

Inspection of a good school: St Matthew's Church of England Aided Primary School

Wood Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS7 3QF

Inspection dates:

26–27 February 2020

Outcome

St Matthew's Church of England Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Matthew's is a happy, caring and welcoming school. Pupil welfare is at the heart of everything it does. Most parents hold the school in high regard. Pupils enjoy school and attend well. They show respect for each other and for adults. One parent stated, 'My child is inspired by the teachers and pupils around her to be the very best version of herself every day.'

Pupils behave well. They follow the behaviour rules and understand what will happen if they do not. This is because the behaviour policy is very clear.

Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff. Family values are at the heart of all the school does. Learning behaviours are good. Pupils stay on task and enjoy their lessons. They want to do well. Teachers have high expectations and set work which challenges pupils to achieve their best.

Pupils are proud to attend their school. They particularly like the different responsibilities they hold. School councillors are proud of their work to improve school meals. They also talk with enthusiasm about their regular visits to a local care home. Pupils are kind to each other. Bullying is rare. The pastoral team supports vulnerable pupils and families well.

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

Leaders reviewed their teaching of reading last year and have made many improvements. There is now a much stronger focus on developing early reading skills across the early years. Phonics is taught through a structured programme. This gives clear expectations of the sounds pupils should learn each term. Teachers regularly check that pupils are achieving well in their reading. They put effective catch-up programmes in place to support any pupils who fall behind. Reading books match closely to the sounds that pupils know. Pupils are confident readers and enjoy a range of appropriate reading books.

Leaders should continue to check the effectiveness of their plans, to make sure that they are continuing to raise standards.

Pupils read a wide range of books and remember authors whose books they enjoyed. Pupils read regularly. Teachers use reading lessons to develop vocabulary and check understanding. Pupils enjoy their story times. They listen avidly as teachers read aloud and complain when story time finishes.

Parents, staff, governors and pupils worked together to create new plans which set out what pupils will learn in each subject. All planning is linked to the national curriculum. Planning is detailed and shows what skills pupils will learn over time. The history curriculum provides pupils with rich and memorable experiences. These help bring learning to life. For example, pupils visited Jorvik to aid them in their study of the Vikings. Leaders are still working on developing other subjects in order to make them as good as they can be. Leaders need to continue developing effective plans which show what knowledge they want pupils to learn.

In mathematics, leaders are clear about what pupils will learn over time. Teachers spend time building up knowledge over a series of lessons. Pupils say they like learning new knowledge. They also think that recapping helps them to remember. Pupils revisit key skills so that they remember them over time.

Children in the early years are happy, confident and safe. Adults show high levels of care and relationships are positive. Children work independently, using the wide range of activities on offer. For example, two children spent time reading word cards then sorting them. Other children worked together on a number hunt around the rooms. Adults record what children can do in learning journeys and books. They constantly assess how children are learning and what they need to do next. Parents are extremely happy with how their children settle into the early years.

Attendance remains above the national average. Leaders buy additional services to help them prioritise attendance. Families receive the support they need to ensure pupils attend school regularly. Leaders keep detailed records to show where pupils have gone when they have left the school. Pupils' behaviour is good and bullying is rare.

The curriculum is strengthened through enrichment activities. Pupils learn first aid, cooking skills, relaxation techniques and life skills. They enjoy a range of thoughtfully planned activities.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. Detailed plans match the specific needs of pupils. Pupils engage well in their lessons. They receive additional support to help them learn alongside their peers.

Staff morale is high. Staff talk about the strong team spirit in school and say everyone works well together. Leaders have taken effective action to reduce workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training on safeguarding. Leaders make sure staff are up to date with national and local updates. Leaders work well with external agencies. They report concerns and attend relevant meetings. Safeguarding information is kept securely and governors check that all staff are using the system. All relevant checks on new staff are completed.

Governors have strengths in safeguarding. They carry out regular audits to ensure the school meets its statutory duties.

The school's curriculum provides opportunities to teach pupils about keeping safe. Pupils talked about learning how to keep safe online and how to keep safe on the roads.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Historically, the number of pupils reaching the expected standard in the year 1 phonics screening check has not been high enough. Leaders have taken effective action to address this. They now have a robust plan in place, which they are monitoring closely. They have reviewed their early reading provision and ensured that reading books match the sounds that pupils have learned. They have set much higher milestones for pupils to reach in phonics. Leaders need to ensure that these recent improvements continue and are implemented and monitored effectively so that phonics attainment improves.
- Leaders are clear in their intent for the curriculum. The curriculum is well planned. Leaders need to continue to review and refine their planning so that teaching continues to be effective and to ensure that all subjects continue to be taught equally well.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged St Matthew's Church of England Aided Primary School to be good on 26–27 May 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	108047
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10121829
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	412
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mr N Burrows
Headteacher	Miss G Crawford
Website	www.st-matthews.leeds.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	26–27 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.

Information about this inspection

- Prior to the inspection, the headteacher was on maternity leave. She returned for the duration of the inspection.
- I considered reading, mathematics and history as part of this inspection. I held discussions with leaders and teachers, visited lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and held discussions with pupils about their learning. I observed members of staff read to pupils. I also examined a range of planning in other subjects.
- I met with the headteacher, the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, the leader with responsibility for pupils with SEND, early years leaders, teachers, the bursar, the pastoral lead, a representative from the diocese and from the local authority and seven governors, including the chair of governors.
- I checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's systems for checking the staff employed at the school.

- I spoke to 15 parents at the school gate to seek their views. I considered the 70 free-text responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents.
- I considered 19 staff responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and 20 pupil responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils.
- I examined a range of documentation, including the school development plan, self-evaluation documents, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Janet Lunn, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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