

Inspection of St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary School

Derwent Road, Haresfinch, St Helens, Merseyside WA11 9AT

Inspection dates:	22 and 23 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Peter and St Paul's primary thoroughly enjoy coming to school. The warm relationships that they have with the adults in school make them feel safe and happy. Through their positive attitudes, pupils demonstrate the school's mission statement to 'love, aspire and serve'.

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils, including children in the early years, rise to meet these expectations. They work hard in lessons and try their best to succeed. Most pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils behave respectfully towards one another and to adults. They trust staff to deal with any rare occurrence of misbehaviour quickly. Pupils take pride in their learning. Across the school, there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere that enables pupils to focus diligently in lessons.

Pupils are encouraged to apply for and be democratically elected, to responsible roles in school. They are proud to carry out their duties, for example as school councillors, librarians and as buddies to help younger children.

Pupils take full advantage of the wide range of activities that the school provides for them. These include football, choir, chess and darts clubs. These opportunities nurture their talents and add considerable value to pupils' wider development.

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

The school has prioritised certain areas of the curriculum and worked effectively to secure improvements to the quality of them. These developments have ensured that most subject curriculums are ambitious, coherent and well ordered. In the main, staff, including those in the early years, have clarity about the important learning that they need to focus on.

However, the school's approach to writing in Years 3 to 6, lacks the precision of the rest of the curriculum. The small steps of learning that pupils should learn are not specific enough. This hinders staff in creating learning that helps pupils to build a fluid, automatic writing style. As a result, this reduces pupils' ability to consider the content and organisation of writing, as they are so focused on the physical act of writing itself.

Staff have benefited from high-quality curriculum training. They explain new concepts with clarity and use a range of strategies to check on pupils' understanding. Staff use this knowledge to identify where pupils may have gaps in their knowledge and to shape their future learning. Typically, pupils achieve well.

The school has successfully promoted a love of reading. Staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well. They successfully share this knowledge with parents and carers, who attend school workshops. This enables parents to support their children to

develop greater fluency and confidence in reading. Skilled staff provide pupils with additional support when this is needed. This is effective and helps those pupils to keep up with their peers.

In contrast, the reading curriculum beyond the phonics programme does not set out the precise knowledge and skills that pupils should learn across Years 3 to 6. This delays some children in becoming confident and fluent readers. As a result, they do not read and understand text as speedily as they could.

Staff have the knowledge and skills to quickly identify pupils with potential SEND. The school ensures that pupils with additional needs are supported to access the same curriculum as their classmates and to achieve well.

The school prioritises pupils' attendance. Staff build trusting partnerships with families and work with them effectively to make sure that pupils attend school regularly.

Children in the early years settle into school quickly. The learning environment in the Reception Year is well thought out so that every opportunity is provided for children to develop their communication and listening skills. Pupils across the school build on this positive start.

Pupils learn to become responsible young people. They value diversity and they celebrate the many differences that people have. Pupils talked excitedly about visitors to school like authors, theatre companies and rugby players. They enjoy the opportunities to raise money for different charities and provide food for the local food bank. The school ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school. They understand that the recent changes are bringing about improvements. Staff appreciate that these changes have been carefully planned so as not to overload them.

Those responsible for governance are dedicated to the role. They understand and know the school well and are committed to supporting the school on its improvement journey. The governing body supports leaders' well-being but also holds them to account for the quality of education that children receive.

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 has not identified the specific knowledge in the reading curriculum that it wants pupils to acquire across key stage 2. This results in some pupils receiving a disjointed approach, which slows their progress in becoming confident and fluent readers. The school should identify the precise knowledge that pupils need to learn, so that they can build on their prior learning effectively and quickly become confident and fluent readers.
- Some pupils do not build on the positive start that they make with writing. This hinders their fluency and automaticity in writing as they move through the key stage 2 curriculum. The school should ensure that there is a smooth progression in the teaching of writing skills beyond the phonics programme.

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	104810
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10347910
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	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jimmy McNamee
Headteacher	Michael Mainwaring
Website	www.sspeterandpaulprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	1 and 2 July 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in September 2022.
- This Roman Catholic school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Its last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in November 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due by the end of 2026.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 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 inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. They also met with members of the governing body, including the vice chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art and design. 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 also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils reading to a trusted adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.

Ruth Moran, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kevin Simpson

Ofsted Inspector

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