

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Westleigh St Paul's CofE Primary School

School Street, Leigh, Lancashire WN7 5JN

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 October 2024

Outcome

Westleigh St Paul's CofE Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm and welcoming school. Pupils are happy here. They stated that their teachers are kind and encouraging, which pupils value highly. Pupils also said that the staff make them feel safe, comfortable and confident at school.

The school has high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children in the early years make a positive start to their schooling, often from low starting points. Many pupils achieve well across much of the curriculum by the end of Year 6.

Pupils make the most of the extra-curricular clubs on offer. These range from the Spanish club to singing and sports clubs. Pupils also talked fondly about their school trips to a farm and a zoo.

Pupils appreciate the opportunities to take on responsibilities around the school. For example, the head and deputy head pupils help to marshal parents' evenings and take visitors on tours of the school. Prefects and playleaders are also on hand to help make sure that breaktimes and lunchtimes run smoothly. Pupils conduct themselves well during these social times as well as in their lessons. They are empathetic and embrace the differences of others, particularly their classmates with SEND.

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

In recent times, the school has taken positive and effective actions to maintain the standards of education, such as revisiting and improving the design of many subject

curriculums. This is now providing teachers with greater clarity about the knowledge that pupils should learn, and helpful guidance on how best to deliver new curriculum content. In many of these subjects, content is often delivered well, and most pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of what they have been taught. That said, some of the school's curriculum improvement work is still ongoing, including in a few parts of the early years curriculum.

The school prioritises early reading. It delivers its phonics programme effectively. As soon as children start in Reception Year, the school acts swiftly to support those who need extra help with recognising new letters and the sounds that they represent. Most pupils meet the phonics screening check in Year 1 and are fluent, confident readers.

Teachers use a range of effective strategies to carry out regular checks on pupils' learning during lesson time. This often leads to teachers providing pupils with timely feedback to help them correct their errors and misconceptions successfully.

More recently, the school has introduced changes to how subject leaders monitor the curriculum in their areas of responsibility. However, it is too early to evaluate the full impact of these new systems. This means that the school is not responsive enough to some inconsistencies in how the curriculum is implemented. Consequently, some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

The school has strong procedures in place to identify pupils with SEND early. It adapts the delivery of the curriculum well to meet the individual needs of these pupils. This supports pupils with SEND to achieve well.

The school has recently introduced more robust systems to help it gain a greater insight into the patterns and trends in pupils' attendance. The school provides individual families with bespoke and targeted support. This helps to address many of the individual issues that prevent pupils from attending school. Most pupils attend school regularly.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. It has recently introduced clearer school rules and routines which have already had a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. Pupils are responsive to their teachers' instructions, which helps to keep low-level disruptions to a minimum.

Pupils are well prepared for life beyond the school. They learn how to respect people from different backgrounds to their own. Pupils are knowledgeable about world religions. They learn how to maintain healthy relationships with others and how to raise concerns when they feel unsafe. Pupils know how to look after their physical health and enjoy their 'daily mile' activity.

Governors fulfil their statutory duties. However, at times, their oversight of the school's strategic priorities is not as robust as it could be. This limits the governing body's ability to provide robust challenge and support to leaders in relation to the school's improvement priorities. The school is mindful of the welfare of staff, which staff appreciate. For

example, the school ensures that staff have non-contact time to manage their extra areas of responsibility.

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 is still considering its expectations for how some subjects should be delivered by teachers. This sometimes leads to pupils not acquiring important knowledge. The school should finalise its curriculum thinking in these subjects and provide clearer curriculum guidance to staff.
- The school's checks to establish how well curriculums are being delivered, and the impact of these curriculums on pupils' learning, are not as rigorous as they could be. This means that, sometimes, issues with curriculum delivery are not addressed swiftly. The school should make sure that its approaches to evaluating the effectiveness of its curriculums are robust.
- The governing body's oversight of the school's strategic improvement work is not as effective as it could be. This sometimes limits its ability to provide robust challenge and support to help drive forward the school's ongoing development priorities. The governing body should ensure that it has sufficient insight into the strategic development of the school and oversight of the subsequent work of school leaders to bring about the desired improvements.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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.

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	106481
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10348037
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jackie Birt
Headteacher	Julie Leech
Website	www.westleighstpauls.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection. They took up their post in September 2024. There has also been a change to the chair of governors.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school operates a before-school club, which is overseen by the governing body.
- The school is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in April 2019. The school is awaiting confirmation from the diocese about its next section 48 inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 consideration 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 met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the SEND coordinator, some subject leaders and other staff during the inspection. The inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector spoke to representatives of the local authority and the Diocese of Manchester.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also considered documents and spoke to some staff about the curriculum, the early years, SEND, attendance, safeguarding, personal development and behaviour.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online staff survey and the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspector spoke to pupils about their experiences of school. There were no responses to the online pupil survey.

Inspection team

David Spruce, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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