

# Inspection of a good school: Nelson St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Hibson Road, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 0PY

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Inspection dates:

28–29 January 2020

## Outcome

Nelson St Paul's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

St Paul's is a friendly and welcoming school. Pupils are happy to attend. They enjoy their time at school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well in classrooms and around the school. The pupils that I spoke with said that they feel safe and that bullying is rare. If it does happen, they said that adults resolve it quickly.

Pupils achieve well. The well-planned curriculum helps pupils to build their knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

The school's values of 'love, joy, perseverance, forgiveness, justice and hope' are promoted positively. Pupils enjoy the charitable work that they undertake.

All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, access a wide range of cultural opportunities. These include residential trips in Year 6. Pupils enjoy a range of clubs beyond the school day, such as football and netball. Pupils can also attend the well-run breakfast and after-school club.

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

Leaders have an accurate view of what they do well and what they need to improve. This is because the systems for checking the impact of the curriculum are effective. This helps them to plan effectively for future improvement.

Reading is prioritised and well-promoted. There is a well-used library and book areas in all classrooms. Teachers are confident in helping children to learn phonics. There is a systematic approach to early reading followed by all staff. This ensures that children and pupils are learning phonic knowledge in a consistent manner. The pupils that read to me used their phonic knowledge well to help them to read words that they did not recognise. Books are well matched to the sounds that children and pupils are learning. This helps to

build their confidence. Pupils who struggle to read are supported well so that they catch up. As a result, by the end of Year 1 a large proportion of pupils reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Pupils said that they enjoy reading and that they read regularly in school. Despite this, leaders recognise that some older pupils do not have strong comprehension skills. As a result, they struggle to fully understand what they read. This holds them back from achieving as well as they should by the end of Year 6.

The mathematics curriculum is well planned. It is sequenced and logically ordered. This helps most pupils to successfully build on their learning. As a result, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in key stage 1 and 2 in 2019 was broadly in line with the national average. Leaders evaluate their actions carefully. They recognise that the mathematics curriculum is not always implemented consistently well. This means that pupils, particularly in upper key stage 2, do not always build on their learning as well as they could. For some pupils, this limits their readiness for the demands of the key stage 3 curriculum.

Leaders ensure that all pupils access a well-planned curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics. Teachers deliver these plans well. In science, for example, teachers use questions effectively to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. The curriculum is strengthened by trips and visitors. In Year 4, for instance, pupils visited a dentist to support their understanding of teeth and dental hygiene.

Plans to develop pupils' social, moral and spiritual development are strong. Pupils learn about other faiths, such as Islam and Judaism. Christian values, such as justice and forgiveness, are taught through the curriculum. Pupils learn to appreciate and respect the differences between people. They are prepared well to live in modern Britain.

Pupils with SEND are identified and supported well. Teachers adapt work to meet pupils' needs, including any emotional needs. Other adults support pupils effectively. As a result, these pupils achieve well.

Early years is a vibrant and happy setting. Parents and carers said that their children settle in quickly. The curriculum is organised carefully, covering all areas of learning. Children engage keenly with all adults, who know them well and take good care of them. This helps children to develop in confidence. Staff make regular checks on children's development, focusing particularly on their early reading skills. Children do well in early years and they are ready to move into Year 1.

Pupils enjoy their learning and most behave very well in lessons and around the school. Leaders, the school's family support team and other agencies work closely to improve attendance for all pupils. This is having a positive impact for current pupils, whose attendance is close to the national average.

Staff are positive about the support that they receive from leaders. They appreciate the care that leaders take over their well-being. Governors know the school well. They work with leaders to make sure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are fully included in school life.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils' safety is their key priority. Systems for keeping pupils safe are thorough and followed through diligently. All adults undertake regular training. They know how to keep pupils safe. Any concerns about pupils are carefully logged and followed up. Records are detailed. The school works successfully with a range of agencies to help pupils and their families get the help they need.

If pupils have concerns they know what to do. Many said they would talk to adults if they had any worries. They are confident that adults would help them. Pupils are taught how to stay safe outside school. For example, children in early years know how to stay safe when walking near the road, following a visit from a road safety team.

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

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

- Early reading and phonics are well taught. However, leaders recognise that pupils do not always fully understand what they read. This is particularly evident for older pupils. As a result, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the 2019 national tests in reading was lower than in previous years. Recent improvements to the way pupils develop their comprehension skills are having an impact for current pupils. These improvements need embedding to ensure that more pupils better understand what they are reading by the time they leave the school.
- The mathematics curriculum is well organised. However, leaders know that it is not always implemented consistently, particularly in key stage 2, so that pupils build on their learning. As a result, some pupils are not as well prepared for the key stage 3 curriculum as they could be. Leaders need to ensure that the mathematics curriculum is implemented consistently by all teachers so that it helps all pupils to know more and remember more.

## 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/outstanding. 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 17–18 November 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119438
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111006
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	413
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Bill Seed
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Julie Wood
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stpaulsnelson.co.uk">www.stpaulsnelson.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17–18 November 2015

## Information about this school

- The new headteacher has been in post since April 2019. Prior to this appointment, she was the deputy headteacher.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection was in September 2014.

## Information about this inspection

- I met with several school leaders, including the headteacher, two assistant headteachers, the early years leader and the leader for SEND.
- I met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- I took account of the 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: early reading and phonics, mathematics and science. Inspection activity in these included: meeting subject leaders, evaluation of curriculum planning, visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, listening to pupils read, and discussions with subject leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. I also held discussions with pupils about their learning in these subjects.

- I looked at safeguarding procedures and scrutinised records for safeguarding and pupils' behaviour. I checked pupils' attendance and teachers' training records. I spoke to staff and pupils to evaluate their understanding of safeguarding procedures.
- In addition to the subject-focused activity, I checked the quality of provision in the early years. I also looked at how the wider curriculum was organised across the whole school. I looked at improvement planning and several of the school's policies.
- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. I also spoke to pupils about school life and their views on personal development and behaviour.
- I took account of the 33 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Gary Bevin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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