

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary School

Clincton View, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 8JN

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 December 2024

Outcome

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a very warm and welcoming school, which has a strong, inclusive ethos. Pupils live out the school's value, 'We learn to love everyone as Jesus loves us'. They are highly respectful of each other, staff and visitors. Relationships between everyone in this tight-knit school community are strong. Pupils get along with each other. They behave well in lessons and outside on the playground. They use the variety of play equipment sensibly and make sure that everyone has someone to play with.

The school has soaring aspirations for what pupils should learn from the curriculum. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In many ways, the school's aspirations for pupils are realised. Across a range of subjects, pupils achieve well. They are prepared for the next step in their education.

Pupils are proud of their school. They learn to care for the environment. They work together, for example to make the school grounds the best that they can be for their fellow classmates. Pupils created a very special 'well-being garden', using only recyclable materials, so their peers had a place to go and relax if they needed to.

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

The school has targeted its actions appropriately to ensure that standards are maintained or improved. This includes a recent review of the curriculum. This has led to improvements in how the curriculum is designed and put into practice by teachers. The ambitious curriculum meets the needs of pupils well, including for children in the early years. The school has identified the important knowledge, for example the key

vocabulary, which pupils need to learn. It sequences learning well from the early years to Year 6.

Teachers have a clear understanding of the curriculum. This is evident in their confident delivery of the curriculum to pupils. Staff demonstrate secure subject knowledge, choosing activities that support pupils to learn the required content. In many subjects, teachers use a range of strategies to check on pupils' understanding before they move pupils on to new learning. However, from time-to-time, teachers' checks on what pupils know are not as effective as they could be. This means that some pupils spend more time learning things that they already understand, as opposed to deepening their learning.

Typically, pupils demonstrate a firm understanding of writing. This begins with early mark making and letter formation in the early years. On many occasions, pupils show that they can use correct grammar, spelling and handwriting. However, this is not routinely the case, and this affects how well some pupils' writing demonstrates their understanding. When these errors occur, pupils sometimes do not have opportunities to review and edit their work. This limits their chance to improve their writing.

Children develop a love of reading from the very start of school. Reading sits at the core of the curriculum. Key texts are often used to provide a context for learning. Pupils begin to learn phonics as soon as they start school. Staff deliver the phonics programme well. Where needed, pupils receive additional support to help them to catch up with their peers. Pupils develop the reading skills needed to tackle more challenging texts as they move through the school.

There are robust processes in place to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. The school supports teachers with effective guidance and training. This ensures that they can adapt their approach when delivering the curriculum. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve very well.

Pupils' attitudes to their education are excellent. They are fascinated by learning and fully engage in their lessons. In Reception class, pupils learn how to take turns, share and maintain concentration on tasks. Pupils are clear about what the agreed rules and routines are. Staff manage pupils' behaviour consistently. The school works with parents and carers effectively to ensure that attendance and punctuality are high.

There is a very strong programme for pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy a range of extra-curricular activities. These include choir, chess, musical tuition and a vast array of sporting opportunities. The school ensures that every pupil can attend a club if they wish to. The school encourages pupils to take on leadership roles. Pupils have a breadth of opportunities to develop their leadership skills, including as well-being ambassadors, cyber buddies, school gardeners and house captains.

Those responsible for governance are well trained and fulfil their statutory duties well. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Staff value the support that they receive from the school. They benefit from regular coaching and training to continue to develop professionally.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, teachers do not use the school's assessment strategies as effectively as they could. This means that some pupils do not get enough chances to deepen their understanding. The school should ensure that teachers use these strategies more precisely so that pupils' learning builds on what they already know.
- A minority of pupils do not have consistent opportunities to review their written work. This means that they do not spot and correct the occasional errors that they make in a few pieces of work. The school should ensure that these pupils have opportunities to review their written work so that their accuracy in some of their writing improves.

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 September 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	133320
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10348231
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	189
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Williams
Headteacher	Pam McGuffie
Website	www.olpsprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The substantive headteacher currently works in school on Mondays to Wednesdays. The deputy headteacher is the acting headteacher for the school on Thursdays and Fridays.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.
- This Catholic school is part of the Diocese of Liverpool. The school's last section 48 inspection took place on 18 April 2024. The next section 48 inspection is due in 2029.

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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector visited lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector met with the headteacher. He also met with other senior leaders, for example, to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND.
- The inspector met with a group of curriculum leaders to discuss their current evaluation of their areas of responsibility.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work across different curriculum subjects in all year groups.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the archdiocese.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes and as pupils moved around the school building. He scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at the school. He spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and pupils. The inspector took account of paper-based responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and for pupils during the second day of the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Stuart Perkins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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