

# Inspection of St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

Finlay Avenue, Penketh, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 2PN

---

|                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Inspection dates:         | 1 and 2 October 2024 |
| The quality of education  | <b>Good</b>          |
| Behaviour and attitudes   | <b>Good</b>          |
| Personal development      | <b>Good</b>          |
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b>          |
| Early years provision     | <b>Good</b>          |
| Previous inspection grade | Good                 |

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

Pupils thrive in this warm and nurturing school environment. They enjoy strong, positive relationships with staff. Pupils value the care and support that they receive from the kind and attentive staff. This fosters a deep sense of safety and belonging.

Pupils consistently display politeness and good manners. They follow the agreed rules and routines. This contributes to the calm and focused atmosphere in classrooms. Pupils approach their work with enthusiasm. They stay engaged and give their best efforts in lessons.

The school sets high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), work hard to meet these expectations. Pupils achieve well across a range of subjects.

Through their leadership roles, pupils make a meaningful and positive impact on their school and the wider community. For example, they build relationships with local care home residents through regular visits. Within the school, pupils take pride in their roles as school councillors. They actively promote sustainability by ensuring energy conservation and preventing water waste. These responsibilities empower pupils to develop a sense of purpose, demonstrating their commitment to caring for others and protecting the environment.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has effectively addressed the areas for improvement identified. This includes the designing of an ambitious and broad curriculum. The curriculum clearly defines what pupils should learn. Children in the early years get off to a strong start. The school has created a vibrant and engaging curriculum. This inspires a love of learning and prepares children for the transition to key stage 1 well.

Teachers implement the school's curriculum well. They have good subject knowledge, and they introduce new learning clearly. Teachers ensure that they provide regular opportunities for pupils to revisit prior learning. This is beginning to have a positive impact on supporting pupils to remember the key information that they will need for future learning. Teachers typically makes checks on pupils' understanding well to shape future learning.

Pupils with SEND are well supported, enabling them to access the curriculum and achieve success. The school prioritises early identification of SEND to ensure prompt and appropriate support.

The school places emphasis on fostering a love of reading, starting in the early years. In the Nursery and Reception class, children regularly engage with stories and rhymes. The teaching of phonics begins in the Reception class, with staff well trained to deliver the programme effectively. Pupils who struggle with phonics are promptly identified. Targeted support is provided to help them. As a result, most pupils develop confidence and fluency

in reading. However, a small number of pupils do not read as well as they should. This is because, on occasion, teachers move on to new learning too quickly. When this happens, pupils do not spend enough time consolidating what they have learned. Older pupils are developing a greater knowledge of different texts and authors. They enjoy the stories that their teachers share with them.

Although the pupils who left Year 6 in 2023 did not achieve outcomes in line with their peers nationally in their statutory tests, these results are not reflective of pupils' current attainment through the curriculum. Typically, in many subjects, pupils achieve well.

Pupils' personal development is thoughtfully integrated into various curriculum areas. The school plans activities that broaden pupils' understanding of the world. This prepares them for active citizenship in their local community. Pupils participate in first-aid training and regularly raise funds for charities. Pupils enjoy the school trips and guest speakers that enrich the curriculum.

Pupils are kind and respectful. Older pupils take pride in their roles as special friends to younger peers. They look after and play with the children in Nursery and Reception at lunchtimes. Pupils learn to celebrate diversity. For example, pupils celebrate cultural festivals that are important to members of the school community. The school places a strong focus on attendance. For the few pupils who need extra support, swift and effective actions are taken to improve it.

Parents and carers appreciate the school's central role in the community. Many parents commented on the strong support their children receive at the school, including for pupils with SEND. Parents also commented on how well children are welcomed and cared for at the school.

Governors are skilled and provide effective support and challenge. Staff said that they are privileged to work at the school. They feel very well supported by leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- A small number of pupils do not read as fluently as they should. This hinders their access to age-appropriate texts. The school should ensure that teachers give pupils more time to practise and embed the important knowledge and skills before they move on, so that all pupils achieve as well as they could.

## 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>             | 111376                                                                   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Warrington                                                               |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10348071                                                                 |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                                                  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided                                                          |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3 to 11                                                                  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                    |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 116                                                                      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                                       |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Helen Chaplin                                                            |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Dominic Vernon (Executive headteacher)<br>Amy Norris (Head of school)    |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.stvincentsprimary.org">www.stvincentsprimary.org</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 18 and 19 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005      |

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The last section 48 inspection took place in November 2018. The next inspection is due to take place before July 2025.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The number of pupils on roll has declined since the last inspection. As a result, most pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.

## 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.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, other leaders, staff, governors, a representative from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, the 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. An inspector also listened to some pupils read.
- 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.
- The inspectors talked with pupils in meetings and around the school at lunchtime and breaktime.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. The inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted’s online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted’s online survey for pupils.
- The inspectors looked at the documentation provided by leaders, including the school self-evaluation, development plan, minutes of governors’ meetings and a range of documentation relating to pupils’ attendance and behaviour.

## Inspection team

Collette Mather, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sandra Hamilton

Ofsted 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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024