

Inspection of St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Hough Hill Road, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 2HB

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 December 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 16 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?

St Peter's Catholic Primary School is a warm and welcoming learning community where pupils feel valued. Staff carefully consider pupils' emotional well-being. Pupils, including children in the early years, said that they have a trusted grown up whom they can talk to if they have any worries. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe.

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has high expectations for pupils' academic achievement and for their wider development. Typically, pupils achieve well.

Pupils understand the school's values and treat each other with respect and kindness. Pupils behave well for most of the time. They are proud to earn tokens that contribute to rewards for their 'school families' and they look forward to their weekly reward assemblies.

Pupils enjoy taking part in the wide range of clubs and activities that are available to them. The school ensures that pupils from all backgrounds take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. For example, every pupil in key stage 2 learns to play a musical instrument.

Parents and carers said that they enjoy attending the variety of performances and events in which their children are involved. Pupils are proud of their work for local charities and carry out their positions of responsibility with pride.

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

In many subjects, the school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum, from the early years to the end of Year 6. In these subjects, pupils, including those with SEND, are furnished with the knowledge and skills that they need for the next stages of their education.

In a small number of other subjects, the school has not finalised the essential knowledge that pupils should learn. From time to time, this hinders teachers from knowing exactly what concepts to deliver and when this content should be taught. On occasion, this prevents some pupils from learning as deeply as they should in these subjects.

In the main, teachers explain concepts well and design appropriate activities to support pupils in their learning. The school has provided staff with the training that they need to use assessment strategies with confidence. In many subjects, teachers use these strategies successfully to check what pupils know and remember. Teachers identify pupils' misconceptions quickly and support pupils to keep up with their peers.

In subjects where the curriculum is less well developed, the school's approaches to assessment are not as effective as they could be. Some pupils develop gaps in their

learning as a result. This hampers these pupils from having a secure foundation on which to build new knowledge.

In the early years, skilled staff prioritise the development of children's language and communication skills through purposeful conversations and the use of stories and rhymes. This prepares children well as they begin their phonics programme in the Reception Year. The teaching of reading has been prioritised across the school. The school has effective support in place for pupils who find reading more difficult. Pupils of all ages read regularly with adults, and they eagerly recounted their favourite books and characters.

The identification of the additional needs of pupils with SEND is rigorous and begins in the early years. The school is proactive in securing additional support for pupils when needed. Staff are provided with the information that they need to make appropriate adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum. Parents of pupils with SEND are well informed about the support that their children receive and the progress that they make. Pupils with SEND follow the same ambitious curriculum, and they take part in the full range of extra-curricular activities on offer.

Routines for learning and behaviour are well established in the early years. These routines, underpinned by the strong relationships between staff and pupils, continue throughout the school. Learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils appreciate the praise that they receive for their high standards of behaviour and effort. They value the nurturing spaces that staff provide to help them to regulate their emotions when necessary.

The school has recently updated the curriculum for personal, social and health education. The revised curriculum provides pupils with the information that they need to learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Pupils have a strong understanding of democracy. The school ensures that all pupils have opportunities to develop their wider interests and talents through a broad range of clubs and trips.

Leaders at all levels are committed to the whole-school community and are ambitious for all pupils in the school. Staff value the opportunities that leaders provide for their continuing professional development. Staff are proud to work at the school and feel well supported by leaders. Staff reported that their workload is considered when new initiatives are introduced.

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 finalised the key knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which this content should be taught. As a result, pupils do not deepen their knowledge as well as they could in these subjects. The school should ensure that teachers are clear about the essential knowledge and concepts that pupils should learn.
- In subjects where the curriculums remain in development, the school's assessment strategies do not enable teachers to check consistently well what pupils have learned before. As a result, on occasion, some pupils find it more difficult to recall key facts and to build securely on their prior learning. Leaders should ensure, as they finalise these curriculums, that teachers are equipped to use assessment strategies successfully to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning.

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	106241
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10211805
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Philip Murphy
Headteacher	Katherine Ryan
Website	www.stpetersstalybridge.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 October 2007, 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 June 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in the academic year 2025/26.
- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the lead inspector discussed the

curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils 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 inspectors observed pupils reading to a trusted adult.
- The inspectors 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 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.
- The inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders and members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority, a representative of the Diocese of Shrewsbury and a school improvement partner.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Eleanor Overland, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Lawson

Ofsted Inspector

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