

Inspection of St Oswald's Church of England Primary School

Ronald Ross Avenue, Netherton, Bootle, Merseyside L30 5RH

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including children in the early years, enjoy coming to this nurturing school where everyone is made to feel welcome. Leaders and staff encourage pupils to embrace the school's values of peace, hope and friendship. Staff provide a wide range of clubs to help foster pupils' interests and talents. These include outdoor learning, creative clubs and sporting activities.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Those pupils who need support to manage their feelings and emotions are given the help that they need from staff.

Pupils said that they feel safe and that bullying is rare. They know that staff are always on hand to help them sort out any concerns or upsets quickly. Pupils said that staff look after them well. This helps them to feel happy at school.

From joining the school in the early years, children settle in well. They are eager to get into school each morning. Leaders and teachers want the best for pupils, including for children and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). To this end, leaders set high expectations for pupils' achievement. Parents and carers are very happy with the way that staff support their children to succeed.

Older pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council, an office angel or an 'eco warrior'. Pupils told inspectors that everyone is encouraged to celebrate their own qualities that make them unique.

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

Staff and those responsible for governance share leaders' ambitious vision for all pupils and children to achieve well.

Leaders are keen to promote and nurture pupils' and children's love of reading. Teachers provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to read for pleasure. For example, pupils look forward to their weekly visit to the well-stocked school library. Pupils and children listen with concentration to the adults who read to them in class. In the early years, leaders ensure that staff prioritise the development of children's language and communication skills.

Children begin learning phonics as soon as they start in the Nursery class. For the most part, staff are highly skilled in how to deliver this curriculum effectively. They ensure that staff choose books that are carefully matched to children's and pupils' phonics knowledge. However, leaders have not ensured that a small number of staff have the knowledge they need to deliver some aspects of the programme consistently well. This hinders a very small number of pupils on their journey to become confident and fluent readers.

Leaders have appropriate systems in place to help teachers to identify those pupils and children who need extra help in phonics and reading. These pupils receive appropriate support to help them to catch up quickly.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to learn a well-structured and exciting curriculum. In most subjects, leaders have made it clear to teachers the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn and remember over time. In these subjects, teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use assessment strategies well to check on pupils' learning, including for pupils with SEND. However, in a small number of subjects, teachers are not as clear about some of the knowledge that pupils should be learning and when some aspects of the curriculum should be taught. This hinders teachers in designing learning for pupils.

Leaders have appropriate systems in place to ensure that staff can quickly identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff work together with parents and external partners to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support that they need. Staff are well trained to meet this group of pupils' needs. Leaders regularly review the support that staff provide for pupils with SEND to ensure that teachers continue to meet the needs of this group of pupils. This ensures that pupils with SEND can access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Pupils, including children in the early years, behave very well. They are thoughtful towards others and try their best. Overall, pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time. Staff identify and provide for the pastoral and wider needs of pupils well. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and appropriate behaviour in an age-appropriate way. Pupils learn how to take care of their own mental health and why this is important.

Pupils have a strong understanding of the importance of equality. They benefit from trips and visits that help to develop their understanding of life in modern Britain.

Governors hold leaders to account well. Those responsible for governance know the strengths of the school and those aspects that leaders continue to refine, such as their curriculum thinking in a small number of subjects. Governors work effectively with leaders to ensure that staff are supported well with their workload and well-being. Staff feel that their well-being is a priority for leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding. Their safeguarding systems are robust. Governors meet regularly with senior leaders and have a thorough knowledge of current safeguarding challenges.

Staff are well trained to identify and report any issues that might indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm. All safeguarding concerns are recorded appropriately and

followed up by safeguarding leads. Leaders work closely with external agencies to support pupils and their families.

Leaders ensure that pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils are aware of dangers that they may encounter online and know when to seek help from an adult if they are worried.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not ensured that teachers are clear enough about some of the knowledge that pupils should learn and when this knowledge should be taught. This hinders teachers in designing learning for pupils. In these subjects, leaders should ensure that teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils need for subsequent learning.
- A very small number of staff have not been trained sufficiently well in how to deliver some aspects of the phonics curriculum. This hinders a very small number of pupils in learning how to apply their phonics knowledge. Leaders should ensure that staff are trained well in how to support pupils with their reading.

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](#)' 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	104900
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10226313
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	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Susan Varga
Headteacher	Emma Murtagh
Website	www.stoswaldsnetherton.com
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, and other members of the leadership team. Further meetings were held with subject leaders, staff and pupils in the school.
- Meetings were held with the lead inspector and a representative of the local authority. The lead inspector also met with representatives of the school's governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited

lessons, spoke with pupils, and looked at examples of pupils' work. The inspectors also spoke with other senior leaders and leaders of other subjects.

- The inspectors met with the safeguarding lead to discuss their actions to keep pupils safe and spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspectors talked to pupils about their experiences at school. They also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during playtime and lunchtime.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, as well as the responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Julie Brown, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nick Capron

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.

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 2022