

Inspection of a good school: St Luke's C of E Primary School

Morley Street, Bury, Lancashire BL9 9JQ

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 March 2023

Outcome

St Luke's C of E Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' pure joy in attending this school shines through in their warm smiles, cheery waves and joyful laughter. They are extremely proud to be part of the St Luke's family. They trust the staff implicitly. Pupils know that adults are on their side, ready to help them when they face difficulties, or to cheer them on when they experience success. Pupils feel safe and well looked after.

Pupils' strong appreciation of diversity runs like a golden thread from the early years to Year 6. Pupils look beyond the outward appearance and beliefs of others to see the person inside. They do not indulge in name-calling because someone is different. Indeed, they are absolutely adamant that such unkindness does not happen in their school. If it does, or if bullying should occur, leaders deal with these incidents very well.

Leaders expect pupils to behave well and to give of their best in all that they do. Pupils value their education. They work hard, listen attentively and show respect to their teachers and to each other. Overall, most pupils achieve well.

Pupils relish meeting visitors to the school and they enjoy a broad range of trips. Such events open their eyes to the wonders of the world, while helping them to aim high for their future. They are well prepared for the next steps in their lives.

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

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from a well-established and ambitious curriculum that reflects the context of their everyday lives. An appreciation of difference and an understanding of equality sits at the heart of the curriculum offer. This accounts for pupils' readiness to act as positive citizens in modern society. Pupils take on positions of responsibility, such as peer mentors, with zeal and determination because they want to make a difference to their community.

The learning journey at St Luke's starts from the minute that children enter the early years. Leaders have carefully crafted the curriculum to ensure that the fundamental building blocks for future learning are taught to children in the Nursery and Reception classes. This sets them up well for the move into Year 1.

In many subjects in key stages 1 and 2, leaders have organised the curriculum content so that pupils can successfully develop their knowledge over time. However, in some subjects, leaders have been less decisive about fine-tuning the essential knowledge that pupils must learn. At times, teachers are not sure what knowledge should be taught, emphasised and rehearsed until it is held securely in pupils' memories. In some subjects, there is too much content. This leads to pupils gaining a broad, rather than a deep, understanding of what they are taught. This hampers their ability to make links across their learning. It also means that, by the end of Year 2, some pupils have not mastered the fundamental knowledge and skills that enable them to make the best possible start in Year 3.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain new learning confidently and they check carefully that pupils have understood what has been taught. Teachers take the time to help pupils to overcome any misconceptions. Pupils typically achieve well. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic did leave its mark on those pupils who left Year 6 in 2022. Despite teachers' attempts to recover lost learning in pupils' writing knowledge, the gaps that had developed proved to be too wide. This is no longer the case. The benefit of time and teachers' close attention to pupils' needs mean that current pupils are catching up quickly.

Leaders are becoming increasingly effective in identifying the needs of pupils with SEND. This starts early on in the learning journey so that pupils get the support that they need to achieve well. Recent training means that staff use a range of different approaches effectively in order to help pupils with SEND access the curriculum.

Reading enjoys centre stage within the curriculum. Pupils develop a love of reading through the broad range of texts that they encounter on a daily basis. Children in the early years, and pupils in key stage 1, benefit from a systematic approach to teaching phonics. Well-trained staff, well-matched books and effective strategies to help those who find reading more difficult ensure that pupils become fluent and enthusiastic readers.

Pupils want to learn. They avoid wasting time in lessons. Instead, they concentrate and try their best. Pupils are considerate to others. They behave very well. This was clearly evident in their impeccable conduct during a whole-school reflection event to mark the anniversary of the first national lockdown. Pupils are invested in the school rules because they have been instrumental in shaping them to keep everyone safe and secure. Leaders have been very successful in ensuring that pupils attend school regularly.

Pupils delight in the opportunities to find out about the world beyond the school gates. They gain a secure understanding of fundamental British values and they develop empathy for those who are less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are supported to keep physically and mentally healthy. They are taught how to recognise the signs of unhealthy relationships and how to respond to peer pressure.

Leaders' honest and accurate views of the school's effectiveness are underpinned by their willingness to seek external support and advice. Members of the governing body have a detailed knowledge of all aspects of school life. Their support and challenge are valued. They make a strong contribution to the leadership of the school.

The vast majority of staff are positive about being a member of the school community. They believe that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that keeping pupils safe is everyone's business. Their investment in staff training, especially the high proportion of staff equipped to act as designated safeguarding leaders, is testament to the importance that they place on protecting pupils from harm.

Staff across the school are alert to pupils at risk of harm. Concerns are shared swiftly and acted on diligently to ensure that pupils receive the support that they need.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations. They know that the importance of sharing their worries and how to report any incidents that make them feel uncomfortable, unhappy or unsafe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the key knowledge that pupils must know in order to unlock future learning is unclear. Sometimes, pupils' learning is superficial because they cover too much subject content. This makes it difficult for them to make links with what they already know and can do. Leaders should refine the curriculum design in these remaining subjects. This is so that teachers know exactly what knowledge must be taught, emphasised and recalled in order for pupils to gain a deep body of knowledge over time.
- At times, the curriculum does not help some pupils in key stage 1 to gain the fundamental knowledge and skills that should be fully secure by the end of Year 2. This means that some gaps in learning linger into key stage 2. Leaders should ensure that the key stage 1 curriculum enables pupils to make the best possible start when they enter Year 3.

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 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	133944
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10240216
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	482
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tamoor Tariq
Headteacher	Melanie Michael
Website	www.stlukesbury.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England primary school. It is part of the Diocese of Manchester. The previous section 48 inspection took place in November 2018.
- Since the previous inspection, a new deputy headteacher has taken up post.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- A breakfast club is in operation each day before the start of lessons.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, including early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, looked at a sample of pupils' work, spoke to teachers and talked to pupils about their learning. One inspector also observed pupils reading to familiar adults.

- Inspectors met with leaders of other subjects to consider the curriculum in these areas.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders. They also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector spoke to representatives of the local authority and the Diocese of Manchester.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their views of the school and observed their behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation shared by school leaders or that was made available on the website. They checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe through a review of documentation and through discussions with leaders, governors, pupils and staff.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the views of staff and pupils through the Ofsted online surveys.

Inspection team

Jo Olsson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Schelene Ferris

Ofsted Inspector

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