

Inspection of a good school: St John Vianney School

Rye Bank Road, Firswood, Stretford, Manchester M16 0EX

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 February 2023

Outcome

St John Vianney School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and students in the sixth form have a wide range of enrichment activities to enjoy at school. They have many opportunities in and out of school to learn new skills or develop their interests and talents. The singing club before school is an enjoyable way to start the day. Pupils learn the technical skills to sing and the confidence to perform. Lunch clubs and after-school clubs harness pupils' skills. Pupils love the many trips and residential activities that they attend. They learn to cycle in the local park and enjoy water sports and outdoor activities. Pupils told inspectors that such activities help them with their independence and social skills.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are happy and proud to be part of the St John Vianney family.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. They know every pupil well and support them to achieve and behave well. Every individual is valued for who they are. Respect and equality are core values in the school. Pupils learn about difference and accept each other's unique qualities. Sometimes pupils do fall out, however, but any bullying or unkind comments are dealt with well by leaders and staff.

Pupils feel safe in school. They are confident that leaders and staff will listen to any concerns that they have. Pupils describe the school as 'a second home'. They enjoy playing football and badminton with staff during lunchtimes and breaktimes.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and exciting curriculum that meets the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of all pupils in the school well. The curriculum allows pupils to broaden their learning in key stages 4 and 5 through a number of options, such as photography, food studies and horticulture. Pupils achieve well. Many gain nationally recognised qualifications, including GCSE, functional skills and BTEC accreditation.

In most subjects, teachers use assessment strategies well to enable them to know if pupils have learned what they should. They use this information to reshape their teaching so that pupils can overcome gaps in their understanding. However, this is not the case in a few subjects. Teachers are less sure what pupils' next steps are. This prevents teachers from selecting the most appropriate resources or learning activities to help pupils to build on what they know. When this happens, pupils' learning is hindered.

Leaders have ensured that reading is a priority in school. Every opportunity is taken to encourage pupils to read. Poetry has inspired pupils to write and recite their own poems. Some pupils were successful in winning a prize for their poetry writing in a national competition. Dedicated time each day supports pupils' reading and literacy knowledge. Pupils who are at the early stages of reading have buddy readers and one-to-one time to read to an adult. Staff have a strong knowledge of phonics. They use this well to support pupils to recognise letters and sounds, so that they learn to read effectively. Speech and language therapists also support pupils with their communication skills and early reading knowledge. This cohesive support ensures that pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need to become confident, fluent readers.

There is a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour in school. Pupils learn how to regulate their emotions and manage their own behaviour. They have their own toolbox of resources that help them when they may be anxious or in need of support. As a result, there is very little low-level disruption in school.

Leaders have ensured that pupils' personal development is as important as their academic, vocational and technical education. Staff look to the future and work with parents and carers to prepare pupils for adulthood. Pupils learn to use public transport, go shopping and to manage money. Work experience is well established and used to allow pupils and students to experience possible work options. Some pupils, and students in the sixth form, have moved on to paid work and apprenticeships in restaurants, food and engineering.

The school's personal, social, and health education programme is well designed. It gives pupils many opportunities to learn and talk about sensitive issues, including those related to relationships and sex education, in a safe and supportive environment.

The multi-faith chaplaincy team represents the school and supports local charities, including food banks. Pupils learn about different cultures and religions through assemblies, themed weeks and in subjects. Pupils are tolerant of differences and they support each other well.

The majority of staff feel that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. They said that leaders have taken steps to reduce workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff have a secure understanding of how to keep pupils safe. Staff are quick to notice any physical changes or changes in pupils' behaviour that may indicate a cause for concern. Leaders take effective action, including referrals to the local authority and external agencies when needed, to secure the help required for pupils and families.

Leaders ensure that all pupils attending alternative provision are secure. They make all the necessary checks on attendance, staff recruitment, policies and procedures to know that pupils are safe.

Pupils learn how to stay safe, including online and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not use assessment strategies effectively to inform their teaching. This hinders them from selecting the best activities to help pupils learn. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the knowledge and skills that they need to check on pupils' learning so that the activities pupils complete help them to build on what they know.

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 2014.

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	106167
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	10241973
Type of school	All-through special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	119
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	18
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gerard Fieldhouse-Byrne
Headteacher	Aidan Moloney
Website	www.stjohnvianneyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Leaders use one unregistered alternative provider.
- At the time of this inspection, the school had no pupils below the age of 10.
- All pupils at the school have an education, health and care plan. The school caters for pupils with a wide range of needs. These include autism spectrum disorder, moderate learning difficulties and speech, language and communication.
- The school is a Roman Catholic school. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in July 2019.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors 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. An inspector also listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- During the inspection, inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding. They also spoke with leaders and staff.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents expressed through Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. They also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Julie Bather, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023