

Inspection of a good school: St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Oswaldtwistle

Mayfield Avenue, Oswaldtwistle, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 3AA

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Oswaldtwistle continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

All are made welcome at this friendly and happy school. Pupils and staff treat each other with kindness and respect. They behave well in lessons and around the school because staff's expectations of them are high.

Pupils arrive each morning full of excitement for the day ahead. They value the wide range of clubs, trips and visits that leaders provide. For example, they take part in art, choir, mathematics and sports clubs. Teachers make sure that pupils are happy and enjoy their learning.

Pupils describe their teachers as kind and caring. This helps them feel safe in school. Pupils know that adults are ready to listen and help them with any concerns or worries. Leaders take effective action to deal with any incidents of misbehaviour or bullying, should they occur.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to succeed, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils live up to their teachers' high expectations. They achieve well.

Pupils enjoy the wealth of leadership opportunities that leaders provide. For example, pupil ambassadors organise activities in mathematics, music and science. Pupils lead broadcasts to the school. They develop as confident and caring citizens, keen to contribute to the life of the school and the community. Pupils live out the school's values, including respect and love.

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

Leaders have put in place a broad and interesting curriculum which supports pupils well in their learning. Subject leaders have given careful thought to the knowledge that pupils

need to acquire. Learning is organised in logical steps. For example, in mathematics, leaders have considered how pupils will develop their knowledge of number and written calculations, starting from the Reception Year. In music, pupils build their composition skills in a logical way.

Leaders ensure that teachers have appropriate expertise in teaching the curriculum. Staff value working with teachers in school and from other schools to share ideas. They benefit from regular curriculum training. Subject leaders provide effective support for teachers new to the school.

In lessons, teachers make regular checks on how well pupils are learning. Staff are prompt to help any pupils falling behind to catch up. Subject leaders oversee how well pupils are learning and remembering the curriculum.

Leaders have made sure that reading is an important part of the curriculum. Children begin learning phonics soon after starting in the Reception Year. Leaders have provided staff with effective training to ensure that they support pupils well in their early reading. They match reading books closely to the phonics that pupils are learning. Staff provide a range of effective support to help pupils struggling to read to keep up with their phonics learning. Most pupils develop as fluent and confident readers. However, a small number of pupils are slow to develop fluency in reading. They do not have sufficient time in school to practise their phonics by re-reading books with an adult.

Teachers ensure that pupils develop a love of reading. They share a wide range of books and stories with their classes. This begins in the Reception Year, when children enjoy listening to and reading stories and rhymes. Pupils benefit from visiting the local library. They talked about their favourite authors and books with enthusiasm.

Leaders work closely with parents, carers and a range of professionals to identify pupils with SEND. Staff provide these pupils with a range of carefully planned support which is matched to their needs. This gives most pupils with SEND access to the same curriculum as their peers, where possible. Occasionally, pupils with SEND do not have enough time to revisit and practise important aspects of the curriculum, such as written calculations in mathematics. This slows their learning.

Staff provide a wide range of exciting and interesting experiences to develop pupils' personally. For example, pupils gain a secure understanding of diversity and the importance of respecting differences. They take on important roles in the school, such as being members of the eco council and worship leaders. They take an active part in the parish and wider local community, such as singing at a local care home and fundraising for charities.

Lessons are a hive of activity. Pupils try their very best and behave well. Learning is not disturbed by the need for reprimand. This starts in the Reception Year, when children settle quickly into new routines. In and around the school, pupils are exceptionally polite and welcoming to visitors. The school's pastoral team provides pupils and their families with a wide range of expert to address additional needs such as mental health and well-being. Governors know the school well. They make regular checks on the effectiveness of

the school's curriculum and provide leaders with an appropriate balance of challenge and support.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel well supported by governors and leaders. For example, they described leaders' efforts to consider their well-being and workload when making decisions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide staff with regular safeguarding training. This ensures that staff are alert to possible signs of abuse.

Leaders work closely with a range of external agencies to protect pupils. They make sure that pupils and their families get the support they need.

Through the curriculum, pupils find out about how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils know how to stay safe when working online. They find out about dangers in the community, such as drugs and alcohol.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of pupils at an early stage of reading do not have sufficient time in school to practise and re-read books with an adult. This means that they do not develop fluency in reading as quickly as they should. Leaders should ensure that those pupils struggling to read with fluency benefit from very regular practice and re-reading of books with an adult to develop their reading skills.
- In a small number of subjects, teachers sometimes do not give pupils with SEND enough time to revisit and practise important learning. This means that these pupils do not remember what they have learned over time. Leaders should ensure that pupils with SEND have sufficient time to consolidate learning so that they know and remember more.

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 school to be good in May 2013.

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

Unique reference number	119660
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10256124
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	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Joyce
Headteacher	Lesley Pemberton
Website	www.stmarysoswaldtwistle.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The school is a Roman Catholic school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in February 2020.
- The governing body has recently appointed a headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading and phonics, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, she met 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. She observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. She also looked at the curriculum and pupils' workbooks in some other subjects.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about school life, including behaviour.

- The inspector held meetings with a range of staff, including the acting headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the school's special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector spoke with members of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. She spoke with parents at the start of the school day. She considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and to the pupil survey.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. She spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe. She reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- The inspector spoke with a range of staff to discuss leaders' support for them.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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