

# Inspection of a good school: St Oswald's Catholic Primary School, Longton

Chapel Lane, Longton, Preston, Lancashire PR4 5EB

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Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2023

## Outcome

St Oswald's Catholic Primary School, Longton continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including children in the early years, said that they feel happy and safe at school. They described St Oswald's Catholic Primary School as a friendly and caring learning community, where staff encourage them to try everything.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' achievement. Pupils benefit from a broad and varied curriculum. They spoke enthusiastically about their learning. Pupils are articulate and confident. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to teachers' instructions and are eager to take part in activities. They achieve well.

Pupils are clear about the high standards of conduct that leaders expect. They understand the school's golden rules and they support each other to follow them. Across the school, pupils behave well. They enjoy positive relationships with staff. Pupils were confident that leaders deal with any incidents of bullying effectively.

Pupils benefit from a vast array of extra-curricular clubs, trips and visits. For example, they talked with relish about the school's 'tough kidder' obstacle race and visits to local museums. Older pupils are positive role models for younger pupils, for example, when acting as reading buddies to children in the Reception class.

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

Leaders have designed a well-thought-out curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In many subjects, the curriculum is coherently organised and meticulously sets out the building blocks of knowledge that subject leaders want pupils to learn over time. In these subjects, pupils develop a deep body of subject knowledge.

In a few other subjects, subject leaders have not finalised the knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember. Added to this, leaders have not carefully considered the logical order in which they introduce pupils to new concepts. This sometimes hinders

teachers from designing learning that builds on what pupils know already. In these subjects, some pupils do not build on previous learning as securely as they could.

Leaders have successfully supported teachers to gain an expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach. In most subjects, teachers deliver the curriculum well. For example, teachers break down learning into small steps to help pupils to acquire new knowledge easily. Added to this, teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to recap and reinforce their learning. As a result, many pupils spoke confidently about their learning.

Mostly, teachers use effective assessment methods to identify what pupils have remembered and understood. However, in subjects where leaders are finalising the curriculums, teachers' checks do not provide them with sufficient information about how well pupils have learned important content. This sometimes prevents teachers from identifying pupils' misconceptions as quickly and accurately as they should.

Leaders have put in place an effective reading programme that supports pupils, including those pupils with SEND, to become confident, fluent and avid readers. Children begin learning phonics at the beginning of the Reception Year. Staff are confident and well trained in the teaching of phonics. They make sure that pupils read books that match the sounds that they already know. Leaders ensure that pupils who fall behind with their phonics knowledge receive appropriate support to catch up quickly.

Once pupils have mastered phonics, staff introduce them to a wide range of books from different authors and different genres. Staff foster a love of reading. Consequently, older pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, enjoy using the school's well-stocked library and enthusiastically recommend books for others to read.

Leaders accurately identify the needs of pupils' with SEND at the earliest opportunity. Teachers make sure that these pupils access the same curriculum as their peers by adapting the delivery of the curriculum as necessary. Leaders work well with parents and carers, and outside professionals to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support that they need to achieve well.

In the early years, children are happy and highly motivated to learn. They play eagerly with their friends. In lessons, pupils are respectful to each other and their teachers. They learn without disruption. Everyone understands the rules and routines that should be followed. Pupils are well mannered and friendly.

Leaders have designed a personal development programme that sparks pupils' interest in the wider world. For example, through 'our wonderful world' assemblies, pupils learn about the importance of equality, inclusion and tolerance. They develop a respect for other cultures and celebrate difference. Pupils are encouraged to take on leadership roles, such as acting as reading ambassadors and sports captains.

Governors work closely with leaders to fully evaluate all aspects of the quality of education that pupils receive. They challenge and support leaders effectively.

Leaders and staff have forged strong relationships with pupils and their families. Staff are proud to work at the school. They know that their efforts to support pupils are highly valued by leaders. Staff appreciate leaders' actions to look after their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders ensure that all staff are trained so that they understand their safeguarding responsibilities well. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare.

Leaders monitor individual safeguarding cases diligently. They take timely and effective action when necessary. Leaders are adept at working with external agencies to ensure that appropriate support is in place for vulnerable pupils and their families.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn about the possible risks that they may face in their local community and online. Pupils know who they can speak to if they are feeling worried or anxious. They learn how to keep themselves safe.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some foundation subjects, leaders are still refining what they want pupils to learn and the order in which this content should be delivered. This hinders teachers in designing learning that builds securely on pupils' prior knowledge. Leaders should ensure that the curriculums in these subjects define the most important things that pupils need to know and that they are logically ordered. This is so that pupils can learn deeply in these subjects.
- In some subjects, teachers' checks do not provide sufficient enough information about how well pupils have learned the content in the curriculum. This sometimes prevents teachers from identifying pupils' misconceptions quickly enough. As leaders finalise the curriculums in the foundation subjects, they should ensure that assessment strategies support teachers to pinpoint and remedy pupils' gaps in 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 February 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119637
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10283647
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	245
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Paul Allison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bernadette Wood
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.longton-st-oswalds.lancs.sch.uk">www.longton-st-oswalds.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The most recent section 48 inspection was carried out in May 2019.
- Leaders do not use an alternative provision for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and other members of staff. The inspector also spoke with members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The inspector spoke to pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. The inspector also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.

- The inspector reviewed a wide range of evidence, including leaders' self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the single central record. The inspector met with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and some pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Kate Bowker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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