

# Inspection of a good school: Kirkham St Michael's Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Kirkham, Preston, Lancashire PR4 2SL

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Inspection dates:

31 January and 1 February 2024

## Outcome

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

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' well-being and happiness are at the heart of this nurturing school. Pupils feel safe in school and they are confident that if they have any concerns or worries, they can go to a trusted adult and that they will be supported.

The school has high expectations of what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve. The school is determined that pupils will aspire to be the best that they can be and that they 'will set the world on fire'. Most pupils make the progress that they should through the curriculum.

Pupils are polite and well mannered. They show respect to their friends, the staff and to visitors. Pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly manner.

Opportunities are woven into all curriculum areas to broaden pupils' learning experiences. For example, visits to zoos, museums, castles and places of worship deepen pupils' knowledge of the subjects that they study. Pupils enjoy participating in a range of clubs, such as for archery, netball, football and dodgeball. Year 5 pupils were excited about the performance of their own dance routine to a huge audience at a world-famous ballroom.

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

The school has created a curriculum that is ambitious. Curriculum content, including subject-specific vocabulary, is clearly identified and organised clearly so that teachers know what to teach and when this will happen. This ensures that pupils learn all that they should and achieve well over time.

Typically, teachers check that pupils have remembered what they have been taught. However, in some subjects, especially those that have been recently revised, the checks that teachers carry out on pupils' learning do not help them to identify and address gaps

in pupils' knowledge. This sometimes hinders pupils from progressing as well as they should through the curriculum.

The school liaises with parents and carers and seeks advice from external agencies to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers adapt their delivery of the curriculum well, so that pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers.

The school has placed reading at the centre of the curriculum. Pupils said that they love to read and they enjoy visiting the attractive school library. Children in early years get off to a flying start in learning to read. They learn sounds and letters from the beginning of Reception Year. This continues throughout Years 1 and 2, so that pupils gain secure phonics knowledge. Reading books are well matched to the sounds that pupils know. Staff identify any pupils who are not keeping up with the phonics programme and provide effective support. Staff provide suitable advice for parents in order for them to support their children at home. Most pupils learn to read with fluency and accuracy.

Staff take every opportunity to take learning beyond the classroom, including making the most of the school grounds. Year 6 pupils visit the Houses of Parliament to further their understanding of democracy and the rule of law. All pupils learn to play the clarinet for a year, and several pupils choose to continue to take this learning further. Older pupils show great commitment to their extra responsibilities or jobs, such as helping younger pupils with reading or lending a hand in the school office.

Children in early years settle into school quickly. They learn the behaviours that the school expects. They follow the rules and are kind to each other. This solid grounding is maintained as pupils across the rest of the school behave well. Teachers can teach without interruption.

Staff are proud to work at St Michael's and say that they feel valued. They welcome the training that they receive. The school engages well with the staff when change is introduced. For example, staff trial and evaluate the impact of new initiatives before they are rolled out to all classes.

Governors know the school well. They work effectively to ensure that the school's priorities are successfully addressed, holding leaders to account as well as offering support.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some subjects, where the curriculums are newer, the checks that teachers make on learning do not identify the gaps in pupils' knowledge. This means that pupils are not

able to build on prior learning as well as they should. The school should ensure that staff are suitably equipped to identify gaps in learning and address misunderstandings.

## 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 March 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](#)' 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>	119550
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10314016
<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>	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Nicola Storer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jonathan Dryland
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmichaelscofe.net">www.stmichaelscofe.net</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	13 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England primary school in the Diocese of Blackburn. Its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in June 2016. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place during the 2023/24 academic year.
- The school does not use any alternative providers for pupils.

## 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 the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and staff in school. She met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. The inspector also spoke with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- The inspector observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects and reviewed a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including records of governing body meetings, leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school and observed their behaviour at lesson times and as they moved around the school. She considered the views of pupils through Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments.
- The inspector spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. She considered the views of staff through Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.

### **Inspection team**

Sharon Cowey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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