

Inspection of a good school: St Matthew's CofE Primary School

Poplar Road, Stretford, Manchester M32 9AN

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 June 2022

Outcome

St Matthew's CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be members of St Matthew's school. They live up to the school motto, 'let your light shine', and thoroughly enjoy learning with their friends.

Pupils are confident learners. They respond well to the high expectations that staff have of their achievement and behaviour. As a result, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and children in the early years, achieve well in a range of subjects.

Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe and loved in school. Pupils learn about racism. Older pupils know what homophobic bullying is. The school council is active. Members have formed a steering group to help to raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues. Pupils told the inspector that if bullying happens, it is dealt with immediately.

Year 6 pupils participate in water sports and different outdoor activities, at their annual residential retreat. They also visit museums and theatres in Manchester and Stockport. Pupils enjoy fieldtrips, which support their learning in history and geography.

Opportunities are available for pupils to pursue their interests in different areas of music and sport. Children in the early years visit local parks and a farm to enhance their knowledge of the world in which they live.

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

Leaders and governors make sure that pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well. They have crafted a curriculum that includes a broad range of subjects that interest and engage pupils. The curriculum is logically ordered so that pupils can build on what they know and deepen their understanding over time in most subjects.

In most subjects, teachers regularly check that pupils have understood new learning. For example, in science, teachers are crystal clear about how they will assess pupils' skills in

recording evidence and using data. However, in a few subjects such checks are still developing. As a result, in these subjects, teachers do not have a secure understanding of how well pupils have learned the curriculum content.

Most subject leaders are trained well. The support that they give to staff to help them to implement the curriculum is effective. However, some subject leaders are new and are still developing their knowledge and expertise. This means that they are less able to offer helpful advice and guidance to staff. As a result, the delivery of the curriculum in these subjects is sometimes less effective.

Leaders place a high priority on reading, which is at the heart of the curriculum. Phonics is taught well by suitably trained staff. One-to-one support is especially effective. Pupils, and children in the early years, learn to sound-out words correctly and to read clearly. They read daily in school and are familiar with the work of a wide range of authors and poets.

Pupils with SEND thrive academically and personally. Staff receive specialist training to help them to identify and cater for the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders make sure that extra help and specialist support are available when needed to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum.

Due to pupils' and children's positive behaviour, there is very little disruption in lessons. Typically, pupils listen carefully to their teachers and follow instructions closely. For example, in the early years, children work together cooperatively during group activities. Older pupils settle into work quickly. Sports day took place during the inspection. After it ended, pupils started lessons promptly and without fuss.

Leaders have crafted a rich and varied personal development curriculum, which provides many opportunities for pupils to show that they are mature and responsible citizens. For example, pupils develop their leadership skills as anti-bullying champions and members of the eco-council. Older pupils take responsibility for mentoring their younger peers in the early years. Staff encourage pupils to be compassionate and kind-hearted. Pupils raise funds for different charities. Pupils are especially keen on attending the choir, sewing, games, mindfulness, dancing and cycling clubs. They enjoy drama and recently performed in a production of Macbeth at a local theatre.

Governors have an accurate view of the school. They know which aspects of the curriculum are strongest. They also know where extra support is needed to improve the delivery of some subjects. Most parents and carers speak highly of the school.

Staff, including those new to the school, told the inspector that they feel part of a united team. Leaders constantly check the well-being of all staff, including those who are new to the teaching profession. All staff feel that leaders are considerate of their workload and mental health.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Senior leaders and governors are diligent when it comes to minimising risks and harm to pupils. Leaders work closely with a range of partners to make sure that pupils get the support that they need.

Staff know how to spot signs of potential neglect and abuse. They are familiar with government guidelines on keeping pupils safe in school. Staff know exactly what to do if they are concerned about the welfare of a pupil.

Pupils and parents agree that the school is a safe place to be. The curriculum supports pupils' understanding of staying safe in various situations, including online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, effective checks on pupils' learning are not in place. As a result, in these subjects, staff do not have an accurate understanding of how well pupils are learning. Leaders should ensure that assessment procedures are in place so that staff know how well pupils are learning the content of the curriculum.
- In a few subjects, subject leaders do not have the subject knowledge or expertise that they need to support teachers to deliver the curriculum effectively. This means that teachers are less sure about how to design learning in these subjects to build pupils' knowledge over time. Senior leaders should make sure that subject leaders receive the training that they need to ensure that the curriculum is delivered as intended.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged school to be good in May 2017.

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

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| Unique reference number | 106337 |
| Local authority | Trafford |
| Inspection number | 10226253 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 216 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Alison Daniel |
| Headteacher | Peter Langridge |
| Website | stmatthews.trafford.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 4 and 5 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection a new headteacher and a new chair of the governing body have been appointed.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary controlled Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection was carried out in January 2016.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school 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 held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. He also held meetings with other leaders, including those responsible for pupils' personal and social development and SEND. The inspector held a meeting with governors, including the chair of the governing body. He held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

- The inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. He also observed some pupils reading to a member of staff.
- The inspector spoke with leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects. He also spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector spoke with parents to gather their views about the school. He considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View as well as free-text comments from parents, and reviewed the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector examined a range of policies and documents. He also scrutinised safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy. The inspector spoke to safeguarding leaders about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents. He also talked with pupils about their safety and welfare.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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