

Inspection of St Mary and Michael Catholic Primary School

Castle Lane, Garstang, Preston, Lancashire PR3 1RB

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 November 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and welcoming school. According to pupils, everyone 'fits in' and gets along well with each other. Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. They attend regularly. Pupils told inspectors that they trust adults to look after them and sort out any problems. They are confident that adults would deal with any incidents of bullying fairly and effectively.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' academic and personal development. Pupils achieve well because leaders have organised a broad curriculum that helps them to build on their learning. Pupils are polite and respectful with each other and adults. They display positive attitudes to learning and they behave well at playtimes.

Pupils enjoy holding responsibilities such as those of school councillors and eco-councillors. They are proud of the work that they do to support charities such as MacMillan Cancer and a local hospice. Pupils appreciate accessing clubs after the school day such as the Sign language, Spanish and sports clubs. They also enjoy the wide range of trips offered. For example, Year 3 pupils visit a castle as part of their history work, while pupils in Year 5 enjoy an activity trip that promotes teamwork.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced. They have organised subjects so that pupils build on what they already know. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those who are disadvantaged, achieve well. By the time pupils leave Year 6, they are well prepared for their secondary education.

Reading is prioritised by leaders and teachers. It is very common to see pupils of all ages enjoying books, either reading to themselves, to others or listening to adults read. There is a well-organised and structured approach to teaching pupils to become confident early readers. Children get off to a strong start in early years. They settle quickly and happily into routines, quickly gaining a good grounding in their phonics knowledge. Pupils practise their phonics daily and read suitable texts regularly. Pupils are supported well by knowledgeable adults. Staff closely monitor how well pupils are gaining key reading knowledge. They quickly identify pupils who struggle and provide extra support to help them to catch up. As a result, pupils become confident, fluent readers who can access the ambitious curriculum that leaders have planned.

In most subject areas, leaders have organised the curriculum so that it is clear what pupils should learn from early years to Year 6. This enables pupils to build on what they already know so that their knowledge and understanding are deepened over time. However, in a small number of subjects, pupils' learning has not been thought about with the same care. This hinders pupils' progress through the curriculum.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They plan appropriate activities to ensure that pupils, including children in early years, make the progress that they should through the curriculum. Pupils can talk confidently about what they have learned over time in a range of subjects. Even so, pupils are less able to talk about what they know in the few subjects where learning is less well organised.

Leaders ensure that teachers deliver the planned curriculum. In most subjects, teachers carefully check on pupils' progress and make adaptations to the curriculum when they spot gaps. However, teachers are not as skilled in completing this work in all subjects. This means that teachers and leaders are not completely sure how well pupils are achieving across all subjects.

Staff quickly identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers organise effective plans to support these pupils' learning so that they can access the full curriculum. This means that pupils with SEND know more and remember more over time.

Pupils behave well. They display positive attitudes in class and around school. Occasionally, when pupils lose focus in class, adults calmly bring them back on task. Pupils said that if they misbehave, staff deal with issues fairly.

Leaders' work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils learn to appreciate and respect the differences between people. They learn about other cultures and religions. Pupils learn about the school's 'Blue badge' values, such as respect, acceptance and forgiveness, which are taught through the curriculum. As a result, they are well prepared to live in modern Britain.

Governors and leaders undertake their roles diligently. They know the school's strengths and what needs to improve. Staff are positive about the support that leaders provide, including for their workload and well-being. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the work staff do and the impact this has on their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Staff receive regular training to help them identify and manage any concerns. Any issues about pupils are carefully logged and followed up. Leaders work successfully with a range of agencies to help pupils get the support that they need.

If pupils have worries, they are confident that adults will help them. Pupils are taught how to stay safe outside school. For example, pupils said that they know how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of subjects are not organised so that pupils' learning carefully builds on what they already know. This means that pupils cannot remember what they have learned over time as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that these subjects are planned as effectively as other areas of the curriculum so that pupils are better prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In some foundation subjects, teachers do not use assessment effectively to check what knowledge pupils know and remember. As a result, some teachers are unable to adapt learning activities to match pupils' needs. Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment information to accurately reflect how well pupils are doing and to identify any support that pupils need with their learning.

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	119617
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10200813
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	112
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul McCann
Headteacher	Luena Archibald
Website	www.st-mary-st-michael.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February to 1 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The new headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- The school makes no use of alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Lancaster.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection of religious education took place in March 2019.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with six members of the governing body, the headteacher, subject leaders and staff. Inspectors also took account of the responses to Ofsted's staff online survey.

- The lead inspector spoke with two representatives of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Lancaster.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils to gather their views about the school. Inspectors spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors checked on safeguarding procedures and documentation relating to safeguarding. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around school and considered leaders' attendance and behaviour information.
- Inspectors considered a range of other school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation and plans for improvement.
- Inspectors did deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and geography. As part of this work, inspectors visited lessons and spoke with subject leaders and teachers. Inspectors reviewed pupils' work and spoke with them about their learning. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to trusted adults.

Inspection team

Gary Bevin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nick Capron

Ofsted Inspector

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