

Inspection of a good school: St Gabriel's Church of England Primary School

Tonge Roughs, Aspinall Street, Middleton, Manchester M24 2BE

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 June 2024

Outcome

St Gabriel's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school and they said that they feel safe. The school's values of courage, respect, friendship, love and forgiveness are shown daily through pupils' consideration towards each other.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), behave well in lessons and they are eager to learn. Pupils know that their learning is important. They listen attentively to their teachers and participate with great enthusiasm.

The school wants the best for all pupils. It has high expectations for pupils' achievement, and staff are determined that all pupils will succeed. The majority of pupils achieve well, including those who are disadvantaged.

Pupils, including children in the early years, behave equally well during social times. Typically, they play together harmoniously. Pupils know why it is important to respect others, regardless of their background. This helps to make the school a respectful place for all. Pupils have every faith that any concerns that they have will be dealt with successfully by staff.

The school is committed to promoting pupils' wider personal development. It provides a broad range of extra-curricular activities, including trips, visits and experiences to enhance pupils' learning of the curriculum. Pupils value the opportunities that they have to become fully involved in the life of the school.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with SEND. The curriculum matches pupils' interests and ambitions. Staff have carefully considered what pupils will learn and the order in which this essential knowledge should be taught. This begins in the Reception Year, where staff design learning that prepares children well for the curriculum in Year 1 and beyond.

Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach. For the most part, teachers deliver the curriculum well. For example, in lessons, teachers model the technical and ambitious vocabulary that they expect pupils to use accurately in a range of contexts. Having such language at their fingertips helps pupils to feel empowered and confident in their learning.

Overall, teachers use assessment information well in most subjects to establish where there might be gaps in pupils' knowledge. For example, teachers skilfully question pupils to check their understanding and to help pupils to remember important learning. Throughout their time at school, pupils encounter frequent opportunities to revisit and consolidate their prior knowledge. They appreciate how this helps them to build secure knowledge over time.

In a very small number of subjects, teachers' checks on how well pupils are learning the curriculum are not as effective as they should be. This hinders teachers from identifying and addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge as quickly as they could in these subjects.

Pupils with SEND access a full curriculum. The school has furnished staff with the skills necessary to identify pupils' additional needs at the earliest opportunity. Staff supported pupils with SEND well by making suitable adaptations to curriculum delivery. This helps pupils with SEND to thrive.

Reading has a high profile throughout the school. In the early years, well-trained staff take every opportunity to develop children's communication and language skills. Pupils learn phonics as soon as they start in the Reception Year. Staff deliver the phonics programme with precision and diligence. Pupils read from books that are well matched to the sounds that they have learned. Typically, pupils apply their phonics knowledge well to read unfamiliar words. Staff use their expertise to provide effective support for those pupils who struggle with early reading. This enables them to catch up quickly with their classmates.

Pupils know that learning to read is important. Across the school, pupils read with enthusiasm and enjoyment. The school has given careful consideration to developing the fluency and comprehension skills of all pupils. By the end of Year 6, pupils are well prepared to access the key stage 3 curriculum.

The school works closely with families and external agencies to identify and remove the barriers that prevent some pupils from attending school as often as they should. The strategies that the school has put in place have borne fruit. Many pupils have improved their rates of attendance.

Pupils benefit from many opportunities beyond the academic curriculum. For example, they learn to play a new musical instrument each year. Pupils also learn about different families, cultures and faiths in readiness for life in modern Britain. Pupils spoke proudly about the fundraising that they do for charity and the support that they provide to their community through food bank donations.

Governors know the school well. They provide appropriate challenge and support to the school to secure ongoing improvements to the quality of education for all pupils.

The school actively engages with staff to ensure that their workload is considered, for example when making changes to policies and to the curriculum. Staff feel valued and they are proud to work 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 a very small number of subjects, teachers' strategies for assessing how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum are not as effective as they should be. This means that, sometimes, gaps in pupils' knowledge go unchecked. The school should ensure that, in these remaining subjects, teachers are equipped to remedy any misconceptions or gaps in pupils' learning swiftly.

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 November 2014.

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	105808
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10347986
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Wendy Leech
Headteacher	Linzy Brown
Website	www.stgabrielsce.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The governing body is responsible for a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspector discussed the ongoing impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, music and mathematics.
- For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspector met with the headteacher and other leaders. They also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector spoke to representatives of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to pupils about their views of the school and observed their behaviour during lessons and at breaktime.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation shared by the school or made available on the school's website.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 put pupils' interests first.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the views of staff through the Ofsted online surveys.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Clare Baron, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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