

Inspection of a good school: Rainford CofE Primary School

Cross Pit Lane, Rainford, St Helens, Merseyside WA11 8AJ

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 September 2023

Outcome

Rainford CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Anya Richardson. The school is part of the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Laurie Kwissa, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Margaret Swinson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and happy at Rainford CofE Primary School. The school has high expectations for pupils' learning. Pupils work hard in their lessons and they achieve well. Typically, pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

The school is aspirational for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As such, all pupils follow the same ambitious curriculum and told inspectors that they enjoy their lessons. Children in the early years settle well into school life and build strong foundations for their future learning.

The school expects high standards of behaviour. The majority of pupils meet these high expectations and they interact well during lessons and at breaktimes. Staff provide effective support for the small number of pupils who need additional help to manage their own behaviour and emotions.

Pupils value the wide range of additional opportunities on offer to them. For example, pupils represent the school in sporting competitions, perform in a variety of productions and enjoy caring for the school chickens. Pupils and staff are proud to be a pivotal part of the local community. For instance, the school makes contributions to wider events including Education Sunday and the Christmas tree festival.

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

The school has carefully organised its curriculum so that pupils can successfully build their knowledge over time. This starts in the early years where children get off to a flying start.

Across the school, pupils remember and build on their prior knowledge well. For example, pupils can apply a range of methods that they have learned previously when tackling new mathematical problems. By the end of Year 6, pupils are ready to face the challenges of secondary school.

In the main, teachers deliver the curriculum consistently well. They introduce new concepts with clarity, and they routinely draw on their subject expertise to explain complex ideas to pupils well.

For the most part, teachers use appropriate assessment strategies to check on what pupils know. They use this information carefully to shape new learning. For example, teachers ensure that, when necessary, pupils revisit essential knowledge or spend more time on a concept before moving on. Teachers skilfully identify and address pupils' misconceptions. As a result, pupils build their subject-specific knowledge securely over time.

The school has fully embedded the early reading programme. Teachers have received appropriate training to deliver the phonics scheme as intended. Skilled staff quickly identify those pupils who need additional help with their reading. These pupils receive the timely support that they need to catch up quickly.

The school has introduced initiatives to raise the profile of reading. For example, the reading scheme is shared with parents and carers so that they know how best to support their children with reading at home. Pupils told the inspector that they enjoyed reading the variety of high-quality texts that the school provides.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND swiftly and accurately. Mostly, pupils with SEND are supported well by staff to achieve their best. However, the information that the school provides for teachers about some pupils with more complex SEND is not as precise as it could be. As a result, some teachers are not sufficiently equipped to adapt their delivery of the curriculum for these pupils.

In lessons, pupils are keen to learn. They engage well with the activities that teachers select for them. Pupils are aware of what is expected of them. Routines in classrooms are well established across the school. However, on occasion, a few pupils fall short of the high expectations that staff have of their behaviour. The school has successfully introduced new systems to address these incidents of misbehaviour and, as a result, these pupils are behaving increasingly well.

Pupils can recall a range of learning from the effective personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum. They have learned about appropriate language, different types of relationships and British values. Teachers are attuned to the issues that pupils face in modern society, and they adapt the content of the PSHE curriculum when needed. For example, pupils have recently received additional lessons and assemblies on how to stay safe online. Pupils readily assume a range of responsibilities in school. They take their leadership roles seriously. Pupils are thoughtful and want to help each other whenever they can.

Trustees and governors are highly knowledgeable. They challenge and support the school well to further improve the quality of education for pupils. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their well-being. For example, teachers said that the school has implemented strategies to reduce their workload. Staff value the training opportunities that the trust provides for their ongoing professional development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not ensured that teachers are fully equipped to support some pupils with complex SEND effectively. This means that, from time to time, these pupils learn less well. The school should ensure that teachers are provided with the information and training that they need to successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum for these pupils.

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 Rainford CofE Primary School to be good in June 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' 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

Unique reference number	148365
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10283659
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	Trustees
Chair of trustees	Margaret Swinson
Headteacher	Anya Richardson
CEO of the trust	Laurie Kwissa
Website	www.rainfordcofe-pri.st-helens.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust.
- Rainford CofE Primary School converted to become an academy school in March 2021. When its predecessor school, Rainford CofE Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is a Church of England primary school in the Diocese of Liverpool. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in September 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place before 2025.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils at the school.

Information about this inspection

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

- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a trusted adult.
- The lead inspector spoke to pupils about their experiences of school and their views about behaviour and bullying. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector: 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.
- The lead inspector spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of the trust, trustees and members of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Liverpool.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. There were no responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Eleanor Overland, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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