

Inspection of a good school: St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

Webster Street, Litherland, Liverpool, Merseyside L21 8JH

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 March 2023

Outcome

St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. They are friendly, welcoming and curious about the world around them. Pupils are happy and safe at St Elizabeth's. Pupils know that staff will treat their concerns seriously and take action to resolve them. Should bullying take place, leaders and staff deal with it swiftly.

Pupils are caring and active citizens. They do not judge others because of how they look or where they are from. Pupils are proud of their community. They help to keep the local area free of litter. Recently, pupils successfully lobbied the local council to install road safety measures and parking restrictions outside of the school.

Leaders expect pupils to be well behaved and to treat each other and staff respectfully. Leaders also encourage pupils to be hard-working and resilient learners. Pupils, and children in the early years, respond positively to these expectations, which helps to ensure that they achieve well in a range of subjects.

Leaders have created a wide and varied range of extra-curricular activities, which enables pupils to pursue their interests. Pupils enjoy attending the many clubs available, including hockey, chess, gardening and happiness clubs.

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

In most subjects, leaders and governors have created a well-thought-out curriculum, which identifies what pupils will learn and when this will happen. Leaders and teachers want pupils to have no limits to their ambitions.

In most subjects, the curriculum is delivered effectively. Teachers typically check how well pupils are learning and provide additional support to pupils when this is needed. However, a few areas of the curriculum are not designed or implemented well enough. As a result,

some pupils' understanding is not as strong as it should be. While pupils can recount essential facts and information, their depth of understanding is limited.

Leaders place reading at the heart of the curriculum. They have generated excitement about authors and poets throughout the school. Pupils have met nationally renowned novelists, as well as accomplished poets. Pupils are familiar with the work of a diverse range of writers. Leaders dedicate a week for pupils to explore the world of literature and the wonder of books by writers from across the globe.

Recently, leaders have reviewed and improved the early reading and phonics curriculums, both of which are taught well by skilled staff. Pupils, and children in the early years, enjoy their daily phonics sessions. They like to learn new letters, sounds and words. Children in Nursery are enthusiastic about singing nursery rhymes and listening to stories. Most pupils comprehend different text well and read confidently. Pupils who need extra help to improve their reading are developing their reading fluency quickly.

Leaders identify pupils with SEND early. For example, when children enter Reception, teachers establish if they need extra help to develop their speech, language and communication skills. Leaders make sure that pupils with SEND get the specialist help they need. Leaders also work closely with the local authority, parents, carers and other partners to make certain that pupils with an education, health and care plan receive the support they require. Leaders' careful approach to supporting pupils with SEND helps to ensure that they learn well and can access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Pupils behave sensibly. Children in the early years follow instructions carefully. This was evident during the inspection, when children in the Reception class, closely supervised, sat around a campfire and toasted marshmallows very carefully. Two-year-old children are looked after well. They form strong bonds with staff and enjoy learning from the older children in Nursery. Pupils' good behaviour across key stages 1 and 2 helps to maintain the calm order that pervades the school and ensures that lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

Leaders enrich pupils' experiences and develop their appreciation of art and culture through exciting educational visit to different places of interest, including local and regional museums, a synagogue, theatres and a waterfowl nature reserve. Pupils like to perform in the school choir. They develop their leadership skills as reading champions, eco-council members and members of the sports crew. Pupils plan events, such as own clothes days, to raise funds for different worthy causes. Pupils commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day and celebrate Black History Month. They exercise regularly and understand the importance of a healthy and nutritious diet.

Those parents who spoke with the inspector said that their children are happy and safe at school. Staff enjoy working at the school. They describe leaders and governors as being considerate. Staff feel that leaders are mindful of their well-being. They are not burdened with unnecessary work.

Governors have a strong understanding of how well pupils are learning. They hold leaders to account for pupils' achievement. Governors also help leaders to continually improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders leave nothing to chance when it comes to pupils' safety. They are acutely aware of the needs of pupils, including the most vulnerable. Leaders work with a broad range of external partners to make sure that pupils get the support they require.

Staff are familiar with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, as well as the government's current guidelines on keeping pupils safe in education. Staff know how to identify pupils in need of help. They record and promptly report any concerns that they have about pupils' safety and welfare.

Pupils learn about healthy relationships and internet safety through different areas of the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the way in which the curriculum is designed and implemented does not help pupils to build on their existing knowledge and skills. Consequently, pupils' progress through the curriculum is hindered. In these subjects, leaders should ensure that the curriculum is designed and implemented in an ordered way to help pupils to build their knowledge confidently and deepen their understanding.

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 June 2017.

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](#)' 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	104932
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10240472
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	432
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of the governing body	Cathie McDonald-Hollis
Headteacher	Liam Daniels
Website	www.st-elizabethsprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 and 9 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- Since the previous inspection, a new chair of the governing body has been appointed.
- Leaders and governors make provision available for a small number of two-year-old children.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Roman Catholic school. The last section 48 inspection under the Education Act for schools of a religious character was conducted in January 2018.

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 has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. He also held meetings with other leaders, including those responsible for SEND, attendance and pupils' behaviour, welfare and personal development.

- The inspector met with members of the governing body. He held telephone conversations with a representative from the local authority and a meeting with a representative from the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils read.
- The inspector met with pupils to discuss their learning in some other subjects. He spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector met with parents and reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He also considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector spoke to safeguarding leaders about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents. He talked with pupils about their safety and welfare. The inspector examined a range of policies and documents. He also scrutinised safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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