

Inspection of a good school: St Werburgh's and St Columba's Catholic Primary School

Lightfoot Street, Hoole, Chester, Cheshire CH2 3AD

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 July 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils relish being part of this happy school community. They do their best to live up to the school motto and 'love, learn, laugh' as much as possible. Pupils enjoy welcoming new friends into their school. They said that respect for each other underpins everything that they do.

Pupils build exceptionally strong relationships with each other and with staff. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils play well together, making sure that everyone is included. In school pupils are cheerful and sensible. They demonstrate good manners. Older pupils are keen to ensure that they are good role models for their younger peers. Children in the early years learn to persevere and take great pleasure in working together.

The school has extremely high expectations. Pupils are curious and committed learners. They have a thirst for knowledge. There is an industrious atmosphere in school. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve highly across the curriculum.

Pupils benefit from an extremely well-thought-out set of experiences which help them to understand the wider world. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously. They know that it is up to them to make a difference in society. Pupils demonstrate this by engaging in random acts of kindness such as giving plants that they have grown to members of the community.

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

The school has made reading a priority from the start of the Reception Year. Staff are experts. They teach phonics consistently well and ensure that pupils make rapid progress. Many pupils enter the school speaking English as an additional language. These pupils are well supported to learn phonics quickly. Pupils read books that are closely matched to the sounds that they know. Most pupils are confident and fluent readers when they start key stage 2. The school promotes a love of reading. Pupils enjoy listening to carefully chosen books that interest and inspire them.

The school has created an inspiring curriculum. It is organised in a way that enables pupils to revisit concepts and build on their prior learning. Children settle in quickly in the early years. They learn to share and become confident learners. Highly skilled adults engage children in exciting play and learning. Children proudly show off their learning by writing story books for their friends or carefully counting the ingredients for the stew that they have made. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They ensure that older pupils develop the necessary vocabulary to help them to explain their thinking. Pupils enjoy working with their friends and know how important it is to work together sensibly.

Teachers are very clear about what pupils need to learn to be able to flourish in their next stage of learning. As a result learning is built upon seamlessly as pupils move through the school. Pupils are interested in what they are learning. The school uses every opportunity to check that pupils have remembered what they have learned before. During lessons teachers check carefully that pupils have understood new information. Every opportunity to learn is utilised well. Pupils progress quickly.

Pupils with SEND make strong progress through the curriculum. The school identifies pupils' needs quickly and puts appropriate, effective support in place. When needed the school seeks advice from external specialists. A range of adaptations are in place to help pupils with SEND to achieve extremely well. The school ensures that these pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life.

Pupils behave especially well. They care about one another. Staff teach pupils to understand how their actions affect others. Pupils trust that staff will help them to sort out any problems such as falling out with friends.

The school uses the wider curriculum exceptionally well to help pupils to develop a keen sense of responsibility. Pupils are immensely proud when they are voted into positions of responsibility in the school. They benefit from a broad range of experiences which enhance their learning. These include clubs which develop their talents well and trips that bring curriculum areas to life.

Staff feel well supported to be able to carry out their jobs effectively. They know that the school listens carefully to their views. Workload is considered when changes to policies are implemented. The school ensures that professional development is prioritised so that staff feel appreciated.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 June 2015.

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	111384
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10348072
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	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sharon Daltrey
Headteacher	Kathryn Oates
Website	www.lovelearnlaugh.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Catholic primary school is part of the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The last section 48 inspection took place in March 2018. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in the next academic year.
- The school does not use any alternative provision 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 that 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff throughout the inspection.
- The inspector met with governors. She held a telephone conversation with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. 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 also considered other curriculum areas.
- The inspector observed pupils read to a trusted adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during playtimes and in lessons.
- 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 considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free text comments. She considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. The inspector met with parents to gather their views and opinions about the school.

Inspection team

Sarah Barraclough, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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