

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

Clarence Road, Longsight, Manchester M13 0YE

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 February 2025

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being a part of this school. Strong relationships between pupils, families and the school lead to a respectful and caring community where everyone is valued. Pupils, including those who join school part-way through the school year, come together to play and learn harmoniously.

The school has high expectations for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils work hard to meet these aspirations. This begins in the Nursery Year where children get off to a flying start. Pupils build on this strong foundation as they move through school. By the time that they reach Year 6, most pupils achieve well. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils enjoy trips and visits to museums and art galleries or to the farm and the zoo. Such experiences link well to pupils' learning. The school broadens pupils' experiences beyond the local community. Pupils enjoy many clubs and activities such as football, gardening, yoga and choir. They take part in sporting competitions against other schools in the federation. Pupils are proud of their achievements and are keen to show off the trophies that they have won.

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

The school and governing body strive to maintain and improve the standards of education year on year. They are highly ambitious for pupils and staff alike. They are keen to see all pupils succeed despite any potential barriers to learning. Every decision or change that leaders make is done with the pupils' best interests at the core.

The school has established an ambitious vision for the education that it provides for pupils. From the beginning of the early years to the end of Year 6, the school has designed a broad and rich curriculum. It has thought carefully about the knowledge that pupils should learn. This enables staff to know the important building blocks of information that pupils need to know and remember.

In the main, the curriculum is well delivered. Teachers have strong knowledge of the subjects that they teach, and they present information to pupils clearly. However, in a few subjects, staff do not choose the most effective activities to support pupils to learn the content of the curriculum. This means that some pupils do not learn to the depth that they could. The school ensures that the additional needs of pupils with SEND are quickly identified. In most circumstances, staff successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum and provide appropriate support to these pupils.

Staff carefully check what pupils know and can do. Typically, staff identify and address pupils' misconceptions as they arise. This enables pupils to build on their knowledge seamlessly. Teachers regularly revisit and recap the knowledge that they taught earlier in the year, or in the key stage. As a result, most pupils know more and remember more over time so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

The school recognises the fundamental importance of teaching pupils to read. Children in the early years enjoy singing rhymes and songs. They learn about letters and the sounds that they represent as soon as they join the Reception class. Staff deliver the phonics programme with skill. They receive regular and appropriate training to ensure that the phonics programme is taught consistently well. Pupils practise reading using books that match the sounds that they know. Staff act swiftly to ensure that pupils receive well-tailored and effective support when needed. Older pupils develop a love of reading and can be found at the end of each day with their heads in a book. Most pupils, by the time that they are in Year 6, have developed into fluent, confident and eager readers.

Children in the early years behave well. They follow established routines and learn cooperatively alongside one another. Behaviour across the school is very positive. The school has improved the attendance rates for many pupils. However, the absence levels for some pupils remain a concern. Despite a range of strategies to boost attendance, some pupils do not attend school often enough. Therefore, they miss important learning and experiences.

Pupils are fully prepared for life in modern Britain. The offer to promote their personal development is carefully designed to enrich the opportunities that pupils have. Pupils take on roles such as school councillors and well-being warriors. They make a valuable contribution to the life of the school and the wider community through charity work or a traffic reduction project. Carefully chosen books, historical figures, or current role models who have changed the world inspire pupils. They can identify and see themselves in those role models. The result is that pupils believe that anything can be possible and that they can accomplish whatever role that they choose in the future.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, staff do not choose the most appropriate activities to help pupils learn the intended curriculum. This prevents some pupils from developing a deep body of subject knowledge. The school should ensure that teachers make the most appropriate pedagogical choices to teach new curriculum content.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. As a result, these pupils miss out on important learning and experiences. The school should review and refine its actions to promote attendance so that those pupils with high absence rates attend school more often.

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 January 2020.

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	105504
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10366723
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	477
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Miranda Hall
Executive Headteacher	Gareth Elswood
Website	www.sjcfederation.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of a hard federation with St Chrysostom Church of England Primary school in 2016. Both schools share one governing body and are led by an executive headteacher.
- The day-to-day organisation of the school is led by the head of school and supported by two assistant headteachers.
- This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Manchester. Its last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in July 2024. The next section 48 will take place in the 2029 academic year.
- The school offers a breakfast 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 some pupils read from Year 1 to Year 3.
- The inspector spoke with the executive 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.
- The inspector spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. She considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's online survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil 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

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