

# Inspection of a good school: St John with St Mark C of E Primary School

Athlone Avenue, Bury, Lancashire BL9 5EE

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Inspection dates:

22 and 23 November 2022

## **Outcome**

St John with St Mark C of E Primary School continues to be a good school.

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

Leaders encourage pupils to celebrate diverse faiths, cultures and beliefs. Children in the early years and pupils are happy and safe in school. They support and care for each other. They take responsibility for their actions and meet the high expectations of staff for their behaviour and achievement. This can be seen in lessons, in the corridors and at breaktimes.

Pupils are polite and courteous. They show respect to visitors. They are proud of their school and talk confidently about their learning experiences.

Leaders ensure that pupils behave in ways that are acceptable. Pupils are given reminders about good behaviour if they step out of line. Pupils say that this helps them to reflect on the impact of their behaviour on others. For example, they say that if someone is 'mean' towards them, then staff will oversee a subsequent 'restorative justice' meeting between pupils. In this way, bullying is rare and swiftly managed.

Parents spoken to are grateful for the approachability of all staff. If they have a concern, they know that they can meet with a staff member in school. They know that staff keep their children safe.

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

Senior leaders have ensured that the curriculum is well designed and structured. There is a clear emphasis on how each subject should be taught so that all pupils achieve success. Subject leaders talk knowledgeably about their responsibilities. Teachers know their subjects well. They benefit from ongoing professional development, mostly provided by senior and subject leaders.

Teachers and support staff in the early years department provide a safe, nurturing environment in which children thrive. Children develop early skills for reading, writing and mathematics. Teaching is designed to help children remember long term what they have

been taught and to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts. This is checked well by staff and leaders.

Teachers use assessment effectively in order to see what pupils know and remember. They recognise that it forms an integral part of how they teach. They pick up swiftly on pupils' responses in lessons, for example when addressing misconceptions. Teachers know the pupils very well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), those who are disadvantaged or with English as an additional language (EAL). Teaching, support and resources are well organised. Teachers are skilled at then pitching teaching and support to meet whole class, small group and individual needs, including those of pupils with SEND. Occasionally, pupils do not reach their full potential in some subjects. There are some missed opportunities for them to extend their use of new vocabulary and reasoning skills.

Leaders ensure that they engender a love of reading. There is a well-stocked school library. Pupils receive daily reading sessions. There is close partnership with parents to develop their children's reading. Leaders and teachers have produced a detailed overview of how the school has set about ensuring that all pupils benefit from the agreed phonics programme.

Pupils benefit from good-quality teaching, assessment and support in phonics and early reading and make progress from their starting points. Pupils who fall behind catch up because they receive timely additional teaching and support. Teachers ensure that the books pupils read match their knowledge of letters and sounds.

Pupils behave impeccably in lessons and at other times.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of activities offered after school, including sports such as netball, football and bowling for pupils with SEND. Staff organise educational trips out to events and museums, and music opportunities include tuition in and performance of violin, ukulele and tin whistle.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced through opportunities such as those to become spiritual ambassadors. These pupils provide support for others who may be experiencing social or emotional problems in school. Leaders have provided safe spaces and budget allowances for this initiative to develop.

Leaders' engagement with staff is strong. Staff are not overloaded in terms of their assessment responsibilities or other aspects of their workload.

Governors know the school well and hold leaders fully to account, for example when questioning them about patterns of attendance and punctuality or the school's use of pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils and its impact.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders work closely with families. Parents say that they value the support and advice that they receive about their children's well-being. Staff and governors receive regular updated training about safeguarding and are well-informed.

Leaders take swift action to address any child protection concerns in partnership with social services. Links with local community police and related agencies have led to positive interventions, such as assemblies for pupils about the dangers of knife crime.

Pupils learn how to make safe decisions in relationship, health and sex education lessons.

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

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

- In some subjects, pupils' progress is held back due to a lack of opportunities for extending their vocabulary and reasoning skills. This can limit pupils' deeper learning. Leaders need to monitor pupils' work to check that pupils further develop their vocabulary range and reasoning skills. In this way, pupils will deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding.

## **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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 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.

## 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>	133929
<b>Local authority</b>	Bury
<b>Inspection number</b>	10226071
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	331
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Victoria Cook
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steven Ollis
<b>Website</b>	<a href="mailto:www.stjohnwithstmark@org.uk">www.stjohnwithstmark@org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	13 and 14 December 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England primary school. Its most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) took place in January 2018.
- The school meets the needs of a diverse range of pupils, including pupils with EAL.
- The school uses alternative provision for some pupils. These pupils are attending Hindle's School of Excellence and remain on the roll of St John's with St Mark's while awaiting full-time placements at other schools.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken this into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff. The inspector held a discussion with two governors. He spoke with a small group of parents. The inspector held a telephone conversation with the school's improvement partner.
- The inspector checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. He looked at a range of documentation and spoke to leaders and staff.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading and phonics, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at samples of work, talked to pupils and held discussions with teachers. The inspector also looked at samples of pupils' work from other subjects.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes. He spoke with pupils about their experiences in school.
- The inspector spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector considered the free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils and Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The inspector considered documentation shared by school leaders, including the school's self-evaluation form, school development plan, curriculum documents and pupils' EHC plans.

### **Inspection team**

Jon Ashley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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