

Inspection of a good school: St Catherine's CofE Primary School

Greenstone Avenue, Horwich, Bolton, Lancashire BL6 5SJ

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 March 2022

Outcome

St Catherine's CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being part of this caring school community. They feel happy and safe, show very good manners and are polite. Pupils are enthusiastic learners. This is because staff have high ambitions for them, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils behave well when moving around school and at playtimes. They attribute this to how everyone is welcomed at St Catherine's. Pupils who spoke with the inspector said that any arguments between friends or bullying are sorted out quickly by staff. Consequently, pupils feel well cared for. This helps to ensure that the school is a calm and purposeful place to learn.

Pupils enjoy the many clubs that they can take part in. These include clubs to learn computing, dance, ukulele and recorder. Pupils value the special responsibilities they are given, such as being part of the 'collective crew', learning ambassadors or buddies for Reception children. Through these roles, pupils develop leadership skills. For example, learning ambassadors spoke to the inspector about their current learning in a confident, articulate manner.

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

Leaders have carefully designed the curriculum to help pupils know and remember more over time. The well-organised curriculum meets the needs and interests of pupils, including those with SEND. Subject leaders are passionate and knowledgeable about their subjects. They have given careful thought to how the curriculum builds on pupils' prior learning. The curriculum is well established in all subjects. Leaders provide teachers with the support they need to deliver the planned curriculum content confidently. Teachers introduce, check and revisit the knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Pupils achieve well as a result.

There is a clear love of reading around school. Pupils were keen to discuss the books of many authors. They are proud of the wide range of quality texts in the school library. Reading is a priority in the school and there are links to all curriculum subjects. The phonics curriculum is systematic and well delivered. Younger pupils develop the skills of decoding new words, using their knowledge of sounds. The books they read match the sounds that they are learning. This helps pupils with their fluency and accuracy when reading. Staff have received appropriate training to deliver the phonics curriculum and are confident to deliver this. Older pupils said that their fluency in reading has improved over time. Many pupils also said that their use of vocabulary is improving, including when they write and when they speak to others.

Staff work as a team to provide the strong educational experiences for pupils. Leaders' and staff's commitment to ensuring that each individual pupil succeeds is apparent in all aspects of the school. However, some pupils do not make links and connections between their learning in different subjects. This prevents pupils from broadening and deepening their understanding of the curriculum.

Leaders and staff are quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. The curriculum has been carefully thought through and designed to meet the needs of pupils, from the early years to Year 6. This includes pupils with SEND. Any pupils who need extra support get it quickly. This includes pupils with SEND.

All subject leaders have clear expectations for children's learning in early years. Carefully selected resources and activities ensure that children revisit and practise these concepts. This means that children are well prepared for key stage 1

Equal opportunities are promoted well in the school. Leaders and staff ensure that differences are celebrated. For example, pupils learn about different cultures and life in modern Britain. As a result, they show respect for each other. Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils listen carefully in lessons and engage well with each other. Any disruptions to pupils' learning are rare.

Governors have a firm understanding of the quality of education on offer at the school. Leaders take account of the workload and well-being of staff. This is appreciated by staff, who feel valued and well supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is effective. Staff receive appropriate training and regular updates in relation to safeguarding. They are clear that keeping children safe is everybody's responsibility. Staff are attentive to pupils' needs. They know what to do if they have any concerns regarding pupils' safety. When necessary, leaders work with external partners to support vulnerable pupils and their families.

Leaders have developed a curriculum that helps pupils to manage risks. This helps to keep pupils safe, including when they are online or outside of school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, pupils do not make links in their learning between subjects. Leaders should ensure that pupils know how to make connections between their prior learning, when learning new concepts and ideas. This will help to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Catherine's CofE Primary 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144045
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10226057
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	Board of Governors
Chair of governing body	Christa Norton
Headteacher	Karen Graham
Website	www.st-catherines.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England school, within the Diocese of Manchester. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2014. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The school converted to an academy on 1 January 2018.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in his evaluation of the school
- In order to judge whether the school continues to be good, the inspector focused the inspection on specific subjects of the curriculum. The inspector undertook deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography. This involved meeting with senior and subject leaders, scrutinising the curriculums and visiting lessons in these subjects. He met pupils from the lessons visited and looked at their work. He met with the teachers from the classes visited. He listened to pupils reading.

- The inspector looked at the single central record and checked the school's systems for monitoring and reporting safeguarding concerns. The inspector also met with the designated safeguarding leader.
- The inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator to help evaluate provision and practice in the school.
- The inspector spoke with a range of staff and pupils to find out what it is like to be a pupil, or to work in this school.
- The inspector met with a representative group of governors.
- The inspector reviewed key documents, including the school's self-evaluation form, school action plans and monitoring records.
- The inspector checked all survey responses, including those from pupils, staff and parents. This included taking into account 52 responses to Ofsted Parent View. He also met with some parents on the second day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Simon Hunter, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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