

Inspection of St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Rossall Grove, Little Sutton, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH66 1NN

Inspection dates: 19–20 September 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils in this school really enjoy their education. They find lessons interesting and full of fun. They work very hard and behave well because teachers expect them to. They listen to adults and to each other and do what they are asked to do straight away.

They talked excitedly to us about linking their work in lots of subjects to events such as the Little Sutton Scarecrow Festival and to staging and performing 'Macbeth'. This has stretched their imagination and creativity and shown them how to use what they have learned for a real purpose.

All pupils, including the most vulnerable, make full use of the very wide variety of extra opportunities that staff provide. They talked enthusiastically about trips that take place locally and further afield. They also spoke about taking part in the school's wonderful range of activities before and after school and at lunchtime. They confidently made links between these extra activities and their classroom lessons.

Pupils know that the school keeps them safe. They know whom to go to if they are worried about anything. Pupils told us that there is no bullying in their school.

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

The headteacher and governors made sure that everyone at the school acted on the last inspection report. As a result, the school has improved considerably. Governors and the headteacher give everyone the time and help needed to make changes. Staff are pleased with developments and believe that the school is better. The school now has enough strengths to share good practice from within its own staffing.

Leaders have designed a well-structured plan for learning. They keep a focus on mathematics and English, while making sure that pupils study all subjects of the national curriculum until the end of Year 6. They do this by linking learning in individual subjects to other areas of the curriculum. For the topic of the Mayans in Year 6, the teacher has mapped how pupils will know and remember more about geography, history, religious education and art.

Staff skilfully teach what leaders expect in every subject. They make sure that pupils revise past work before moving on. I saw a teacher reminding pupils how they had created timelines for the Romans last year. She then showed them how to create a more sophisticated one for the Ancient Greeks. In all subjects, teachers list the skills that pupils should master by the end of each stage. However, in some subjects such as history and geography, they do not always show clearly enough the knowledge that pupils need to remember for future learning.

The school's much improved results show that, in mathematics and English, teachers now plan more effectively so that all pupils reach their full potential. Pupils also

benefit from a well-planned curriculum in other subjects. However, in some subjects, teachers do not routinely ensure that the work is demanding enough for all pupils to fully extend their knowledge and skills. Leaders and teachers make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils have the help that they need to achieve their best.

The headteacher prioritises reading. There is a clear sequence for the teaching of phonics from the very start of Reception. Leaders make sure that there is enough time for reading and that teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled. Teachers spot immediately if any pupils are falling behind and give them extra help until they catch up. Pupils enjoy taking books home to share with their families. At story time, teachers share their love of books with infectious enthusiasm.

Children settle quickly into the Reception class. They share and take turns and are engrossed in carefully planned learning through play. Teachers watch the children and make notes about their progress so that they can plan activities for the next stage. Good curriculum planning and effective teaching mean that the children gain a strong foundation in reading and mathematics, as well as developing wider skills such as knowledge and understanding of the world.

The school provides very rich experiences that help pupils to develop a strong and caring character and help them to understand the difference between right and wrong. There are many opportunities for pupils to gain an excellent understanding of the importance of good eating habits and exercise in leading a healthy and happy life. The school's Catholic ethos can be felt in all aspects of the life of the school and contributes strongly to pupils' personal development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's leaders, including governors, have made sure that there are strong policies and procedures so that no one comes to any harm. Staff know how to spot if a pupil is having problems. They help pupils and families when they are in difficulty and bring in outside support if needed. The school keeps good records of discussions, meetings and actions so that pupils' safety can be monitored. Teachers show pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. Pupils say that they feel safe in the school and their parents and carers agree.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In English, mathematics and religious education, teachers make it clear exactly what pupils should know and remember at each stage in their learning. This is sometimes, but not always, the case in other subjects. Leaders should ensure that essential knowledge is consistently identified across the wider curriculum.

- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to improve their understanding through challenging work. However, this does not happen systematically across the wider curriculum. Leaders should make sure that teachers in all subjects routinely plan work that is demanding enough to fully extend all pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have welcomed effective support, including from the local authority. They have successfully acted on advice and enthusiastically used models of good practice from specialist leaders of education. The school now has the capacity to improve even more using the expertise of its own leaders and staff. Leaders should now share principles of good practice from within the school.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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	111357
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10110893
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Colette Winterburn
Headteacher	Robert Hughes
Website	www.stmaryoftheangels.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 June 2017

Information about this school

- St Mary of the Angels is a voluntary-aided Catholic school.
- A section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in June 2016.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- We observed and spoke to pupils during lessons and at playtimes.
- We met formally with three groups of pupils to talk about their work and their experiences in the school. An inspector heard a range of pupils read.
- We held discussions with staff, middle and senior leaders, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Shrewsbury.
- We looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding.

- We considered 38 responses to Parent View (Ofsted’s online questionnaire), including 38 free-text comments. We also considered 21 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for staff and 27 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for pupils.
- As part of this inspection, the subjects we considered in detail were reading, mathematics, science and history. In addition, we considered pupils’ writing.

Inspection team

Liz Kelly, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gaynor Rennie

Ofsted Inspector

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