

Inspection of a good school: St Philip's Church of England Primary School

Loxford Street, Hulme, Manchester, Greater Manchester M15 6BT

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 June 2023

Outcome

St Philip's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at St Philip's. They told the inspector that the school is very welcoming and that they value being part of the learning community. Pupils look forward to seeing their teachers each day, and they said that they enjoy learning about different topics.

Pupils know that leaders and staff have high expectations of them. This motivates pupils to behave well and to try their best in their learning. Staff reward pupils' efforts with golden tickets, house points and certificates. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), typically achieve well. The early years prepares children well for the next stages in their learning.

Leaders and staff resolve incidents of name-calling and bullying quickly. Pupils have positive attitudes towards other people. They know not to judge others by their differences, such as for their skin colour, for their beliefs or for being disabled. Pupils know that the make-up of families can vary. They understand the need to respect these differences.

Leaders have established close links with local organisations, such as the neighbouring university. This enriches the wider curriculum. For example, pupils benefit from instruction from professional sports coaches. Prominent people from the local community have visited to speak to pupils, helping them to be aspirational for their future lives.

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

Leaders have successfully focused on improving the quality of education that pupils receive. They have ensured, during several changes to the school's leadership and governance arrangements, that most pupils have continued to learn well. This includes children in the early years. Leaders have implemented a broad and rich curriculum. They have identified the most important knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which this should happen.

Across the curriculum, staff generally deliver subjects well. They develop their own knowledge by accessing the training that leaders provide. However, from time to time, teachers do not select the most appropriate activities to deliver new information and concepts to pupils. This hinders how well some pupils learn new content across the curriculum.

Typically, teachers use effective systems to check how well pupils are learning, particularly in subjects such as mathematics and phonics. This enables teachers to identify areas where pupils are less secure or where they have developed misconceptions in their learning. Nonetheless, in a few subjects, teachers do not use leaders' assessment systems well enough. Over time, this means that some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge.

Leaders and staff are fastidious in identifying pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. They work closely with external professionals, and parents and carers, to provide the additional support that these pupils need. As a result, pupils with SEND follow the same curriculums as their peers. Typically, they learn well.

Reading is a priority across the school. Leaders find out which genre of books pupils enjoy reading. All pupils regularly visit the well-stocked library. Staff encourage them to read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to read throughout the day, such as at lunchtime and during library club. They enjoy completing quizzes about the books that they read. Some older pupils enjoy times when they can read stories to younger children.

Leaders have introduced a new phonics programme that staff follow with fidelity. They have made sure that all staff have the relevant expertise to teach early reading well. Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start at the school. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they are already familiar with. This helps pupils to practise their reading and, typically, most pupils develop into fluent and accurate readers.

Usually, pupils conduct themselves well throughout the school. They enjoy engaging in a variety of team games at playtime. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. In lessons, they listen to instructions from adults and complete their work appropriately. Very occasionally, a small number of pupils display some low-level behaviour. When this occurs, teachers are quick to address any disruption to minimise the impact on other pupils' learning.

Leaders provide many opportunities to enhance pupils' wider development. For example, pupils attend clubs and engage in sports and the arts. Pupils relished recalling their visits to local museums, the theatre and an outdoor venue where they participated in water sports. Older pupils can apply for leadership roles, including play leaders and school councillors.

The recently formed governing body has been determined to work closely with leaders and to hold them to account for the quality of education that the school provides. It has been successful in achieving this. Governors understand the importance of supporting staff and reducing their workload where possible. Staff reported high levels of morale. They feel well supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established strong systems to ensure that safeguarding is of the highest priority in the school. Leaders provide staff with up-to-date safeguarding training so that they understand how to keep pupils safe and protected from harm. Staff identify welfare concerns early, and they provide appropriate support for pupils and their families.

Pupils know how to lead healthy lifestyles. Visits from professionals, such as police community support officers, help to develop pupils' understanding of how to stay safe in the local area. Pupils have a detailed knowledge of how to protect themselves when outdoors and while using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, some teachers do not choose the most appropriate activities to deliver the curriculum content. This hinders how well pupils learn new information and concepts. Leaders should ensure that teachers deliver the curriculum as intended, to enable pupils to learn all that they should.
- In one or two subjects, teachers do not use leaders' assessment systems sufficiently well to identify how effectively pupils are learning new knowledge. As a result, over time, some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should help teachers to use assessment information to better identify and address gaps in pupils' 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 January 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

Unique reference number	105509
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10283638
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jess Kippen
Headteacher	Gavin Shortall
Website	www.st-philips.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Community of Saints Church of England Federation.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes to the school's leadership and governance arrangements.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- Leaders provide a breakfast club for pupils.
- St Philip's is a Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in November 2017.

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 carried out deep dives into the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and visited a sample of lessons. He spoke with teachers and with pupils about their learning. He looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read with a familiar adult. He discussed reading with a group of older pupils.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- The inspector observed how pupils behaved around the school, including at breakfast club and at lunchtime.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other leaders. He also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector held telephone calls with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- The inspector reviewed school policies and procedures, including those relating to safeguarding. He scrutinised documentation, such as training records. The inspector discussed safeguarding with governors, leaders and staff.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. He spoke with groups of staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector met with some parents at the start of the school day. He took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Lobodzinski, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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