

Inspection of Scotforth St Paul's Church of England Primary and Nursery School

Scotforth Road, Lancaster, Lancashire LA1 4SE

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils arrive at school happy and they look forward to the day ahead. They enjoy letting staff know how they feel at the start of each day. Pupils know that staff will take care of them if they have any concerns. This helps them to feel safe in school.

The school has high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils work hard to live up to these expectations. Pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. As a result, the school is a serene environment in which pupils can learn well. They are highly respectful to one another and staff. Pupils instinctively demonstrate their courteous manners when moving around the school.

Pupils know that sometimes people fall out. However, they are acutely aware of the impact of their actions on others. To this end, they show great care and kindness towards their classmates and their younger peers.

Pupils develop a keen sense of responsibility. For example, the school council is eager to choose its annual charity and to design activities to raise money for this positive cause. Pupils are proud of the range of roles that they can apply for in school, including sports captains, house captains and subject ambassadors. Pupils also benefit from a range of clubs such as fencing, lacrosse, Chinese and science clubs.

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

The school has developed an engaging curriculum which meets the needs of pupils well. There is clarity in what the school expects pupils to learn in each subject. The school has designed the curriculum logically and this helps pupils to build on their prior learning successfully.

Staff have strong subject knowledge and they typically use this to design activities that support pupils to learn the curriculum in depth. On occasion, however, there are some inconsistencies in the way that teachers deliver aspects of the curriculum in some subjects. From time to time, this hinders how well some pupils learn.

Teachers check regularly that pupils have understood what they have learned. There are well established routines in place to help pupils remember their prior learning. When misconceptions arise, teachers ensure that these errors are corrected swiftly so that pupils can get back on track.

The school has effective systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. These pupils learn the same curriculum as their peers. The school has trained staff well to ensure that they adapt the delivery of the curriculum appropriately for pupils with SEND. This helps these pupils to achieve well.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils enjoy reading a range of high-quality texts across different genres. Pupils talked enthusiastically about the author and poet visits that the school organises to help to bring reading to life. The school has encouraged pupils, through their reading, to learn about different ways of life.

In the Nursery class, children build up their knowledge of rhymes and songs so that they are well prepared for later learning. Children begin learning phonics when they start in the Reception Year. Staff ensure that pupils practice their phonics knowledge regularly. If pupils find reading difficult, staff provide extra support to help them to catch up quickly. Most pupils read fluently by the time they enter key stage 2.

Pupils have a strong understanding of what it means to be fair and to treat everyone with respect. For instance, pupil buddies within school are keen to support younger children. The school ensures that pupils are aware of, and respectful towards, people from cultures that may be different to their own. Nevertheless, the school has not ensured that some pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of the importance of British values.

Children in the early years settle into school quickly. Staff ensure that children swiftly become accustomed to the school's routines. Pupils move around the school impeccably and they behave very well during social times. Learning is very seldom disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils have a strong understanding of the school's behaviour policy and the importance of conducting themselves appropriately. Pupils learn about the importance of forging healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.

Governors know the school well. This knowledge enables them to both support and challenge the school for the benefit of pupils. The school is mindful of staff's workload and well-being. For example, it takes appropriate steps to reduce unnecessary workload for staff when making decisions about the curriculum. Staff feel appreciated by leaders and they enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school is still in the process of establishing the support that staff require to deliver aspects of these curriculums with confidence. As a result, there are some inconsistencies in how well these curriculums are delivered by staff. The school should ensure that staff receive the support and training that they need to deliver these curriculums as intended.
- The school has not ensured that some pupils have the depth of knowledge that they should about the importance of British values. This means that some pupils

are not as fully prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be. The school should ensure that staff are fully equipped to support pupils to develop an age-appropriate understanding of fundamental British values.

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	119533
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10290065
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	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Keith Weatherill
Headteacher	Katie Walsh
Website	www.scotforth-st-pauls.lancs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 May 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Blackburn. The last section 48 inspection took place in November 2022. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place before the end of 2027.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff.
- Inspectors met with leaders of science, computing, physical education and art and design.
- Inspectors met with some governors, a representative of the local authority and received information from a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils read to a trusted adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during playtimes and while in lessons.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors met with parents and carers to gather their views and opinions about the school.

Inspection team

Sarah Barraclough, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Philip Barlow

Ofsted Inspector

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