

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

The Fairways, Westhoughton, Bolton, Lancashire BL5 3NZ

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel proud to be part of the St Bartholomew's family. They thrive socially and academically because leaders place equal importance on pupils' well-being and their achievement. The school's motto, 'Fun and Achieve', sums up what it is like to be a pupil at this school. Pupils really do have fun and achieve well.

The pupils who spoke to me said that they feel happy and safe at this school. They have strong relationships with staff and with each other. Pupils are surrounded by trusted adults that care for them and know them well. Parents and carers appreciate the way that staff look after their children. Pupils understand what bullying is. They are confident that if it ever happened, staff would sort it out.

Staff have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils know this and try hard to achieve their best. They enjoy their learning. Pupils behave well at all times.

Pupils are involved in the life of the school. They help to make the school a special place to be. Pupils enjoy the roles and responsibilities that they are given. For example, the Change Team enjoy the way that they help support other pupils with their mental health.

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

St Bartholomew's is well led and managed. Governors support leaders well. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Staff are proud to work at the school.

In reading, writing and mathematics, leaders have planned a curriculum that is ambitious and interesting. They have made sure that pupils learn knowledge in the right order. As a result, pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), consistently achieve well in these subjects. Pupils' good behaviour and enjoyment of school supports their successful learning.

In the early years, children develop secure early reading and mathematics knowledge and skills. This is because staff have strong subject knowledge and the curriculum is well planned. Staff design activities that allow children to apply new skills across the environment in fun and exciting ways. During the inspection, children were highly focused on a pirate treasure hunt for words they could spell independently. They worked well together making a bridge that would help them cross the shark pool.

Children learn phonics within the first few weeks of starting school. Teachers' careful activity choices ensure that children and pupils learn how to recognise letters and the sounds that they represent. Extra 'Brain Boosts' help those pupils who struggle. This enables them to catch up quickly. Staff make sure that the books that pupils read are matched well to the sounds that they are learning. This helps them to read with fluency and understanding.

Pupils enjoy reading at St Bartholomew's. They find books exciting. Pupils told me how much they enjoy sharing class novels and spending time in the reading treehouses. Pupils read lots of different types of books. They enjoy talking about books and link them to things happening in their lives or the lives of others.

Most areas of the curriculum are well planned. Leaders have recently made changes to the science and history curriculums. In both subjects, leaders have made it clear what pupils will know by the time they leave Year 6. This is well matched to the national curriculum. However, there is further work to do to make sure that pupils' learning is organised logically to help them gain the skills and knowledge that they need to succeed.

In science, pupils learn scientific facts about the world that they live in. They talk about classification keys and different types of rocks confidently. However, the pupils that I spoke to found it difficult to ask questions about the natural world. They did not know how to test their ideas and answer these questions.

In history, teachers know what pupils should learn. However, they do not plan activities that build on pupils' previous knowledge and skills. This makes it harder for pupils to learn more and remember more.

Personal development is strong at St Bartholomew's. Across the curriculum, pupils learn about other faiths and different cultures. Pupils show respect for others. They recognise similarities, rather than notice differences. Leaders make sure that the arts are celebrated. Pupils' end-of-year productions rival any in the West End. They are a highlight of the year.

Pupils also have many opportunities to take part in clubs and activities beyond the academic curriculum. They are all given the opportunity to represent the school in sports.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there are clear processes in place to identify pupils who may be at risk. These are followed by all staff. Referrals are made quickly to the appropriate

bodies. Leaders maintain careful and detailed records. They make sure that they provide targeted support for pupils and families who need it.

Leaders ensure that all adults who work within the school are safe to work with children and pupils. Governors make sure that all appropriate checks are made.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is well planned for most subjects. However, in some subjects, such as history and science, pupils' learning is not as well sequenced as it could be. This stops teachers from planning activities that build on what pupils already know and can do. Leaders need to further develop the implementation of their plans for these subjects so that pupils can achieve well in all areas of the 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged St Bartholomew's CofE Primary School to be good on 25 May 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	105237
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10111039
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	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jayne Caldwell
Headteacher	Mark Johns
Website	www.st-barts.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 May 2011

Information about this school

- The school had its most recent section 48 inspection, undertaken by the Diocese of Manchester, in October 2017.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. I also spoke with class teachers and support staff.
- I met with several governors, including the chair of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- A range of documentation was reviewed. This included school policies and published information about pupils' performance.
- I met with the designated safeguarding leader to check the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures and processes. I also checked the single central record and checks made on newly appointed staff.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, science and history. This entailed discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of pupils' work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils and listening to pupils read.

- I also observed pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtime and as they moved around the school.
- I spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day and considered the 53 responses from Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I also considered the 11 responses from the online staff survey.

Inspection team

Steve Kirkpatrick, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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