

Inspection of a good school: Silverdale St John's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Emesgate Lane, Silverdale, Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 0RF

Inspection date:

21 March 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including children in the early years, are happy to attend this small, friendly, village school. Pupils appreciate the care and support that they receive from staff. They play and work in harmony with their friends across the school.

Each day pupils live out the school's Christian values by being kind and helpful to each other. They live up to leaders' high expectations of their behaviour. They are proud of the rewards they receive for behaving well. They learn to manage their behaviour, if they find this difficult. Staff deal with incidents of bullying swiftly and effectively. This makes pupils feel safe.

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, in some subjects, pupils do not learn as well as they should. This is because, in these subjects, the curriculums are not as well developed as they should be. Leaders have not ensured that teachers have had sufficient training to teach some aspects of the curriculum.

Pupils have many opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities to develop their interests and talents. They attend clubs, including coding, gardening and football. They appreciate the beautiful spaces they have in the school grounds and local area, including the beach and the forest.

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

Leaders have designed a broad curriculum, from early years to Year 6. However, the school has experienced considerable instability in staffing in the last year. As a result,

leaders have not had the opportunity to develop their curriculum thinking sufficiently well. In some subjects, they have not identified the important knowledge pupils need to acquire and the order in which teachers should teach it.

In some subjects, such as mathematics, teachers regularly check on what pupils know and remember. However, in other subjects, they do not find out whether pupils have gaps in their learning which need to be addressed in future teaching. This prevents pupils from progressing through the curriculum as well as they should in some subjects.

Leaders have recently prioritised reading across the school. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and novels. They have access to a range of fiction and non-fiction books. Children's phonics lessons begin as soon as they start school in the early years. However, leaders have not ensured that staff are sufficiently well trained in teaching early reading. Teachers do not identify quickly enough pupils who are struggling to learn some sounds. This means that pupils do not catch up as quickly as they should when they fall behind in their early reading.

Leaders have improved the provision for pupils with SEND. They are quick to identify the needs of these pupils. They work with a range of external agencies to help pupils and meet their needs. They have ensured that teachers are clear about how to make adaptations so that pupils with SEND successfully follow the same curriculum as their peers.

In the main, pupils focus sensibly on their learning and work without disruption. The school is calm and orderly. Children in the early years quickly learn what is expected of them. Pupils are kind and considerate in class and at playtimes.

Leaders enhance pupils' personal development effectively. Pupils, including those with SEND, enjoy a range of trips and visits, including to York, Coniston and Lancaster. They benefit from a variety of cultural experiences that prepare them for life in modern Britain. Older pupils readily take on leadership roles. These include school councillors, sports leaders and worship leaders.

Leaders, including governors, have a clear vision about what they want to achieve in the school. Despite the instability in staffing in the last year, they ensure that staff are well supported in managing their workload and well-being. They have quickly developed a culture of high expectations and trust in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are regularly trained to recognise signs of abuse or neglect. Leaders ensure that staff know exactly what to do if they are worried or concerned about a pupil. Staff are knowledgeable about the risks pupils face, including online and in the community.

Through the curriculum, pupils find out about a range of situations which may lead to harm. For example, they learn about road safety and how to keep themselves safe online.

They know that they should speak to a trusted adult if the actions of others make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not identified clearly what they want pupils to learn and when they want them to learn it. Leaders should ensure that their curriculum intentions are clear and detailed enough for teaching staff to follow in all subjects so that pupils know and remember more.
- Teachers and other adults are not experts in the teaching of early reading. As a result, pupils do not gain the phonic knowledge they need quickly enough. Leaders must provide teachers with sufficient training to allow them to teach the phonics programme effectively.
- In some subjects, assessment strategies do not give teachers enough information to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers use effective checks on learning to shape future teaching which clarifies pupils' misconceptions and strengthens their knowledge.

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 December 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	119541
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10256205
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	65
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Mary Ashton
Headteacher	Sarah Sanderson
Website	www.silverdale.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher is new to the role since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school is a Church of England School. The last section 48 inspection was in May 2017.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, they 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. They also listened to pupils read.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher. They also met with subject leaders and a group of teachers.
- Inspectors met with governors. The lead inspector also spoke with two local authority advisers to the school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in meetings and in and around the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the responses to the staff and pupil questionnaires.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. They spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe. They reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.

Inspection team

Emma Jackson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Andy Hunt

Ofsted Inspector

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