

# Inspection of St Brigid's Catholic Primary School

Waterpark Drive, Stockbridge Village, Liverpool, Merseyside L28 7RE

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Inspection dates: 4 and 5 March 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The school is an oasis of calm. It is a safe sanctuary for pupils. They enter the school gates with big smiles on their faces. Pupils are eager to learn and to do their best. This begins in the early years where children's love of learning is harnessed. They joyously engage in activities and flourish.

Pupils told inspectors that people work together and help each other. They benefit from close relationships with staff who know them and their families very well. The school is determined to ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve highly. Most pupils achieve well from their starting points.

The school's values underpin all that it does. Pupils are proud to be part of this close-knit school that 'loves, believes, achieves'. The school teaches pupils how to behave well. Pupils listen attentively to teachers. They follow instructions quickly and enthusiastically. Pupils behave extremely well.

Pupils thrive in this kind community where the school's expectations of pupils' behaviour and academic success are high. They are caring and compassionate towards one another. Pupils enjoy residential trips where they develop characteristics such as bravery and resilience. They enjoy musical activities such as choir and some pupils recently performed in a national singing event.

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

Pupils benefit from a broad and ambitious curriculum. In the main, staff deliver the curriculum well and design activities that are closely matched to the curriculum's aims. They are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach and explain new ideas clearly. Staff systematically check whether pupils have understood. Where staff identify that pupils have gaps in their learning, they intervene. Similarly, they are adept at identifying and quickly addressing misconceptions. This helps to ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge do not develop and that they secure a deep body of knowledge across most areas of the curriculum.

However, in key stages 1 and 2 pupils' achievement in writing is not as strong. Weak punctuation, grammar and spelling hinder the quality of pupils' writing. This is because, until recently, the school has not given sufficient focus to these aspects of pupils' writing. While the school has taken action to strengthen its approach to writing, it is too soon to see the full impact of this.

The school accurately identifies pupils' additional needs and any barriers that they may have to learning. Staff adapt learning effectively and support pupils with SEND to learn independently. Bolstered by the school's high expectations and belief in them, pupils with SEND experience success across the curriculum.

Right from the start of early years, there is a sharp focus on speech, language and communication. Children are immersed in a vocabulary-rich environment. Meaningful

interactions with staff help children to learn how to communicate effectively with adults and each other. Highly established routines assist children to settle well into the Nursery class and acquire excellent behaviours for learning. They very quickly feel a sense of belonging in the school. Children are captivated by their learning. They are engrossed in activities and resilient when things do not go to plan. For example, children work together to problem solve in the construction corner. They are prepared incredibly well to get off to a flying start in Year 1.

The school's phonics programme is embedded well and supports most pupils to become confident and fluent readers. Pupils who struggle with reading receive catch-up support. This helps them to secure their reading knowledge. A culture of reading runs through the school and fosters a love of reading in pupils.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They engage enthusiastically in lessons. The school communicates clearly the importance of attending school each day. Its work to promote good attendance and reduce absence is having a positive impact. Most pupils attend school regularly. However, rates of persistent absence remain high.

The school ensures that pupils access knowledge and experiences that will help them to succeed in modern Britain. For instance, they understand how fundamental British values underpin society and why these are important. The school places great emphasis on helping pupils to keep safe. For example, pupils explain many ways they protect themselves when they are online.

The school's unwavering commitment to providing a high-quality education is shared by leaders at all levels. The school's robust quality assurance processes help to drive forward improvement. Governors know the school well and support the school in its unrelenting drive for all pupils to achieve. Staff are given time to carry out their responsibilities, such as time to develop staff. The school is a beacon in the community and supports and cares well for its families.

## **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's writing curriculum has not given sufficient focus to grammar, punctuation and spelling. Weaknesses in these aspects of pupils' learning hamper the quality of their writing. The school should strengthen its approach to teaching writing and ensure that pupils are given sufficient time to practise and apply their knowledge of the fundamental writing skills.
- The number of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, who are persistently absent from school is high. These pupils are missing out on vital parts of the curriculum and

personal development opportunities. The school should strengthen its approach to tackling persistent absence to ensure that pupils attend school frequently.

## 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

|                                            |                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 104474                                                                         |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council                                          |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10347881                                                                       |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                                                        |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided                                                                |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 2 to 11                                                                        |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                          |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 258                                                                            |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                                             |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Karen McKenna                                                                  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Rachael Tyler                                                                  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.stbrigid.knowsley.sch.uk">www.stbrigid.knowsley.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 25 and 26 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005            |

## Information about this school

- This Roman Catholic school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The last section 48 inspection took place in February 2024 and the next one is due to take place before the end of February 2029.
- The school has Nursery provision for two- to four-year-old children.
- The school uses two registered alternative provisions for a small number of pupils.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff about the work of the school.
- An inspector held a telephone conversation with representatives from the archdiocese and the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in: early reading, mathematics, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work in English.
- An inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a member of staff. Inspectors spoke with some pupils about reading.
- An inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair.
- Inspectors observed behaviour during break- and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with pupils to ask about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including attendance information and governor meeting minutes.
- Inspectors met with staff. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- Inspectors met with some parents at the start of the school day. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including the free-text comments.

## Inspection team

Jenny Jones, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Elaine Jackson

Ofsted Inspector

Claire Walmsley

Ofsted Inspector

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