

Inspection of a good school: St Luke's Church of England Primary School

Queen's Park Road, Heywood, Lancashire OL10 4XB

Inspection dates: 15–16 January 2020

Outcome

St Luke's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly, happy school where pupils feel safe, welcome and included. Each morning, leaders and teachers greet pupils, parents and carers warmly. Staff are ready to listen to any questions or concerns. Parents are very positive about the school.

Teachers and staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils are clear about these expectations and work hard to meet them. The behaviour of pupils is exceptional. They are polite in the way they talk to each other and to staff. Pupils work well together and this allows them to learn and succeed. All pupils I spoke to told me that they do not believe that bullying is a problem and it is very rare.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that helps pupils learn in a fun way. Pupils study a wide range of topics. They enjoy trips that support their learning, such as to the library. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' personal skills. Pupils learn about a range of cultures, traditions and communities. They have many opportunities to take on positions of responsibility, such as members of the school council and sports leaders.

The school links well with other schools and gives pupils the opportunity to think about others and the communities they live in.

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

Leaders have designed the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. They have thought about what pupils should learn in most subjects and how to link subjects together. High-quality reading books provide a basis for the pupils' learning. Year 4 pupils developed some rich vocabulary using a book about Julius Caesar that linked to the history curriculum. In most subjects, teachers' plans make it clear what should be taught and in what order. Teachers are not afraid of revisiting key knowledge so that pupils know more and remember more.

In subjects such as art and design and design and technology, plans do not build the knowledge pupils need as they move through the school. For instance, when teachers explain new concepts in art, they do not make useful links with the vocabulary that pupils already know. As a result, pupils are not helped to know more and remember more in these subjects.

Pupils achieve well in reading. Teachers teach phonics every day. These lessons help the youngest pupils gain the knowledge they need to develop early reading skills. Teachers support parents to help their children to read. This includes tips for checking understanding of new words and ideas for making up stories together. Pupils who are falling behind with their phonics get the extra help they need to catch up.

Leaders recognise that pupils need a broad vocabulary to become fluent readers. They address this through whole-class reading sessions in every year group. Teachers use these sessions to develop vocabulary and ignite a love of reading.

The curriculum plans for writing ensure that most pupils develop their knowledge of spelling, grammar and punctuation. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to write in different subjects. However, a small minority of pupils are falling behind with regard to their knowledge of punctuation, spelling and grammar.

Pupils achieve well in mathematics. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and build on pupils' prior learning successfully. They plan activities that are thought-provoking and motivating for the pupils. Teachers clearly explain new learning in mathematics.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn alongside their peers in all subjects. They receive the help they need to learn in smaller, more manageable steps. Pupils with SEND are achieving well and in line with their peers.

The school's curriculum goes beyond what pupils learn in lessons. Pupils have many chances to learn outside of the classroom, including trips and after-school clubs. Involvement in the gardening club and the Heywood in Bloom event is appreciated by the pupils. Leaders use collective worship to explore themes such as coping with change. They encourage pupils to think about their own experiences and the experiences of others. Pupils are keen to learn, and their behaviour supports learning.

The early years is a vibrant and inspiring. Children enjoy and show an interest in well-designed activities. Teachers make sure that lessons help children to build their knowledge and understanding. They give priority to developing children's language skills. For example, children enjoyed learning about the importance of vegetables. They learned new words following a recipe to make pea soup in the outdoor kitchen. All children get a firm foundation in reading and mathematics. They achieve very well in the different areas of learning.

Leaders ensure that all staff work together for the benefit of the pupils. They are considerate of staff workload and well-being. All staff care about the pupils and their community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff have relevant, regular training. Staff know what they must do so that pupils are safe. The school keeps detailed and well-organised records relating to safeguarding concerns. Staff understand and use the safeguarding systems well. Leaders work closely with external agencies and are not afraid to seek advice when needed. Leaders check the suitability of adults working at the school. Governors work with leaders to check that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Pupils know that they can speak to an adult if they are worried about anything. They learn how to keep themselves safe when online. Leaders make sure that pupils are made aware of risks within the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has made improvements in writing since the last inspection but there is still further work to do. A minority of pupils do not achieve well enough in writing. The writing curriculum is not sufficiently adapted to ensure that these pupils build their knowledge of writing. Leaders should ensure that these pupils are provided with a more structured curriculum to strengthen their knowledge of spelling, grammar and punctuation. In addition, leaders need to ensure that pupils can apply their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar in all areas of the curriculum.
- The curriculum is delivered effectively overall. This is particularly the case where subjects are carefully planned and sequenced. Leaders give clear guidance to teachers of what to teach and when. However, in some subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, subject leaders need more support to ensure that the curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced to build on pupils' prior knowledge.

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 school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, 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 convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 26 January 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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	105805
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10111040
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lynne Coxell
Headteacher	Kim Farrall
Website	www.stlukesce.rochdale.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	26 January 2016

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- During this inspection, I met with the headteacher and the senior leaders.
- I held meetings with teachers, support staff and subject leaders. I met with seven members of the governing body and held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- I visited lessons in each key stage. I spoke to pupils from each key stage and viewed examples of their work. I spoke to pupils about behaviour and observed behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- I observed a teacher support Year 2 pupils with their reading.
- I reviewed the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and information on the school's website. I examined records in relation to safeguarding.
- I considered the 39 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 40 free-text responses. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day.

- As part of this inspection, I looked carefully at phonics and reading in all classes. I also focused on mathematics and geography. During these activities, I met with subject leaders and visited lessons. I also spoke with teachers and pupils. I viewed examples of pupils' work and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Andrew Morley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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