

Inspection of a good school: St John Bosco Catholic Primary School

Green Lane, Maghull, Liverpool, Merseyside L31 8BW

Inspection dates:

30 November and 1 December 2022

Outcome

St John Bosco Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St John Bosco Catholic Primary School are a credit to their school community. They speak with enthusiasm and enjoyment about school life. Pupils appreciate the relationships that staff forge with them. This is a school where everyone knows each other well.

Pupils, and children in the early years, are at the forefront of leaders' thinking in this welcoming school. Leaders expect pupils to achieve well and to be suitably prepared for adult life.

Pupils take pride in their work. They behave well in lessons and around school. Pupils understand the importance of following the school rules. They play sensibly with each other during playtimes and at lunchtimes. Children in the early years settle quickly into school routines.

Pupils feel happy and safe in school. Staff understand and support pupils' individual needs well. Pupils know that they can trust staff to help them. Staff deal effectively with any incidents of bullying.

Pupils readily assume positions of responsibility, such as being librarians, school councillors and sports captains. They value the many opportunities that leaders provide to enhance their learning. For example, pupils spoke excitedly about den building, orienteering in the wooded area, playing tennis and using the adventure playgrounds.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that makes clear to teachers what pupils will learn and the order in which they should learn it. The curriculum is suitably ambitious. Pupils study a wide range of subjects that match the breadth of the national curriculum. Children in the early years are prepared well for the demands of key stage 1.

Leaders have identified the essential knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn and embed in their long-term memory. In the main, teachers use assessment strategies skilfully to address pupils' misconceptions. This helps pupils to learn well.

Overall, staff have secure subject knowledge. They use this to deliver the curriculum well in most subjects. However, some staff's subject knowledge is less secure. In response to this, leaders have sourced further training so that staff can deliver all subjects with equal confidence.

Although the curriculum is well thought out, some subject leaders do not check how well teachers are delivering subject content. Occasionally, these leaders do not have a full understanding of how well pupils are learning new topics and concepts. This also prevents subject leaders from providing additional support for staff to improve how they deliver some aspects of the curriculum.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. Pupils are keen to read. They enjoy borrowing high-quality books from the library. There is an effective phonics and reading curriculum in place. Children in the Reception Year begin to learn phonics as soon as they start school. Most children and pupils use their phonic knowledge to read with increasing fluency and confidence. Staff support children and pupils who fall behind to catch up quickly.

Leaders carefully select texts that link well to the topics that pupils study. Teachers read to children and pupils regularly. This helps children and pupils to develop a love of reading and to extend their vocabulary. By the end of key stage 1, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), become fluent and accurate readers.

Leaders have effective systems in place to identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Leaders ensure that teachers have the information that they need to successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND. The support that these pupils receive helps them to learn well.

Children and pupils display positive attitudes to learning. In the early years, children learn to take turns and to listen attentively to their teachers. Across the school, pupils learn without disruption.

Leaders offer a wide range of experiences for pupils. Pupils enjoy a variety of clubs, such as choir, dance, netball and gardening. They talk enthusiastically about contributing positively to the local community. For example, pupils recounted taking food donations to the local food bank and visiting a local care home to sing to the residents.

Governors provide effective support and challenge to leaders. Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders take the workload of staff, and their well-being, into account when making decisions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have prioritised building strong, trusting relationships with pupils and their families. This helps them to identify those pupils and their families who may be in need of extra support.

Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained and receive regular safeguarding updates throughout the year. Staff are alert to the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders have robust systems in place for staff to report and respond to safeguarding incidents in a timely manner.

Pupils know that staff will listen to their concerns and worries. Pupils speak confidently about how to stay safe, for example when they are online or in the wider community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders do not check how well teachers are delivering the curriculum. These subject leaders do not have a full understanding of how well pupils are learning subject content or whether staff need additional support to improve their delivery of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders are well equipped to check that teachers are delivering the curriculum as effectively as they should.

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 June 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

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| Unique reference number | 104941 |
| Local authority | Sefton |
| Inspection number | 10226225 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 212 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Madelaine Hartnett |
| Headteacher | Danny MacAreavy |
| Website | www.stjohnboscoprimary.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 20 April 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in November 2018.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and assistant headteacher, curriculum leaders, staff and pupils. The inspector also held meetings with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with curriculum leaders, spoke to pupils and teachers, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.

- The inspector scrutinised leaders' safeguarding records and the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. The inspector also reviewed leaders' records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and leaders' policies.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Michelle Beard, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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