in reading, mathematics, science and history. There is a greater clarity about what pupils should learn and when they will learn it. Teachers have now improved the way that they organise learning to help pupils remember more. However, leaders acknowledge that some subjects, for example writing, modern foreign languages and physical education, are still at an early stage of development.

Overall, leaders' new approach to the curriculum has not had the time needed to improve pupils' achievement, particularly in writing. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge which still have to be addressed. Added to this, until more recently, teachers' expectations of what pupils should know have not been high enough. This too has caused underachievement.

Overall, teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach. Teachers are increasingly successful in encouraging pupils to see connections between topics and concepts. Current pupils are now building a more secure understanding of their learning. For example, in mathematics 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 the Nursery and Reception classes, early mathematics is also taught well.

The leadership team has focused on raising the profile of reading. Although achievement in reading has not been good, there are some signs of improvement. Books and reading are now important in this school. Early years staff focus on developing a love of reading in their children. Pupils throughout school enjoy regularly hearing an adult share a story with them. Key stage 2 pupils spoke confidently about their favourite stories and authors.

Children learn letters and sounds as soon as they start in the Nursery class. Staff in the early years and in key stage 1 have specialist knowledge of the teaching of early reading. Leaders have improved the way adults are teaching phonics. Most pupils reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Attainment is improving in reading at the end of Year 2.

The teaching of writing is closely linked to reading and phonics. Teachers encourage children in the early years to write from the start. Teachers use stories to bring class topics to life and to enable pupils to try out different ways of writing. They make sure that pupils practise their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills daily. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils use their growing knowledge of grammar to improve their writing. This hinders their success as writers and prevents them from achieving well. Leaders recognise this as an area for ongoing development.

Leaders and staff are determined that all pupils will achieve their very best. They are quick to notice and help if a pupil is struggling.

Many parents are very complimentary about the school supports pupils with SEND. However, the curriculum is not adapted effectively enough for some pupils with SEND. Teachers do not ensure that these pupils access subjects such as reading, writing and mathematics at exactly the right level that they need to succeed.

Children in early years get off to a positive start. Teachers plan the curriculum together and offer children opportunities to learn, explore and be creative. But some areas of the early years curriculum are not as well developed as they should be. For example, children enjoy playing outdoors. However, there are few opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop physically through activities such as climbing and balancing.

Pupils behave well in school. They are friendly and chatty with each other and with adults. Pupils' sense of care and kindness is clear to see. Pupils could recall very occasional incidents of bullying. They said that if it did occur, adults would deal with it quickly.

The school's curriculum is full of opportunities that enhance pupils' personal development. They include many trips and visits. There are lunchtime and after-school activities to encourage pupils to take care of their physical health. Pupils have the opportunity to be peer mentors, a member of the school council or part of the ethos group.

Leaders, staff and governors are working hard to turn this school around. Governors are now playing an 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.

Staff are very 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. They act quickly if they have concerns.

The pastoral care in the school is a strength. Staff ensure that pupils and their families are well looked after and well supported.

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

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics have declined over time. Pupils have underachieved. The new leadership team is tackling these issues. Leaders need to ensure that the achievement of current pupils continues to improve.
- The leadership, curriculum planning and organisation of the foundation subjects is improving. However, there remains some subjects that are less developed. Leaders need to ensure that all curriculum areas are planned and delivered to the same high standard.

- Writing is the most underdeveloped curriculum area. Teachers are systematically teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation. However, there are limited opportunities outside these specific activities for pupils to practise and apply their knowledge and skills in their writing. Teachers need to make sure that the grammatical understanding that pupils are gaining is used effectively to improve pupils' written work.
- The curriculum is not adapted effectively enough for some pupils with SEND. This limits the success that they have in subjects such as reading, writing and mathematics because they are not accessing the curriculum at exactly the right level. Leaders need to review the curriculum for pupils with SEND to ensure that they meet the learning needs of these pupils so that they achieve well.
- A few areas within the early years curriculum are not as developed as they could be to ensure that learning is maximised. For example, children have opportunities to develop their physical skills, but these are sometimes limited. This slows children's development. Leaders should make sure that all of the areas of the early years curriculum are well planned. Leaders must ensure that children in early years have plenty of opportunities within the curriculum to develop and consolidate their physical gross motor skills.

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 St Andrew's CofE Primary School to be good on 23–24 February 2011.

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	105934
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	10111047
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Julie Roebuck
Headteacher	Joanne Bladen-Kay
Website	www.standrewsprimaryeccles.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 February 2016

Information about this school

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

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection I spoke with pupils both formally and informally about their work and school life. I spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and curriculum lead. I also discussed the provision for pupils with SEND. In addition, I held discussions with staff which focused on the pastoral care and safeguarding of pupils.
- I spoke with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- I 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 considered the 24 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- I also considered the 21 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the one response to Ofsted's pupil survey.

- I talked with pupils about the books that they like to read.
- I looked in detail at reading, mathematics and science. For each of these subjects, I held discussions with subject leaders and teachers, visited lessons, looked at samples of pupil's work and talked with pupils. I also considered other subjects across the curriculum, including writing and history.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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