

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St John's RC Primary School

Chepstow Road, Chorlton-Cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 9SN

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 November 2024

Outcome

St John's RC Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, parents and carers see St John's as a family where everyone is welcome and treated with respect. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are eager to attend each day. They bound into school with enthusiasm and are greeted warmly by staff. Pupils know that they are well cared for and safe. They have a trusted adult who they can speak to if they have worries.

The school sets high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils achieve well and are fully prepared for the next stage of their education. Their behaviour is exemplary. There is a calm and orderly learning environment where pupils can concentrate and collaborate.

Pupils enjoy time spent with their friends, especially during lunchtimes. Activities such as cheerleading, football, Spanish and book club broaden pupils' interests. As a result, behaviour is equally positive during lunchtimes.

Pupils' personal development is fostered exceptionally well. They embrace various leadership responsibilities such as lead ambassadors, amigos, eco-councillors and sports ambassadors. Pupils make a positive difference in the school. Their views are valued. They are proud to share their ideas. One such initiative that they have begun is the 'heritage day' to develop pupils' understanding about Chorlton and where they live.

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

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. The purposeful choices that the school has made about what pupils will learn make learning relevant and engaging. In most subjects, the school has clearly set out what pupils should learn and in which order. This helps teachers to know what should be taught. However, in a small

number of subjects, the curriculum is less well defined and in these developing subjects, staff are not as sure about what pupils should learn and when this should happen. This leads to some pupils developing gaps in their knowledge.

In some subjects, the school carefully monitors what pupils know and can do. Typically, teachers identify and address pupils' misconceptions as they arise. However, in a couple of subjects, the school's strategies for assessing what pupils have learned are less well developed. This means that, from time to time, new learning does not securely build on what pupils already know and remember.

Pupils quickly learn to read, starting their journey in the early years. Children in the Nursery Year are introduced to environmental sounds and enjoy sharing stories, songs and rhymes. Staff deliver the phonics programme successfully. Those pupils who need additional help to learn to read receive this swiftly. Most older pupils read with accuracy and fluency. They also enjoy talking about the stories that they have shared in class or in the school's book club.

Teachers benefit from high-quality training that helps them to deliver the curriculum consistently well. Effective training for staff also informs the well-chosen resources and adaptations to curriculum delivery for pupils with SEND. This helps pupils with SEND to fully access the same curriculum as their peers. This is all underpinned by the school's systems that accurately identify the additional needs of these pupils. In the main, pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well across a range of subjects.

Children in the early years are very well behaved. They follow established routines and learn cooperatively alongside one another. Behaviour across the school is highly positive. Kindness runs like a golden thread through how staff and pupils act. Pupils have excellent attendance rates. The school's systems and procedures to maintain high rates of attendance are very effective.

The school's offer to promote pupils' personal development is noteworthy. Staff nurture and develop pupils' talents and interests in drama, debating, sport and music. Pupils, including those with SEND, regularly take part in events in the local area such as debating at a recent conference, competing in sporting tournaments or performing in the school band for local residents. Pupils celebrate and accept the differences that exist between people in the school and within the wider community. They recognise the benefits that each person's uniqueness brings to making the world a richer place.

Staff feel valued. They are proud to work at the school. Staff appreciate the support offered by school leaders around their well-being as well as the commitment to their ongoing professional learning. Governors are highly effective. They maintain a clear focus on the quality of education provided by the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- In a small number of subjects, it is not clear what knowledge pupils will learn. This means that staff are not sure what should be taught or what has been taught previously. As a result, there are a few gaps in some pupils' knowledge. The school should ensure that the curriculum in each subject identifies what it wants the pupils to know and remember.
- In a few subjects, the school's work to establish effective assessment strategies is in the early stages of development. This means that in some areas, checks on what pupils know are not as effective as they could be. The school should refine its assessment strategies to ensure that teachers gain the information that they need to secure and build on pupils' learning.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in October 2019.

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	105546
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10347967
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	386
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mary Metcalf and Iffy Onoura (Co-Chairs)
Headteacher	Bronwen O'Donaghue
Website	www.stjohnsrc.net
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Roman Catholic school is part of the Diocese of Salford. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in May 2018. The school's next section 48 inspection is due by the end of 2026.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club for pupils.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector listened to pupils read from Year 1 to Year 4.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff.
- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the diocese.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including records of governing body meetings, the school's evaluation of its strengths and areas for improvement and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector met with leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school and observed their behaviour at lunchtime. She considered the views of pupils shared through Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- The inspector spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. She considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's online survey.
- The inspector met with parents at the start of the school day. She took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Sue Dymond, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024