Inspection of a good school: Micklehurst All Saints CofE Primary School

The Rowans, Mossley, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire OL5 9DR

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 April 2023

Outcome

Micklehurst All Saints CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this school. They say that they feel safe and have lots of friends. Pupils fulfil leaders' high expectations; they achieve well and behave sensibly. They move very calmly around the building, respecting the independence that staff give them. Bullying is dealt with well by leaders on the rare occasions that it arises.

Pupils are thrilled with the new subject knowledge that they gain in lessons. They want to know even more, often because staff make learning so interesting. Pupils profit from educational trips, including to a temple and to hear an orchestra.

Pupils learn some of the plays by William Shakespeare, such as Hamlet, through drama with nationally acclaimed actors and then by watching a professional performance.

Pupils, spurred on by staff, are excited to find new and interesting words in the books that they read. For example, an older pupil said, 'I found the word 'colossal'; it's a synonym for big, massive or humongous.'

Pupils enjoy taking roles to further develop the work of the school, such as by being a digital leader or member of the school council. They often take part in sporting competitions and learn to play different musical instruments, including brass.

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

Mostly, leaders have thought clearly about what staff should teach pupils and when new content should be taught. They have established a meaningful and ambitious curriculum suited to the needs of pupils. Much of the time, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), gain the new knowledge that they need. Nevertheless, some of leaders' curriculum is less clear on the essential knowledge that staff will teach. Some subject leaders are also less clear on the foundations of the curriculum that staff establish for children in the early years.

Teachers consider carefully which teaching activities to use that will help pupils to learn the intended curriculum. For example, where appropriate, they help pupils to build their understanding of important new information through using globes, maps and watching video clips. At other times, staff find ways to give pupils experiences that make learning even more fascinating, such as by meeting a real skunk, tarantula or meerkat. Leaders and staff promote pupils' passion for science, technology, engineering and mathematics. For instance, they recently gave pupils in Years 3 and 4 an opportunity to make robots with a visiting robotics specialist.

Teachers and teaching assistants usually check carefully whether pupils, including pupils with SEND, understand key concepts or whether further teaching is required. Staff spot gaps in pupils' recollection of information that they have been taught previously. Teachers then revisit parts of the curriculum if needed. Mostly, pupils achieve well in different curriculum subjects.

Leaders have successfully developed pupils' love of reading. Teachers and teaching assistants often share with children and pupils a wide range of carefully selected stories, information books, rhymes and poems. They help pupils to experience the thrill of discovering new words in books. Staff enthuse pupils about reading through competitions, frequent promotions and activities including meetings with authors. They introduce pupils to the works of new authors and different genres. Pupils enjoy reading.

Leaders make certain that all staff understand how to teach phonics. All teaching staff have a valued role in reading to pupils. Staff and reading volunteers are trained effectively. Starting in the Nursery class, staff teach pupils about the joy of books and words as well as hearing and saying different letter sounds. From the Reception class onwards, staff teach phonics, taking care to follow leaders' chosen phonics programme. Teachers and teaching assistants provide effective extra support for pupils with weaker reading skills to help them to catch up. Staff work with consistency and accuracy in teaching phonics. As a result, pupils quickly learn to read widely and well.

Leaders and staff ensure that pupils with SEND are identified early. They link extensively with families and other professionals. Leaders provide staff with training and lots of support that enables teachers and teaching assistants to give pupils with SEND the support they need. Pupils with SEND learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

In the early years, staff teach pupils to be cooperative, physically active and to use language well. Staff and children develop positive relationships. Throughout the school, low-level disruption is rare and does not affect staff's teaching of the curriculum.

Leaders and staff enrich pupils' wider development through a well-considered range of extra activities. They help pupils to understand the importance of charitable fundraising, such as to help people affected by war in Ukraine. Each day at the school, pupils learn the importance of being physically active, for example through the 'wake up, shake up' session, where all pupils and staff take part in exercises accompanied by music.

Governors keep effective oversight of leaders' work. They also maintain a close eye on the well-being of leaders and staff. Staff describe the school as warm and caring. They said that leaders take action to make sure that they have a reasonable workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and governors complete regular, up-to-date training on safeguarding. They understand key safeguarding issues that may affect the lives of pupils and families. Leaders and staff listen carefully to what pupils, parents and colleagues say. They keep careful records of any safeguarding concerns. Leaders act quickly to ensure that relevant information is shared with other agencies. Pupils and families gain much early help because of the efforts of leaders and staff.

Leaders act to protect the school's digital systems from cybersecurity risks. They also ensure that staff teach pupils about online safety. Leaders and staff make certain that pupils know how else to stay safe, including if they should become lost or meet a stranger in person.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the essential knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn is less well identified in the curriculum, including in the early years. This makes it more difficult for staff to teach and assess some of the intended curriculum. Leaders should make certain that all of the curriculum is equally well thought out so that children and pupils learn the information that they need to know.
- Some leaders' knowledge of how the curriculum starts in the areas of learning in the early years is underdeveloped. These leaders are not well placed to help drive improvement of the curriculum in the early years. Senior leaders should ensure that all leaders are well informed about the knowledge that staff teach through the curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes. As a result of this, leaders can then provide even greater support and challenge to early years staff about their curricular thinking.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2013.

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	106235
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10283648
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	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Graeme Jones
Headteacher	Laura Trelfa
Website	www.micklehurstallsaints.tameside.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Manchester. The most recent inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 took place in March 2016.

Information about this inspection

- The initial discussions with senior leaders about the work of the school were conducted remotely by an allocated inspector. When the inspection commenced on site, a new inspector conducted the remainder of the inspection, adding to the evidence gathered by the original inspector.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector on site completed deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils.

- The inspector listened to some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to staff. He spoke with some pupils about their reading.
- The inspector met with pupils to ask about behaviour, bullying and their education. He also considered the 103 responses from pupils to an Ofsted survey.
- The inspector met with groups of staff and asked about their workload and well-being. He considered responses from staff to an Ofsted survey.
- The inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including the free-text responses.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspector considered the views of pupils and parents. He also reviewed examples of leaders' safeguarding records.
- The inspector met with the chair of governors and with four other governors, one of whom joined the meeting remotely.
- The inspector spoke by telephone with an officer from the local authority, a representative of the diocese and the school's improvement partner.
- Both inspectors considered a range of leaders' documents, including examples of policies and information about the curriculum.

Inspection team

Sally Rix, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Tim Vaughan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector

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