

# Inspection of a good school: St Peter's Smithills Dean Church of England Primary School

Limefield Road, Smithills, Bolton, Lancashire BL1 6LA

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Inspection dates:

18 and 19 October 2022

## **Outcome**

St Peter's Smithills Dean Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils are proud to be part of this school community. They described the school as a fun and happy place to learn and develop. Pupils said that they feel safe. They know that they can talk to staff if they have any problems. Pupils said that they could not remember bullying happening. However, they are confident that if it did happen, teachers would deal with it swiftly.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils, and children in the early years, achieve well across a range of subjects. Pupils are confident and they talk articulately about what they have learned.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. This includes children in the early years. Pupils and children are polite and well mannered. They behave well and try hard in lessons.

Pupils appreciate the range of enrichment experiences that they have, such as wheelchair basketball and visiting the theatre. Leaders provide a range of visits and trips to extend pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils said that they enjoy these opportunities very much.

Pupils are tolerant and value the importance of everyone being treated equally. They respect other cultures and faiths and are adamant that everyone is welcome in their school.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is exciting, engaging and ambitious for all pupils, including children in the early years. The school's values are woven through subjects, along with carefully designed activities to ensure that pupils and children in the early

years learn about cultural diversity. Leaders arrange well-thought-out visits and external speakers to make learning interesting and memorable for pupils. Overall, pupils and children in the early years learn well.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Leaders ensure that, in most subjects, teachers present new content to pupils in a logical order. This allows pupils, and children in the early years, to deepen their knowledge over time. However, in a very small number of subjects, leaders have not made it clear enough to teachers about the most important knowledge that pupils should know and remember. This prevents some pupils from learning all that they could.

Leaders ensure that teachers use assessment systems effectively. Teachers, in the main, address pupils' misconceptions in a timely manner. They use the information that they have to design activities that help pupils to revisit and recap important information.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading throughout the whole school. Teachers celebrate books with pupils and with children in the early years. Pupils develop a love of reading new texts in every class. Staff expose pupils to an extensive range of novels, carefully designed to broaden their understanding of the world. Pupils told inspectors that they value the pleasure that they get from reading.

Parents and carers told inspectors that they appreciate the support that they get from staff to help their children to enhance their reading knowledge at home. Children start learning to read as soon as they begin in the Reception Year. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to deliver the phonics curriculum. If children or pupils struggle to keep up, they receive high-quality additional support straight away. As a result, most pupils are fluent readers by the end of key stage 1.

Experienced leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are supported well by staff. Staff identify pupils' needs in a timely manner. Leaders use an appropriate range of strategies to offer suitable additional support. When necessary, leaders use outside agencies to help pupils and their families. All pupils, including those with SEND, access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Pupils' behaviour and rates of attendance are strong features of the school. Pupils, and children in the early years, understand the behaviour system. Disruption to learning is rare. Most pupils work hard and concentrate on their learning in lessons. Pupils and children play well together. They enjoy using the selection of playtime equipment provided. Parents were overwhelmingly positive about the experiences that their children have at school.

Pupils relish taking part in extra-curricular opportunities. For example, staff provide a range of leadership responsibilities for pupils, including through the eco council and charity work to support local food banks. Leaders are now in the process of helping pupils to understand the importance of their roles and how to fulfil them even more effectively.

Leaders have designed an exciting set of enrichment opportunities for pupils and children from the Reception Year to Year 6. These experiences help pupils to learn about wider

society and different cultures. Pupils said that these experiences help them to remember more in their learning. They also develop teamwork skills and learn how to persevere with tasks that are more difficult through participating in the wider personal development programme.

Leaders and governors have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They realise this vision. They are also mindful of staff workload and have taken action to reduce this where possible. Staff feel well supported by leaders and are proud to work at this school. School leaders appreciate the additional support and professional development provided by the trust.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the school's systems to safeguard pupils are effective. Leaders work successfully with different agencies to ensure that pupils are supported appropriately.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained in safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff are alert to any potential risks that pupils may face. They know how to report any concerns in a timely way. This helps to keep pupils safe.

Pupils learn how to protect themselves from harm, including in the wider community. They know who to speak to if they have any concerns. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to stay safe online.

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

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

- In a few subjects, leaders have not made sure that teachers are clear about the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn. On occasion, this hinders teachers in designing learning, and prevents some pupils from achieving all that they could. Leaders should make sure that teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn in these subjects.

## 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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St. Peter's Smithills Dean CofE Primary 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.

## 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>	145751
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241422
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	219
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Peter Bond
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matt Harding
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.spsd.bolton.sch.uk">www.spsd.bolton.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This school is part of the Forward as One Academy Trust.
- St Peter's Smithills Dean Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school in May 2018. When its predecessor school, St Peter's Smithills Dean CofE Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is voluntary aided and is part of the Diocese of Manchester. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in November 2016.
- Leaders do not currently make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff.

- The inspector spoke with members of the governing body and trustees. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. The inspector spoke with the staff who lead these subject areas. She visited lessons and spoke with teachers. The inspector spoke with pupils about their learning and viewed samples of their work. She also met with the leader for computing and music.
- The inspector observed pupils in key stages 1 and 2 read to trusted adults.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation relating to safeguarding. She reviewed leaders' approach to safer recruitment. The inspector also spoke with staff about their safeguarding knowledge and checked on how well they understood their safeguarding responsibilities.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during playtimes and while in lessons.
- The inspector considered the responses to the Ofsted survey for staff.
- The inspector considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also spoke with parents during the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Sarah Barraclough, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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