

Inspection of a good school: St Oswald's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Heslington Lane, Fulford, York, North Yorkshire YO10 4LX

Inspection dates:

9 and 10 April 2024

Outcome

St Oswald's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Care, kindness, and warmth are on offer to all who attend St Oswald's. The staff, pupils and local school community work in harmony. Staff and pupils live and breathe the school's vision of 'Learning for all, caring for each other, preparing for the future'.

The school has the highest of ambitions for all pupils. These ambitions are both academic and social. The broad, exciting curriculum, sparks interest and curiosity in the pupils, who have a thirst for new knowledge. Staff bring learning to life through well-chosen activities. Pupils are independent learners; they are given the freedom to discuss what they are learning in class. This contributes to the positive progress pupils make.

Pupils are confident. They trust adults in the school and freely turn to them for help and advice when they have worries. Pupils actively enjoy spending time with each other. They care about each other. Pupils are quick to make sure that any visitors to school know that if you are a pupil at St Oswald's, you will always have a friend. Behaviour in school is excellent. Bullying is very rare. When it does happen, it is promptly dealt with in a robust manner.

The children in the early years learn in an environment that is carefully considered. Staff and children interact positively. This helps the children to think more deeply as they consider questions that adults pose. Staff encourage curiosity in them as they effectively explore different threads of learning with the children. This positive start in early years helps to set children off on a journey of joy and success in school.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are integral members of this school community. All pupils learn and play together. Staff have the knowledge and skills to support pupils' individual needs.

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

When pupils attend St Oswald's, they experience a broad and well-considered curriculum. The school does not stand still. It is continually raising the bar in all aspects of provision. In relation to curriculum content, subject leader reviews and audits have been carefully considered as part of the school's continuous self-improvement. This has underpinned the school's curriculum development work. This work is beginning to impact positively on how pupils independently link their prior learning to new ideas. However, these ambitious changes are at an earlier stage of development.

Prioritising reading is central to everything that happens at St Oswald's. The progress pupils make in reading at the end of key stage 2 is strong. A high proportion of pupils achieve the higher standard in reading at the end of Year 6. Staff and pupils value learning to read, reading to learn and reading for pleasure. Pupils do not see reading as a chore. All staff at the school see themselves as teachers of reading. Supporting pupils to be fluent readers begins in the early years. Phonics is part of the daily routine for those learning to read. Leaders have ensured that books and resources support individual pupils well. The school has one hundred book titles for pupils to choose from in its reading spine. Members of the community donated these books. Inside the books are personal messages from the donator. These messages help inspire pupils to read. They are keen to read a variety of books from different authors and different genres. The pupils embrace opportunities to read in school, out of school and in the school's new indoor and outside reading area.

Pupils are encouraged to use words and phrases that link to the subject area in lessons. Staff model how to use language that is specific to the topics and subject areas to pupils. For example, in physical education, the member of staff used 'cadence' and 'stride length' when teaching athletics. The pupils then went on to use the same language with expertise.

Children in early years have a wide variety of opportunities to learn. They learn independently and are supported by adults. Children enjoy learning through play both inside and outside. This provision has been carefully planned to support different areas of learning while still giving the children the freedom to be creative. The children are polite and respectful. They take turns and work together in a caring manner. Children use the calm areas in the early years provision to work quietly and relax.

The behaviour of pupils throughout school is commendable. The pupils have positive attitudes to learning in class. The relationships and sex education and health education curriculum links positively with the school's approach to behaviour. This supports pupils to understand how to behave. Pupils recognise the value of being respectful and treating others with kindness. Disruption is rare, however, when it does occur staff quickly use strategies to help support the pupils to reset and re-engage.

The school works with families to support pupils on an individual basis. If a pupil has SEND, leaders ensure that staff get relevant information about the pupils promptly. This enables staff to support pupils with SEND to access the rich curriculum offer.

Pupils at the school enjoy the wealth of clubs and trips that are on offer. From the debate club who have recently visited the Houses of Parliament to the eco-club who are working to improve the local and wider community for future generations. The richness of opportunity for all supports the pupils to be well-rounded knowledgeable citizens.

The staff are universally positive about the school and working in what some describe as their 'dream job'. Workload and well-being are at the forefront of leaders' minds. Staff feel extremely well supported personally and professionally. The governing body is fully invested in the school and the wider community. They provide valuable expertise in a variety of areas. Support, challenge and care are forthcoming from governors in equal measure. As one governor told the inspector 'being a governor at St Oswald's is a privilege'.

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 recently refined their thinking around curriculum design, in order to use what is working well to support pupils' achievement in all subjects. The impact of these changes is not embedded. Pupils do not consistently achieve the school's ambitious expectations. The school should continue to support middle leaders and staff to consistently implement the updated curriculum in all lessons to help pupils achieve the highest possible outcomes.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2019.

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	121535
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10322997
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Sinclair
Headteacher	Jemma Dunne
Website	www.stoswalds.york.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last section 48 inspection of the school was in June 2017. The timescales for reinspection have been extended because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and physical education.
- The inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, governors, trustees, senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders and teachers.
- 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 responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils, staff and parents were also considered.

Inspection team

Richard Jones, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024