

Inspection of a good school: Pilling St John's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Ladies Hill, Pilling, Preston, Lancashire PR3 6HA

Inspection date:

15 March 2022

Outcome

Pilling St John's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to attend this school. They get along well together. Pupils feel safe because they are well looked after by adults in the school. Relationships are strong. Leaders work hard to ensure that they know every pupil well. As leaders pointed out, no child is ever written off in this school.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils work hard and enjoy their lessons. They are keen to meet the high expectations that leaders set for them. Leaders have created a welcoming school where every pupil is encouraged to do their best. This helps pupils to achieve well.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They move around the school in an orderly manner and are usually very attentive in lessons. If bullying occurs, leaders deal with it swiftly and effectively.

Pupils enjoy the many opportunities on offer in school. They value the time that they have to learn in the school's woodland area. Many pupils benefit from the activities available in the after-school club. These include music, sport and creative activities.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including pupils with SEND and children in the early years. Across subjects, the curriculum is well organised. It allows pupils to build their knowledge and understanding over time. For example, the mathematics curriculum develops pupils' learning in well-ordered steps. Pupils are encouraged to explain and talk about the knowledge and skills that they are using. In most subjects, teachers regularly use assessment strategies well to check that pupils have learned the intended curriculum. The curriculum enables pupils to achieve well.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn. The systems in place to assess how well pupils are doing are less well developed in these subjects. As a result, teachers are hindered in checking on what pupils know and understand with enough accuracy in these subjects. This means that, from time to time, pupils move on to new learning before they have secured important knowledge.

Leaders have put reading at the centre of the curriculum. Pupils are taught to read as soon as they start school. Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained. Pupils, including children in the early years, read books that match the sounds that they are learning. This means that they can read with accuracy and increasing confidence. Leaders ensure that pupils who fall behind are identified quickly and supported to catch up without delay. Pupils have access to a wide range of high-quality books to develop their vocabulary and spark their interest. Older pupils are enthusiastic about the books they read.

Pupils behave well in classrooms and at social times. Occasionally, a small number of pupils can present challenging behaviour. These pupils are well supported by staff. As a result, learning is rarely disrupted.

Leaders work effectively to promote pupils' personal development. Children get off to a strong start in the early years. Leaders pay careful attention to meeting the needs of all pupils, including two-year-olds. Pupils learn about equality and diversity. They said that everyone is welcome at their school. Pupils are proud of the work that they do to support national and local charities. They take part in a variety of community events, including the local gala, the coffee feast and carol singing.

Leaders are quick to identify the needs of those pupils with SEND. Staff work effectively to ensure that this group of pupils can access the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders work closely with a range of external agencies to help to support pupils and meet their needs.

Governors have steered the school successfully through a challenging time to ensure that the leadership of the school is stable. Staff are positive about working at the school. They appreciate leaders' strategies to help them manage their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are trained well to help keep pupils safe. Leaders ensure that staff know exactly what to do if they are worried or concerned about a pupil. Staff are knowledgeable about the risks that pupils may face, including online and in the community. Leaders work with a range of agencies to help and support those families who need it.

Through the curriculum, pupils find out about a range of situations which may lead to harm. For example, pupils learn about the dangers of drug and alcohol misuse. Pupils

know that they should speak to a trusted adult if the actions of others make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

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 fully developed assessment systems that allow teachers to check on pupils' missing or insecure knowledge. As a result, occasionally, teachers do not address pupils' misunderstandings or deficits in their knowledge quickly enough. Leaders should strengthen the assessment systems so that teachers can check effectively what pupils know and understand.

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 as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 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 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	119555
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10210955
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gaynor Phillpotts
Headteacher	Emma Phillips
Website	www.pilling-st-johns.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- An acting headteacher has been in post since December 2020. The acting headteacher is supported by an associate headteacher one day each week.
- This is a Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection was in 2017.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision.
- The governing body manages childcare provision before and after school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors observed pupils reading with a familiar adult.

- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors also met with subject leaders and a group of teachers.
- Inspectors met with representatives of those responsible for governance. The lead inspector also spoke with an adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in meetings and around the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and reviewed responses to Ofsted’s staff and pupil questionnaires.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. They spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe. They reviewed the school’s record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.

Inspection team

Emma Jackson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Claire Hollister

Ofsted Inspector

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