

# Inspection of St Christopher's Catholic Primary School

Warwick Road, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire SK6 3AX

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Inspection dates: 20 and 21 September 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 15 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a friendly and supportive school. Pupils understand the importance of respect for all. They take pride in being kind and caring for each other. They learn about this through their school values. Pupils told inspectors that everyone is welcome in their school family. This makes them feel happy.

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff have high expectations for pupils' academic and wider development. In the main, pupils achieve well.

Pupils behave well because they understand what the school expects from them. They cooperate well with each other in lessons and at breaktimes. A small number of parents raised concerns about behaviour and bullying. Bullying is dealt with appropriately. Any occasional arguments between pupils are sorted out quickly by staff. Staff respond sensitively to any worries that pupils may have.

Pupils are proud to make a positive difference to their local community, for example by visiting a local care home and raising funds for charities. Members of the school eco-committee encourage pupils to care for the school grounds and the wider world through litter picks and recycling initiatives. Older pupils contribute to school life by taking on additional leadership responsibilities.

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

The school's curriculum is designed to be broad and ambitious for all pupils. There are effective systems in place to ensure that the school quickly identifies pupils who may have additional needs. Most pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Where required, leaders use individual learning plans to help make sure that teaching is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND are well supported.

The school provides opportunities for parents and carers to access guidance and information about how to support pupils' learning at home. This includes workshops and information sessions about phonics and reading.

The teaching of reading has been prioritised across the school. Staff have had training to ensure that they have the knowledge that they need to teach reading confidently. There is a well-ordered phonics programme in place from the beginning of the Reception Year. This means that pupils learn sounds in a logical order. They read books that contain the sounds that they know. The school has effective support in place for pupils who find reading difficult. This helps most pupils to read with confidence and fluency.

The school has identified the knowledge pupils should learn and the order in which this should be taught in most subjects. Where the most important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils should learn and revisit are made clear, staff are able to ensure that pupils are supported to make connections in their learning. This enables

pupils to build a deep understanding of these subjects and achieve well. However, in a small number of subjects, the school is not sufficiently clear about the most important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils should learn and revisit. This hinders how well pupils deepen their understanding of important concepts over time.

Appropriate activities are usually used to help pupils to learn the curriculum content well. Occasionally, the activities selected do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to understand new ideas and concepts. This means that some pupils do not learn all that they could.

Routines for learning and behaviour are established in the early years. These continue throughout the school. In most lessons, pupils listen carefully to their teachers and focus on their work. There are times when a small number of pupils get distracted from their learning. However, teachers deal with these occasions well, and pupils quickly get back on track. Pupils who struggle to manage their own behaviour receive appropriate support from the school.

Pupils relish opportunities to contribute to decision-making in the school. For example, a group of pupils have recently worked to design a new trim trail area for the school grounds. These experiences help pupils to build confidence and independence. Pupils have access to a range of physical and sporting activities throughout the school day, including after school. They are taught about online safety and about healthy relationships.

Governors know the school well; they have clear oversight of the school's strengths and current areas of development. They are proactive in engaging with staff and are mindful of staff's well-being. The school considers any possible impact on staff's workload when making decisions about curriculum changes or policies. Staff appreciate this support and feel valued.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In a small number of subjects, the school has not clearly identified the most important subject-specific knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn and revisit. This prevents some pupils from making connections and deepening their understanding. The school should ensure that it is clear about the most important knowledge and vocabulary pupils need to learn and revisit in these subjects.
- Occasionally, the activities selected to teach new learning do not support pupils to learn new ideas and concepts. This hinders how well some pupils learn. The

school should ensure that staff are further supported to design learning that supports pupils to understand and learn new knowledge and information effectively.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106117
<b>Local authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	10226348
<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>	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mary Hostler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Maria Waters
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-christophers.stockport.sch.uk">www.st-christophers.stockport.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 February 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The last section 48 inspection took place in July 2018. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in the academic year 2024/25.
- The governing body is responsible for a breakfast and after-school club.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke with subject leaders, spoke to pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors talked with staff and leaders about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, SEND and pupils' personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their wider experience of school. They looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rosalind Munro

Ofsted Inspector

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