

# Inspection of a good school: Much Woolton Catholic Primary School

Watergate Lane, Woolton, Liverpool, Merseyside L25 8QH

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Inspection dates:

11–12 February 2020

## **Outcome**

Much Woolton Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils love coming to school. They love to read. They find learning fun. Pupils' learning is enhanced by well-planned trips, events and visitors to the school. These experiences help pupils to remember the key knowledge that they are learning. Pupils also value learning about how to stay safe.

Pupils develop a wide range of interests. They develop self-confidence because their teachers support them to build on their strengths. Pupils learn strategies to help them live happy and healthy lives. They enjoy being physically active. They take part in many activities, including sport. Pupils learn about the importance of mental well-being.

Pupils behave well in their lessons and around the school. They feel safe. Pupils are well looked after by caring staff. The pupils that I spoke with said that staff deal with instances of bullying effectively. Pupils are kind to each other. They make sure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included in their friendship groups. Pupils are keen to support charities or others who need help.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievement across the curriculum. Most pupils attain well. Leaders are focused on improving the curriculum to enable pupils to make even better progress across subjects and to help younger children in the early years to achieve well.

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

Leaders are effective. They have developed a rich curriculum that captures the strengths and interests of pupils at the school. Leaders ensure that pupils have a wide range of experiences that take learning far beyond the boundaries of the classroom. These activities help pupils to develop positive attitudes about themselves and others. They thrive when they are given the opportunity to demonstrate responsibility. Governors, parents and carers support the values and ethos that underpin the curriculum. They value the work of leaders and other staff.

The strong leadership team checks that the curriculum is delivered in the way that is expected. When leaders discover that pupils are not achieving well, they adapt the curriculum. For example, leaders have changed the way that reading is taught across the school because attainment was not high enough. Leaders have also developed learning in the early years. The positive impact of both of these initiatives are now evident in current pupils' work.

The curriculum used previously in the early years was not well developed. Children were not supported well enough to develop in all the areas of learning. As a result, they did not achieve well. However, following effective support, teachers in the early years now have a secure understanding of how to support children's learning through the curriculum. They plan suitable activities. As a result, current children in the Reception classes achieve well in each area of learning.

Leaders have focused on developing the reading curriculum. They have ensured that pupils and younger children develop secure knowledge of phonics. Leaders have ensured that pupils across the school love reading. Pupils read widely and often. Older pupils read with fluency and accuracy. Pupils who are falling behind with their reading, or who lack confidence, are supported well by skilled staff.

The curriculum in different subject areas across the school is well designed and ambitious. Leaders have thought carefully about the order in which to teach topics. Consequently, pupils' learning in each subject is secure. Pupils build on prior knowledge. They remember with clarity the many different things that they have learned. Teachers provide activities that engage pupils in their learning. Pupils behave well in lessons. Their positive attitudes support effective learning. Pupils in upper key stage 2 take pride in their work. Their teachers ensure that they practise and refine their reading, writing and mathematics in other subjects across the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that the needs of individual pupils with SEND are met. Teachers provide suitable resources or different ways of recording work where appropriate. These adaptations help pupils with SEND access the curriculum. Leaders also ensure that disadvantaged pupils are well supported. Leaders have improved the attendance rate of these pupils so that it is much closer to the national average. Leaders continue to focus on improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. This is because some pupils who are persistently absent do not achieve as well as other pupils.

The attainment and progress of pupils evident in published data over time present a mixed picture. This is particularly true for children in the early years and Year 6 pupils. However, pupils' current work suggests that the improvements that leaders have made to the curriculum are having a positive effect. Leaders know what must be done to ensure that the quality of education is consistently high. There is some variability in this at present. For example, the quality of work in some year groups is more variable than in others. It is, however, good overall.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that pupils are safe. Staff are well trained and act on the latest guidance. Leaders take appropriate action when any safeguarding procedures need to be improved. For example, they check when a pupil registered for breakfast club is absent. Staff make effective use of the school's safeguarding procedures. They record and pass on information about pupils to the relevant personnel. Leaders make sure that the most vulnerable pupils and their families get the right support.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. This includes when they are online.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is lower than the national average. This reduces their opportunity to learn more. Published data shows that the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is improving. However, they do not attain as well as other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. Leaders need to build on the work they have already done to improve the attendance of these pupils to raise their attainment further.
- Published data shows that improvements to the curriculum have increased the attainment of Year 6 pupils over time in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the progress of pupils in key stage 2 has been variable. Some pupils have not made as much progress as they could have done between key stages 1 and 2. The work of current pupils across the curriculum suggests that this situation is improving. Leaders need to ensure that pupils makes consistently strong progress between key stages 1 and 2.
- Published data shows that in previous years, too many children in the early years have not achieved a good level of development. The curriculum in the early years has been weak. Children have not been well prepared for learning in key stage 1. This is now improved. Teaching staff have had support from the local authority to address this. The impact of this support is evident in the improved curriculum for current children in the Reception classes. Leaders need to ensure that teachers in the early years continue to build on this support to ensure that the early years curriculum enables children to achieve consistently well.

## 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 9–10 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104636
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122066
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	418
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Co-chairs of governing body</b>	Carol Chapman/Emma Skyner Andrews
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matthew White
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.muchwoolton.co.uk">www.muchwoolton.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9–10 March 2016

## Information about this school

- The headteacher is also the headteacher at another primary school. There is a head of school and a deputy head of school in post.
- There have been a number of changes to staffing in recent years.
- The school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool and had its last section 48 inspection in May 2019.

## Information about this inspection

- I spoke with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, a group of governors, including the two co-chairs of the governing body, and representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- I looked at a range of documentation for safeguarding, including the record of required checks carried out on school staff. I spoke with pupils about safeguarding. I also reviewed staff training logs and case files. I met with the person responsible for safeguarding to discuss how the school works to keep pupils safe.
- I observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. I also observed them as they moved around the school.

- I spoke with pupils about their experiences at school.
- I looked at the 95 responses to Ofsted’s parental questionnaire, Parent View, and the 53 free-text responses from parents to find out their views of the school. I spoke with parents as they dropped their children off.
- I carried out deep dives in reading, science and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. I talked with the leaders of these subjects. I looked at curriculum plans. I visited lessons. I looked at examples of pupils’ work. I talked with teachers and pupils about what pupils were learning.

### **Inspection team**

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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