

Inspection of a good school: St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Devonshire Road, Bispham, Blackpool, Lancashire FY2 0AJ

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 May 2022

Outcome

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are at the heart of this welcoming school. They achieve well. This is because leaders expect pupils to do their best. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are happy and feel safe. They said that staff look after them well. Pupils are confident and mature.

Pupils behave sensibly around the school. They are attentive in lessons and respond positively to leaders' high expectations of their conduct. Pupils are polite and well mannered during social times, when they spend time happily with their friends. Pupils with whom the inspector spoke said that bullying is dealt with quickly by staff.

Pupils make a positive contribution to the life of the local community and enjoy the many extra opportunities on offer to them at school. For example, some become head boy and girl, school council representatives and members of the anti-bullying team. Leaders provide a variety of activities and educational visits that broaden pupils' experiences, such as to the woodlands and moorland of Beacon Fell and to an outdoor residential centre. Pupils value these opportunities and talk of the benefits for their learning and well-being. They enjoy their learning activities in the school's recently modernised outdoor facilities.

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

Curriculum leaders ensure that teachers have a secure understanding of the school's curriculum. In most, but not all subjects, leaders identify the key knowledge that teachers will teach. Leaders set out the content of the curriculum in a logical order from early years to Year 6. This enables pupils to achieve well. However, staff's assessment of pupils' knowledge across different subjects is uneven. This means that staff are sometimes less clear what pupils know and remember.

Leaders have put reading at the centre of the curriculum. From the moment that children start in the Reception Year, they learn phonics. Leaders' careful checks of pupils' phonics knowledge means that those who fall behind are identified quickly. Staff give these pupils the additional support that they need to catch up in their learning. Reading books chosen

by staff match the sounds that pupils know. Leaders have invested considerably in new fiction and non-fiction books that interest and excite pupils. Staff act as reading role models and read to pupils daily to develop their vocabulary and spark their interest. Older pupils are enthusiastic about the books that they read at school. Pupils become fluent and confident readers.

Pupils move around the school calmly and sensibly. Warm, nurturing relationships with their peers and with staff are evident throughout the school. Pupils behave well in class and listen attentively to their teachers. As a result, pupils learn with limited interruption. Children in the Reception class engage positively in their learning and show high levels of concentration.

Leaders and staff identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly. They ensure that these pupils receive the support that they need to succeed. Leaders and staff work well with outside agencies, who provide further specialist support for pupils' needs.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils' personal development. For example, leaders consider carefully how to develop pupils' resilience and well-being, including through activities linked with local community organisations. Pupils benefit from a range of visits and residential trips. Leaders use visitors to school to help deepen pupils' understanding of the curriculum in different subjects. Pupils regularly raise funds for a variety of charities.

Governors share the ambitions of school leaders. They are knowledgeable about the school's work to strengthen pupils' learning in subjects across the curriculum. Governors have successfully used external experts to enable them to improve how they hold leaders to account. Leaders ensure that staff's work-life balance is carefully considered in decisions they make about the improvement of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant. They act quickly on any concerns that arise at school about pupils' safety and well-being. Leaders keep detailed records of their actions to support and protect pupils. Staff and governors take part in regular training to keep pupils' welfare and safety at the forefront of their work.

Staff successfully use the curriculum to help pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when they learn and play online. Pupils know whom to go to if they have concerns or worries, including about what they see and experience online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders do not identify enough of the key knowledge to be taught in some foundation subjects. Consequently, for these subjects, staff's assessments of pupils' understanding are not as useful as they could be and pupils learn less successfully. Leaders should identify the essential information that pupils will learn and ensure that staff assess the knowledge that pupils are taught.

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 outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2011.

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.

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	119691
Local authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	10204418
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Ismay
Headteacher	Alexis Satterthwaite
Website	www.st-bernadette.blackpool.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club that is managed by the governing body.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative education provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Lancaster. The last section 48 inspection was in May 2016.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, history and science. For each deep dive, the inspector met with leaders, reviewed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with staff, spoke with some pupils about their learning and considered samples of pupils' work. The inspector also looked at individual documents about the education of pupils with SEND to evaluate how well these pupils' needs are being met.

- The inspector spoke with pupils about their personal, social, health and economic education and well-being.
- The inspector looked at the single central record of checks on staff suitability to work with pupils. The inspector checked the school's systems for monitoring and reporting safeguarding concerns. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader.
- The inspector met with the SEND coordinator to discuss SEND provision and practice in the school.
- The inspector spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke with several members of staff.
- The inspector met with a group of governors.
- The inspector reviewed key documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation and action plans, as well as minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector checked responses to Ofsted surveys from pupils, staff and parents and carers. This included considering the free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Julie Brown, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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