

Inspection of St Peter's CofE Primary School

Birley Street, Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside WA12 9UR

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 January 2025

The quality of education **Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Outstanding**

Early years provision **Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since December 2013. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's values of faith, hope, love and trust inspire staff and pupils to the highest standards of behaviour. The school's curriculum is built around courage, oracy and enquiry. These aspects influence pupils to be ambitious for their own academic success. Leaders have created a culture that includes everyone. Pupils flourish academically and socially. St Peter's is a superb school and a happy place to learn.

Leaders have established an exceptional curriculum for pupils to study. The school places no limits on pupils' development. Pupils acquire deep knowledge of the subjects that they study. The school enhances this curriculum by providing carefully planned visits. These visits inspire pupils' curiosity and deepen their knowledge. For example, pupils hone their geographical understanding by exploring the way in which a local coal mine is being developed for new industry. They find this learning irresistible.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary, whether adults are present or not. Pupils know that their learning matters. They attend to this learning with care. Pupils are proud of their achievements and enthusiastically share their learning. This culture of success results in pupils who are keen to learn and attend school regularly.

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

Pupils study a very ambitious curriculum. Adults routinely check that pupils have understood new learning. Pupils connect this learning to the things that they already know. For example, pupils link their knowledge of different geographical features to their new learning about plate tectonics. In addition, in science, they discuss in detail how the circulatory system works and link this to their impressive scientific knowledge about the components of the blood stream. Across the curriculum, pupils demonstrate deep and connected knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported to learn the same exceptional curriculum as their peers. The school makes sure that their needs are precisely identified. The support that pupils with SEND receive is exemplary. They master new knowledge quickly and use this independently. They achieve extraordinarily well.

The school's curriculum and teaching are focused on enabling pupils to remember new knowledge. Teachers build in frequent opportunities for pupils to practise this learning. In mathematics, children in the early years quickly master number through repeated practise. Older pupils build on this knowledge, for example through securing their understanding of ratio by exploring scale drawings. Pupils develop secure knowledge across the curriculum. For example, in physical education, pupils explain in detail how to perform different jumps and balances. The tasks that pupils are given inspire their curiosity to learn more. Pupils focus on their learning so that everyone can learn in a calm and purposeful environment.

Children in the early years grasp phonics quickly. Adults expertly teach Reception-age children to read. Children become fluent readers. Adults share new and interesting vocabulary. Children use this vocabulary confidently in their own play and talk. Older

pupils receive an excellent reading curriculum. The school invests in carefully chosen literature, which inspires pupils to read widely and often. Adults routinely share high-quality texts and stories with pupils. Pupils use the example that their teachers set to read with expression and enthusiasm. Reading is everywhere in this school. If pupils struggle to master reading, they receive exemplary support to help them to catch up.

The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is impressive. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to discuss their ideas. Pupils know how to use the language of debating to offer opinions and to challenge others. They do this kindly and offer their well-reasoned ideas confidently. Pupils are taught the importance of diversity and respect. This informs the way in which pupils celebrate each other's differences. Many pupils contribute as subject ambassadors. They eagerly demonstrate the exciting things that they have learned. They are excellent role models for other pupils. Their enthusiasm is palpable. Pupils receive a rich range of opportunities to explore their interests. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, regularly participate in sports, chess and science clubs. These opportunities are further enhanced by the 'St Peter's Award Scheme'. For example, pupils take part in an entrepreneurial experience to learn about business and money. These experiences contribute significantly to pupils becoming confident and well-rounded individuals.

Those responsible for governance know the school well. They use their considerable experience to challenge and support leaders. This has a positive impact on pupils' experiences in school. The school delivers highly effective professional development for staff. Leaders carefully consider the workload and well-being of all staff. Staff could not be more proud to work at this exceptional school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	104801
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10347908
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	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sharon Brammeier
Headteacher	Paul Robinson
Website	www.st-peters.st-helens.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 December 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Liverpool. Its last section 48 inspection took place in November 2018. The school is awaiting confirmation from the diocese about the timing of its next section 48 inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils in the school.

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 and/or sixth form 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.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- 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 scrutinised a range of other documentation, including minutes of governors' meetings and leaders' evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors also spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life.
- To gather the views of parents and carers, inspectors took account of the responses from Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also met with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors met formally with staff to gather their views.

Inspection team

Jen Sloan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sue Mills

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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