

# Inspection of a good school: St Mary's Church of England Primary School, West Derby

Meadow Lane, West Derby, Liverpool, Merseyside L12 5EA

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Inspection dates:

30 November and 1 December 2021

## **Outcome**

St Mary's Church of England Primary School, West Derby continues to be a good school.

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

This is a happy, welcoming and friendly school. Pupils told the inspector that they love coming to school each morning because they have lots of friends. Pupils said that they feel safe because staff look after them well.

Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Pupils achieve well because, in most subjects, they benefit from ambitious and well-planned curriculums that teachers deliver successfully.

Leaders have similarly high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils do their best to live up to these. They are polite, keen to learn and try their best. Pupils said that because staff expect them to behave well, they do. Pupils explained that there is hardly ever any bullying, but that if it does happen, staff will sort it out quickly.

Pupils appreciate the opportunity to hold responsibilities, such as being a school councillor, prefect and reading or play buddy. They value the range of clubs on offer at lunchtime and after school. These include journaling, music and sports clubs.

Pupils enjoy the trips that support their learning, such as visits to nearby towns and museums. Older pupils have been able to benefit from some residential trips.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and suitably aspirational curriculum for all pupils, including for children in the early years. In most subjects, leaders are clear about what they want pupils to know from the Reception class through to Year 6. Leaders have organised learning to ensure that pupils build carefully on what they know already. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders are not as clear about what they want

pupils to know and when. This hinders teachers in designing learning that helps pupils to make connections with earlier learning and deepen their knowledge over time.

Mostly, teachers present information clearly and revisit previous learning as a matter of routine. This helps pupils to remember more and make connections in their learning over time. For example, pupils in Year 6 used their knowledge of multiplication facts to simplify fractions successfully. Leaders have an accurate picture of how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum. Teachers use assessment carefully to check on how well pupils, including pupils with SEND, are progressing. If pupils struggle with aspects of their learning, teachers provide appropriate support.

Leaders ensure that teachers prioritise reading from the moment that children arrive in the early years. There is a well-structured approach to teaching phonics. This curriculum is delivered by confident staff who have received appropriate training. Pupils practise their reading frequently and staff ensure that their books match the sounds that pupils know. Teachers check on how well pupils, including children in the early years, are progressing through the phonics programme. They identify those pupils who fall behind. Staff provide pupils with the additional support that they need to quickly catch up and become confident, fluent readers.

Older pupils understand why reading is important, and they appreciate the joy that reading can bring. They value opportunities to meet and listen to a range of popular authors. Pupils achieve well in reading. At the end of Year 6, they are prepared well for the next stage of their learning.

Children settle into routines quickly in the early years. Throughout the school, teachers have established high expectations and clear procedures to help pupils to learn. Classrooms are calm. Pupils can get on with their learning without distraction.

Leaders have ensured that pupils with SEND are identified early and supported well by staff. When necessary, teachers adapt how they deliver the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. Other staff are knowledgeable about the needs of pupils with SEND, and they provide appropriate support for this group of pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Leaders and staff place a strong focus on developing pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They understand the importance of tolerance and respect for others. Pupils learn how to become responsible citizens, and they are proud of the charity work that they do to support others. Pupils enjoy the 'star of the week' assemblies to reward both their academic and personal achievements, such as being kind and friendly to others.

Governors are highly ambitious for the school. They are well informed about the quality of education that pupils receive. They hold leaders to account diligently. Staff feel that they are supported well by leaders. They are proud to work at the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that the procedures to keep pupils safe are robust and understood by staff. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil's well-being. Staff work effectively with pupils and their families to ensure that they can benefit from appropriate help.

When necessary, leaders and staff work closely with a range of agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils can access appropriate support. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe. Pupils explained to the inspector how they can keep themselves safe when cycling or when they are online.

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

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

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not organised the curriculum so that curriculum content builds on what pupils know already. This hinders teachers in designing learning that supports pupils to make connections and deepen their knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that, in these subjects, curriculums are planned so that pupils can build on what they already know and can do.

## 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 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 evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2012.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104624
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	10204428
<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>	208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kerry Stewart
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dave Harrop
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmaryswestderby.co.uk">www.stmaryswestderby.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school is a Church of England primary school. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in July 2017.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and a new chair of the governing body have been appointed.
- The school does not make use alternative provision for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken this into account in his evaluation.
- The inspector met with two members of the governing body, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders and staff. The inspector also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Liverpool.

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

### **Inspection team**

Gary Bevin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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