

Inspection of a good school: Christ The King RC Primary School Manchester

Culcheth Lane, Newton Heath, Manchester M40 1LU

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 February 2023

Outcome

Christ The King RC Primary School Manchester continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils see school as a happy place to be. They feel well cared for and welcome.

Pupils respond well to the expectations that leaders have set for their behaviour. Pupils' conduct around school is calm and orderly. They are respectful of one another and work purposefully together. Although there are occasions when pupils fall out with each other, any misbehaviour, including rare incidents of bullying, are dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils feel safe at school.

Leaders have set higher aspirations for all pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND), by designing a more ambitious curriculum. Pupils are keen to learn. They are starting to meet the goals that leaders have set out for their learning. They achieve well.

Pupils enjoy a range of interesting extra-curricular activities that have been designed to complement the subjects that they study. Activities and clubs are carefully chosen to promote pupils' personal development, for example their resilience when raft building or rock climbing. There is a diverse range of clubs on offer, including skateboarding and archery.

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

Leaders have prioritised the development of pupils' reading knowledge. In the early years, there is a strong focus on developing children's understanding of language and communication skills. This starts in the Nursery class so that children are well prepared for the phonics programme that they encounter when they move into the Reception Year. Teachers check carefully on pupils' learning and address any gaps in their phonics knowledge. There is effective support in place to help most pupils who find reading difficult. However, some disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, do not have enough opportunities to practise reading. As a result, they struggle to blend letters quickly enough to be able to read fluently and confidently.

In recent years, leaders have redesigned their curriculum offer to build more effectively on pupils' prior learning. In most subjects, leaders have clearly defined what they want pupils to learn, and this is revisited so that pupils recall their learning well. For example, in history, Year 6 pupils understand how features of society in Ancient Greece have affected our daily lives, such as the concept of democracy. Leaders have also focused on developing pupils' subject-specific vocabulary so that pupils can explain their thinking. Teachers' checks on pupils' understanding are effective. This helps teachers to reinforce any weaker aspects of pupils' prior learning before moving on to new content.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have not defined the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. This means that teachers are unsure what they should teach. Some pupils do not remember some of the essential knowledge that they will need for their future learning.

Leaders have clear systems in place to identify pupils who may have specific needs. They ensure that pupils with SEND are supported well to access the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and towards their learning. There is little low-level disruption in classes. Pupils typically focus well on their work and are engaged in their learning.

Leaders and governors have implemented a range of strategies to develop pupils' well-being and mental health. Staff continually check on vulnerable pupils and focus on building pupils' confidence and self-esteem. In addition, pupils in Year 6 are given responsibilities around the school, such as digital leaders or school councillors. They take pride in carrying out their duties. The wide range of visits that leaders organise develop pupils' appreciation of their own and others' cultures.

The large majority of staff are positive about the vision for school development that has been set by governors and leaders. Staff appreciate the support that they receive from leaders. Staff value the opportunities that they have to learn from other staff or subject leaders in order to help them improve their own practice.

Governors offer effective challenge and support to leaders. Governors ask pertinent questions to understand the impact of their decisions on the quality of school development. For example, governors understand the difference that additional support is making to children's speaking and listening skills in the early years.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding training that staff receive ensures that they are vigilant and that they understand the signs and symptoms of abuse. Leaders ensure that local safeguarding issues are understood well by staff.

Leaders ensure that pupils and their families receive early help and support from outside agencies where necessary. Leaders continually review their safeguarding provision to improve on their offer and to meet the pupils' needs.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They understand the dangers of technology and social media. They are aware of who to go to if they have any concerns or worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, do not have enough opportunities to practise blending letters together to understand the words that they are reading. This affects their ability to keep up with the intended curriculum because they do not read with enough fluency. Leaders should ensure that these pupils get more opportunities to practise these skills to automaticity before moving on to learn new sounds.
- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not been clear enough about the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. This means that pupils do not build on their prior learning as well as they do in other subjects. Leaders should define the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn in these subjects so that pupils build more effectively on their prior learning to remember more of the topics that they study.

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 September 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.

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	105514
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10241852
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	427
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Harrison
Headteacher	Annette Deacy
Website	www.christtheking.manchester.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has taken post since the previous inspection.
- There have also been a number of changes to the teaching staff since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- This is a Catholic School. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in May 2016.

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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum 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. The inspector also heard pupils read individually.

- The inspector also spoke to pupils about the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector spoke with parents and carers at the start of the school day and took into account the views of those who responded to the Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector took into account the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the Ofsted's survey for pupils.
- The inspector met with different groups of pupils to ask them about safeguarding. The inspector reviewed documentation, which included the school's safeguarding policy, register of the checks carried out on new employees and safeguarding records.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at breaktimes and when walking round the school. He discussed behaviour and bullying with pupils, senior leaders and other staff.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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