

# Inspection of a good school: St John the Evangelist CofE Primary School Macclesfield

Ivy Road, St John the Evangelist Primary School, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 8QN

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Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2023

## **Outcome**

St John the Evangelist CofE Primary School Macclesfield continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils, parents, carers and staff are proud to be part of this happy school. Pupils and children in the early years enjoy learning and feel safe. A typical parent comment was that this is 'a lovely school with amazing teachers and happy children'.

Pupils said that staff care about their mental health and well-being, as well as their learning. They spoke positively about the support they receive from staff. Pupils trust adults at the school to resolve any worries or concerns that they may have. Leaders and staff deal swiftly with any occasional acts of unkindness or bullying.

Leaders have high expectations of achievement and behaviour for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have designed a curriculum that enables pupils to achieve well in a range of subjects. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite to visitors, staff and to each other.

Pupils carry out roles of responsibility with pride. For example, they are proud to be house captains and forest rangers. At playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils have lots of fun together. Older pupils take good care of their younger friends. Pupils, and parents, appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities that are now on offer, such as art, science and choir. Pupils participate in many sports competitions and local music events.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious and broad curriculum for all pupils, carefully considering the mixed-age classes. In most subjects, they have identified what they want pupils to learn. The knowledge is broken down into logical steps. This means that teachers know what they should teach and when it needs to be taught. Firm foundations of learning start in Reception class. Staff use every opportunity, including books and

stories, to develop children's vocabulary and communication skills. Children in the early years are well prepared for the demands of Year 1.

In most subjects, teachers check that pupils consolidate their learning as they move through the school. This helps pupils to link new ideas with learning that they have covered previously. In these subjects, pupils achieve well. However, in a minority of subjects, teachers do not ensure that pupils have enough chances to revisit and recap their learning from previous years. Occasionally, this means that some pupils do not deepen their learning as much as they could.

The reading curriculum is well thought through and well taught. Leaders provide training so staff know how to teach phonics effectively. Lessons are clearly structured. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading. They talk with enthusiasm about the real-life stories and books which are on offer. Staff identify pupils who are not keeping up with their phonic knowledge. They provide extra help to make sure that these pupils catch up quickly with their peers.

The teaching of mathematics is a strength. Pupils across the school enjoy mathematics lessons and achieve well. The curriculum is well embedded and understood by all staff. Pupils are taught core mathematical knowledge, procedures and methods, using consistent teaching approaches. They then use this knowledge, with confidence, to reason and solve problems. Teachers quickly identify gaps in what pupils have learned. They then adjust their lessons to help close these gaps.

Leaders and staff quickly and accurately identify pupils who may have special educational needs. They put appropriate support in place to ensure that these pupils succeed. Pupils with SEND enjoy learning alongside their peers and achieve well. They participate fully in all aspects of school life.

Classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils listen carefully in lessons and work well together. Lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. On occasions when pupils become distracted, staff use a range of strategies effectively to manage pupils' individual needs. Pupils behave sensibly as they move around the school. They know the school rules and most pupils adhere to them.

Leaders have spoken with pupils and parents about the importance of regular attendance. This is helping to improve attendance for some pupils. However, a few pupils still do not attend regularly enough and this holds back their achievement.

Leaders have thought carefully about the opportunities for pupils' personal development. The personal, social and health education curriculum covers an age-appropriate range of topics that help to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Across the curriculum, they think of others by raising money for charitable causes, for example the local food bank and endangered animals. These experiences enhance pupils' learning and prepare pupils well for life beyond primary school.

Governors know the school and its community well. They consider how the decisions that they make will affect the workload of staff. Staff are positive about the way in which leaders look after their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made sure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff have regular safeguarding training and updates. Highly effective processes ensure that staff identify, record and act on any potential concerns about pupils. Leaders work well with external agencies to support pupils and their families.

Pupils learn about the potential risks they may encounter, including online and in the wider community. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a few subjects, pupils have gaps in the key knowledge that they have learned in previous years. This means that pupils do not deepen their learning as much as they should. Leaders should ensure that teachers provide pupils with more opportunities to recall and consolidate learning from previous years.
- A small group of pupils are persistently absent from school. This means that they are missing out on important learning. Leaders should continue to work with families to ensure that they attend school as regularly as they should.

## **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 first ungraded inspection since we the school to be good in April 2018.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111331
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	10286240
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	291
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Debbie Tomlinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Harrison
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjohnsschoolmacclesfield.org">www.stjohnsschoolmacclesfield.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	24 and 25 April 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leader do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Chester. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in April 2019.

## 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography and history. For each deep dive, she met with leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. She also observed pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector considered other subjects in the school's curriculum. She talked to the leaders of these subjects. She also spoke to pupils about their learning in these subjects.

- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspector spoke with different groups of pupils to gather their views of the school and talked to them about their behaviour and learning. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtime.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. She scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. She also spoke with governors, staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation provided by school leaders and staff. This included the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, headteacher reports and the leaders' self-evaluation document.

### **Inspection team**

Julie Barlow, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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