

Inspection of a good school: St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

Mardale Avenue, Orford, Warrington, Cheshire WA2 9HF

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 January 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love learning at this caring and supportive school. They develop strong relationships with staff. Pupils feel safe in school. Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils said that staff listen to their worries. Staff resolve any rare issues of bullying effectively.

Pupils take part in a range of activities, such as choir, sports clubs and residential visits. Leaders also plan visits to enrich pupils' learning. For example, pupils visit museums, the theatre and the local library. Visitors to school deepen pupils' knowledge of different faiths and cultures. Pupils support charities, including by raising money for a local hospice.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve well in most subjects. However, some pupils do not build their knowledge and skills as well as they could in reading and in a small number of other subjects.

Parents and carers are positive about the school. They value the care and support offered to their children by staff. A typical comment from parents was: 'All of the staff are friendly, supportive and approachable.'

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

Leaders have ensured that pupils follow a broad and engaging curriculum. In most subjects, the curriculum makes clear the knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn. Leaders have ensured that this important knowledge builds in a logical way. In these subjects, pupils achieve well.

In some subjects, the curriculum does not identify the small blocks of knowledge that pupils should learn from early years to Year 6. Consequently, pupils' learning does not always build on what they already know and can do.

Leaders place a sharp focus on developing children's early language skills and vocabulary in early years. Children receive daily phonics teaching as soon as they start in the Reception class. The phonics curriculum is well organised and ambitious. However, not all staff have had the training that they need to teach the phonics curriculum as intended. As a result, some pupils do not learn to read with fluency. The way in which teachers deliver the phonics curriculum differs across year groups. This confuses some pupils. Additionally, staff do not ensure that pupils read books that contain the letters and sounds that they securely know. This causes some pupils to lose confidence when reading.

Leaders have successfully promoted a love of reading. They have thought carefully about which high-quality books pupils will encounter as they move from early years to Year 6. Staff are supported by pupil reading ambassadors, who encourage other pupils to read often.

Leaders know pupils well and are quick to identify the needs of those with SEND. Staff ensure that pupils with SEND can access the same curriculum as their peers. When this is not possible, leaders and staff work closely with other professionals to help meet pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils with SEND achieve the same as others in the school.

Pupils, including children in early years, are polite and considerate. They behave well in class and during social times. They have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils respond well to the clear behaviour policy. This means that staff and pupils can focus on learning.

Leaders enhance the personal development curriculum with their carefully considered '50 Things' curriculum. Pupils have a wealth of opportunities to develop as well-rounded young citizens. For example, pupils go pond dipping and learn how to roast marshmallows over a fire safely. Pupils learn about democracy and elect their peers to the school council.

Governors work closely with leaders and staff. Staff are highly supportive of school leaders. They appreciate the consideration that senior leaders give to their workload and well-being. Staff are proud to work at the school.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that design and technology and history may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant of any signs of potential abuse or neglect. This is because leaders' robust procedures and effective training for staff have created a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders and staff work closely with external agencies to ensure that any concerns are highlighted quickly.

Pupils spoke confidently about how they learn to stay safe online and in the community. Pupils are appointed as junior safety officers, who, in addition to staff, deliver assemblies that promote a variety of ways for pupils to stay safe. This includes reminding pupils to always wear a seatbelt in a car, or how to forensically mark bikes to deter thieves.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all staff who teach phonics have received suitable training. In addition, there are differences in how staff deliver the phonics curriculum, including how pupils are supported to catch up. This means that some pupils are not able to read with fluency and confidence. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the training they need to deliver the phonics curriculum systematically and effectively.
- At times, leaders do not ensure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their phonics knowledge. This causes some pupils to lose confidence and hinders their progress. Leaders should ensure that pupils are able to practise the sounds that they have learned through suitable reading books.
- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not clearly identified the small blocks of knowledge that are essential to pupils' future learning. This makes it difficult for teachers to help pupils to build on what they already know. Leaders should ensure that teachers understand the essential knowledge that pupils should gain, from early years to Year 6, in order to make the intended progress through 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 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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 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	111301
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10210959
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	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Louise Wass
Headteacher	Wendy McKinnon
Website	www.standrews-cp.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 and 29 September 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The governing body is responsible for the before- and after-school clubs at the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school's last section 48 inspection took place in June 2019.

Information about this inspection

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

- The inspector completed deep dives in these subjects: early reading, design and technology, and mathematics. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke to teachers and pupils.
- The inspector also considered other subjects, including physical education, history and science. He met with subject leaders, reviewed pupils' work and evaluated these curriculums.

- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation. He spoke to the headteacher and senior leaders throughout the inspection. He also met with the coordinator for SEND.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He spoke on the telephone to a representative of the diocese. He also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector held meetings with the staff responsible for safeguarding, and scrutinised the single central record. The inspector considered safeguarding processes and asked staff questions to establish their understanding of these procedures. The inspector observed pupils during playtimes, lunchtimes and at the before- and after-school clubs. He discussed safeguarding with pupils.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He also considered the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Adam Sproston, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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