

Inspection of a good school: St William of York Catholic Primary School

St William Road, Crosby, Liverpool, Merseyside L23 9XH

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 March 2024

Outcome

St William of York Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this happy and harmonious school. They work hard to realise the school motto of 'Together Everyone Achieves More'. Pupils are safe and cared for. They make everyone feel welcome at their school.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are incredibly polite. They are sensible and considerate as they move around school, for example they hold doors open and ask how others are feeling. This consideration continues in lessons where pupils listen respectfully to teachers and their peers. Inappropriate behaviour is rare. Problems are solved quickly because staff act when they need to.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to succeed academically. Pupils enjoy their lessons and like to learn new things. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils persevere when they encounter difficulties. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Pupils eagerly take on leadership roles in school, such as acting as 'bully busters', school councillors or play leaders. They raise money for charity and think of others. Through these opportunities, pupils learn what it means to be caring, responsible members of their community. Older pupils are well prepared for their move to secondary school when the time comes.

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

The school has thought carefully about the curriculum that pupils learn from Nursery to Year 6. It has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils. In most subjects, the school has identified important knowledge which is used to build pupils' understanding step by step.

The school has developed its approaches to assessment well in most subjects. Teachers

check that pupils understand what they have been taught before moving on to new content. Teachers revisit concepts when it is clear that pupils have not grasped new learning. On occasion, in subjects where curriculums have been recently revised, teachers do not revisit essential knowledge often enough. This hinders some pupils from connecting new learning to what they know already in these few remaining subjects.

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. In the Nursery class, children listen intently as staff share the magic of stories with them. Children enjoy joining in with rhymes and songs. Staff deliver the phonics curriculum with precision and consistency. This structured and rigorous approach ensures that pupils build their phonics knowledge in a well-ordered way. Staff check on what each pupil knows and can do with rigour. They waste no time in identifying any pupils in danger of falling behind with the phonics programme. Timely and effective support ensures that these pupils keep up with their peers. Across the school, pupils read widely and often. Books for younger pupils are matched well to their reading knowledge. They quickly become confident readers.

Right from the start in early years, children show positive attitudes towards their learning. Across the school, pupils take pride in their work and are confident in sharing what they have learned. For example, in mathematics, pupils can correctly rearrange number problems and explain their problem-solving in different ways.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND quickly so that it can provide the right support. Teachers have deepened their understanding of how they can adapt their delivery of the curriculum. This enables pupils with SEND to learn alongside their peers and to develop their independence.

The school promotes pupils' personal development exceptionally well. This is woven through all aspects of the curriculum. The school works very closely with outside agencies to support pupils' well-being. This includes securing additional guidance and support for vulnerable families. A wide range of enrichment activities is offered, including extra-curricular clubs. Pupils have many purposeful opportunities to learn about life in modern Britain. This includes learning about the important role that equality and diversity play in their school and wider society.

Attendance is a high priority for the school. The school analyses attendance records carefully and is aware of the reasons for pupils' absence. It works closely with families and offers appropriate support. Despite recent improvements, the school recognises that too many pupils are still absent.

Members of the governing body support and challenge leaders well to improve the quality of education. The school is considerate of staff's workload and well-being when making decisions about policies and procedures. Staff are highly positive about working at the school. They value the support that they receive from leaders to enable them to carry out their roles well.

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, the refinements that leaders have made to the key knowledge that pupils need to learn are relatively new. On occasion, teachers lack clarity about the content that pupils need to revisit and remember over time in these subjects. Leaders should embed the changes to these curriculums so that pupils develop deep knowledge and understanding of key concepts over time.

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 May 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

Unique reference number	104934
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10313964
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Glynn Prendergast
Headteacher	Martin Murphy
Website	www.stwilliamofyork.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Roman Catholic school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Its last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in January 2023.
- The school offers a breakfast club each day.
- The school does not make use of an alternative provision.
- The school provides for two-year-old children.

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 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 their evaluation of the school.
- 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.

- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. She met with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed some samples of pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils. The inspector also looked at curriculum documentation relating to other subjects.
- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector spoke with representatives of the local authority and the diocese. She also spoke with an educational consultant who works with the school.
- The inspector met with pupils to ask about their experiences of school. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- The inspector met with several groups of staff. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation documents.

Inspection team

Michelle Beard, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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