

Inspection of an outstanding school: St Peter's CofE Primary School

Alexandra Street, Farnworth, Bolton, Lancashire BL4 9JT

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 September 2021

Outcome

St Peter's CofE Primary School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Peter's flourish. This is because leaders and staff have high expectations of children and pupils and provide them with the very best education that they can. Classrooms are buzzing with the thrill of learning and achieving. Pupils work, undistracted by others. Pupils' learning activities are memorable as well as fun. Pupils read with passion and skill. They love mathematics and use their understanding to count and solve problems. As one pupil said to the inspector: 'Teachers teach us really well. If you get something wrong, they don't shout. They go over the work and help you.'

Pupils are happy. They are proud of their artwork, which is of a high standard and attractively displayed around the school. Pupils learn interesting, new words often and use them when speaking or writing. Statements of encouragement, such as from the Bible, are displayed prominently to prompt pupils and adults to think about their own views and beliefs.

Pupils feel safe at the school because leaders and staff listen carefully to their views and act quickly to resolve any problems. Pupils' behaviour around the school is exemplary. Pupils said that on the rare occasions that bullying arises, leaders and staff help to resolve matters quickly.

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

From the very start of their time at St Peter's, staff speak with pupils gently and patiently. All teachers plan learning activities for children and pupils that encourage conversation and allow for the practice of previous learning. New knowledge is introduced carefully. Leaders and staff place great importance on teaching new vocabulary to pupils. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have a very well developed understanding of new words, such as 'equator' and 'landmark' in geography in key stage 1. They remember what teachers have taught them.

Leaders make certain that all teaching staff have up-to-date training, including in reading. Teachers have a first-rate understanding of the different knowledge pupils need to be taught in each subject and of how pupils remember information. Teachers are well informed of wider debates and research in primary and early years education. They use this knowledge very well to develop an inspiring, meaningful curriculum for their pupils.

Leaders and teachers clearly identify the small chunks of knowledge that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), need to learn. Teachers assess the knowledge that pupils have gained precisely and use this information carefully to refine the curriculum and teaching where needed. Senior leaders and subject leaders have a secure grasp of the work of the school, including in the early years, and have clear plans to make the school even better.

Classrooms are calm as pupils are keen to know more about each subject. Teachers and teaching assistants teach the curriculum without distraction, as disruption is minimal. Staff challenge and support pupils very well. Pupils achieve highly across subjects.

Leaders give much attention to the teaching of reading. Pupils who need extra help, such as some pupils with SEND or other pupils who find reading hard, read often to staff. Teachers and teaching assistants keep a close check on how well pupils are reading. They act quickly to change pupil groups, use additional resources or increase the frequency of practice for pupils where needed. As a result, pupils read with understanding and fluency. Governors have funded extra investment in books for pupils to read. Pupils use these books often and said that they find titles matched to their interests. Pupils at the school love reading.

Pupils learn of the importance of helping other people through well-planned fundraising for charities. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about a wide range of other people and communities, and about current affairs and world issues. Pupils who spoke with the inspector had an excellent understanding of important world problems, such as global warming.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. A typical parental comment was: 'St Peter's is a phenomenal school. The staff have not only pushed my child academically, but they have also nurtured their confidence, self-belief, mindset and emotional needs, meaning they now thrive.' Equally, teachers said that the school is a great place to work and that leaders ensure that they have a reasonable workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff teach all children and pupils how to stay safe, such as when walking near roads or using the internet. When pupils feel sad or worried, staff are quick to spot that pupils need help. Leaders provide much support to pupils, so they can talk about their feelings with a trusted adult. Pupils know that they can also call telephone helplines with any of their concerns. Staff are vigilant in safeguarding pupils because leaders provide them with access to lots of training and opportunities to share relevant information with colleagues.

Leaders manage safeguarding concerns properly and link fully with other agencies to ensure pupils' safety.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in February 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	105239
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10199520
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	416
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Masters
Headteacher	Lynn Williams
Website	st-peters-farnworth.bolton.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 February 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school sends pupils to one registered alternative provision, Bolton Children's Opportunity Group Playgroup.
- St Peter's is a Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2016. The next section 48 inspection is due within the next two years.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and deputy headteachers, an officer of the local authority and spoke by telephone with a representative of the Diocese of Manchester.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about behaviour at school and staff's support for pupils' personal development.
- The inspector met with the chair of governors and three other governors.
- The inspector reviewed the school's work to safeguard pupils by speaking with leaders, reviewing a sample of leaders' records and policies, speaking with teachers and pupils and reviewing comments received from parents.
- The inspector considered 64 responses from parents to Ofsted's online Parent View survey, including 47 additional comments from parents.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021