

Inspection of a good school: Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Old Chapel Street, Edgeley, Stockport SK3 9HX

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 May 2023

Outcome

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be part of this welcoming school community. They greet their teachers cheerfully as they arrive each morning. They enjoy coming to school because they know that staff take good care of them. This helps them to learn well and feel safe.

Leaders encourage pupils, and children in the early years, to strive to be their 'best selves'. Pupils rise to these high expectations by behaving well and trying their hardest in class. They are delighted when they receive 'Bee Attitudes' rewards for their positive behaviour. They celebrate their classmates' successes with pride.

Pupils have learned the importance of respecting everyone. They know that their learning about tolerance and diversity helps them to treat each other with kindness and care. If bullying and name-calling should happen, leaders act swiftly to put a stop to them.

Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the many ways in which leaders enrich their learning. For example, they were excited to have a video call with the author of a book they had recently enjoyed. They represent their school proudly in poetry competitions and musical performances at the town hall.

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

Leaders are in the process of strengthening the curriculum. In many subjects, they have set out an ambitious body of knowledge that they want all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to learn and remember. This knowledge is broken down into smaller building blocks, which pupils encounter in a logical order from the Reception Year up to Year 6. This helps to ensure that their learning builds on a strong foundation. By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve well.

In a few subjects, improvements to the curriculum began more recently. These subject leaders are still finalising their curriculum thinking. They are not clear enough about what

pupils should be learning and when. At times, this leads to a disconnection between what leaders intend to be taught and what is actually taught.

In the main, teachers deliver the curriculum well. They explain new ideas clearly and ensure that pupils revisit previous learning often. This helps most pupils to remember what they been taught. In some subjects, however, teachers' strategies to check what pupils have learned are less effective. This makes it harder for teachers to know whether pupils' knowledge is secure before moving on. Some pupils, including children in the Reception Year, learn unevenly as a result.

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils with SEND. Leaders identify these pupils' needs accurately. Teachers skilfully adapt their teaching so that pupils with SEND can succeed alongside their classmates.

Leaders and staff prioritise reading across the school. Pupils read widely and often. For instance, pupils in key stage 2 were keen to speak about their favourite novels and the poems that they had recently enjoyed.

Leaders have recently improved the phonics programme. Children get off to a strong start by learning phonics from the beginning of the Reception Year. Teachers ensure that pupils read books that are closely matched to the sounds they already know. Well-trained staff support pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge, including older pupils in key stage 2. This is helping pupils to catch up much more quickly than in the past.

Leaders set clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils know that these expectations are fair. In the Reception Year, children settle into school routines quickly. As they move through key stages 1 and 2, pupils take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour. Learning is hardly ever disrupted. At social times, pupils play together well. Older pupils volunteer as 'playground friends' to help younger children to join in safely with games.

Pupils appreciate the many opportunities they have to contribute to school life. They learn about democracy by voting for school councillors, reading ambassadors and well-being champions. Pupils who spoke to the inspector expressed their pride in being able to help others and to put forward their classmates' ideas to leaders.

Governors have a sharp understanding of the school's priorities. They have helped to ensure that leaders have the capacity to continue improving the school. Governors provide appropriate support and challenge to ensure that leaders' plans are implemented effectively.

Staff are proud to work here and feel supported by leaders. They recognise that there is a need to take on different responsibilities. Some staff told the inspector that, because of this, their workload can be challenging. However, staff appreciate the steps that leaders have taken to reduce this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that staff prioritise safeguarding. Staff are well trained to spot signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They follow leaders' procedures for reporting any concerns. This helps to create a strong culture of safeguarding.

Leaders follow up any concerns thoroughly. They make sure that pupils receive help if they need it. This includes working with external agencies such as children's services.

Leaders work with parents and carers to help them understand potential dangers, such as how to help their children stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not fully defined the most important knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember. This means that, in these subjects, teachers are not sufficiently clear about what they should be teaching. This hinders pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that they are precise about what they want pupils to know, and in what order teachers should deliver this learning, so that pupils develop a deep and interconnected knowledge of these subjects.
- In some subjects, including in the early years, teachers do not have a thorough enough understanding of how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge that teachers are unaware of. Leaders should roll out their plans to ensure that assessment strategies are well matched to the knowledge in the curriculum so that teachers can accurately identify any learning that pupils have missed.

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 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	106114
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10256154
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Catherine Gould
Headteacher	Anna Core
Website	www.ourladys.stockport.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The school's most recent section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in July 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

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 that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector completed deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science and physical education. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with teachers and pupils. The inspector listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents. He spoke to the headteacher and senior leaders throughout the inspection. He also met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.

- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also met with a representative of the local authority and a diocesan representative.
- The inspector held meetings with the staff responsible for safeguarding and scrutinised the single central record. The inspector considered leaders' safeguarding processes and procedures. He observed pupils during social times and discussed safeguarding with them.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Ben Hill, lead inspector

His Majesty's 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