

Inspection of a good school: St Charles' Catholic Primary School

Tramway Road, Aigburth, Liverpool, Merseyside L17 7JA

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 February 2023

Outcome

St Charles' Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at school. They are considerate of the feelings and welfare of others. Pupils are cared for well by staff. Pupils appreciate the warm welcome that they receive from staff at the start of the school day.

Most pupils behave well. Where there are minor fallings-out, staff quickly sort them out. Pupils know that they can speak to a trusted adult if they have any worries. If there is any bullying, leaders and staff deal with it quickly and effectively.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievement. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils live up to leaders' expectations. They work hard and try their best.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of after-school activities, such as the science, art and board games clubs. Pupils enjoy learning about their local area. Their visits to local museums and art galleries bring the curriculum to life. Pupils take on extra responsibilities, such as play leaders and school councillors, with pride.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. In most subjects, leaders have clearly identified the important knowledge that pupils must know and remember. Leaders have provided teachers with the appropriate support so that teachers can deliver these subject curriculums effectively.

In most subjects, teachers use assessment strategies effectively to establish what pupils know and can do. This helps teachers to design appropriate learning activities that support pupils to know and remember more. As a result, pupils achieve well.

A few subjects are at an earlier stage of development. Some leaders do not have sufficient expertise to carry out their roles effectively. Leaders have not clarified what it is

that they want pupils to learn or the order in which this knowledge should be taught. In addition, teachers have not had the help that they need to deliver these subject curriculums as intended. Consequently, some pupils do not learn as well as they should in these subjects.

Leaders have ensured that reading is a high priority throughout the school. Children learn phonics from the very beginning of the Reception Year. Teachers and support staff deliver the phonics programme well. Leaders regularly check that pupils are keeping up with the programme. Those pupils who find reading more difficult receive effective support to help them catch up. Older pupils enjoy reading a wide range of books.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers. There is very little disruption in lessons. Pupils are able to get on with their learning without distraction.

Leaders have effective systems in place for the early identification of pupils with SEND. There is a well-considered range of support to ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum alongside their peers. This enables these pupils to learn well.

Leaders provide a range of opportunities that support pupils' personal development. For example, pupils engage in meditation activities to support their physical and mental well-being. Pupils develop an understanding of British values, such as democracy. Leaders ensure that pupils are taught the importance of respect and tolerance.

Leaders are considerate of the staff's well-being. Leaders take staff's workload into account when reviewing policies. Governors have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are diligent in holding leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a strong oversight of safeguarding across the school. They ensure that staff know the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders work well with other agencies to provide the support that some pupils and their families need.

Leaders ensure that the school's curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils have recently learned about the potential risks when playing and working online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders' expectations of what pupils should be taught are not clear enough. This hampers teachers from designing learning activities that help pupils to

build their knowledge securely over time. Leaders should ensure that they finalise their curriculum thinking in these subjects.

- Some curriculum leaders do not have the expertise that they need to carry out their roles effectively. This means that they are less able to support teachers to implement the curriculum as intended. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders have the training and support that they need to lead their areas of responsibility well.

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 November 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	104646
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10256189
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	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola McCloy
Headteacher	Rebecca Dean
Website	www.stcharlescatholicprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	28 and 29 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in January 2018.
- Leaders make use of two registered alternative provisions.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.

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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders.
- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body, the archdiocese and the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics

and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.

- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector checked the school's single central record. She met with the leaders responsible for safeguarding, sampled case studies and reviewed documentation.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils. She also spoke to pupils during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspector spoke with some parents and carers. She also reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- The inspector held meetings with members of staff. She considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Kelly Butler, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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