

Inspection of a good school: Kirkdale St Lawrence C of E VA Primary School

Fonthill Road, Liverpool, Merseyside L4 1QD

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 October 2023

Outcome

Kirkdale St Lawrence C of E VA Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this nurturing, happy school. They know that the school values them for who they are and what they could become. This encourages pupils to live out the school motto. Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They know that there is a trusted adult who they can go to if they are worried about anything.

The school has recently changed the design of the curriculum. These changes have raised staff's expectations of pupils' achievement in all subjects. Pupils have responded well to these higher expectations. They work hard to reach them and they are increasingly successful in their learning. Typically, pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Pupils learn to treat each other with respect as soon as they join the school in the early years. They are polite to adults. The school is a calm, friendly place to learn and play.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of other experiences in school. There are opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities, such as being a prefect or a junior chaplain. The school works with many outside organisations to provide support for pupils' mental health. This helps pupils and their families to better understand how to look after their well-being.

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

The school's newly refined curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. The curriculum has been designed to ensure that pupils build their knowledge systematically from the Nursery Year to Year 6. The school makes sure that teachers are well equipped to deliver the curriculum.

Teachers check on pupils' learning regularly. This means that they can address pupils' misconceptions and identify those pupils who might need some extra help. This helps pupils to build securely on what they know already and deepen their understanding of concepts over time. However, weaknesses in the design of the previous curriculum have

left some pupils with gaps in their knowledge. This means that, on occasion, these pupils struggle to connect new learning to what they already know.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly and accurately. Staff work closely with parents and carers, and outside agencies, to put appropriate support in place for these pupils. Teachers know how to adapt their delivery of the curriculum so that pupils with SEND can learn successfully alongside their peers.

The school has ensured that there is a well-ordered early reading programme in place. Children in the Nursery Year enjoy learning songs and rhymes. This means that they are ready to link letters to sounds as soon as they begin in the Reception class. Staff match reading books carefully to pupils' phonics knowledge. Staff identify those pupils who are in danger of not keeping up with the phonics programme and support these pupils to catch up quickly. This sets them up well as early readers. By the end of Year 2, nearly all pupils are fluent and confident with their reading.

Teachers expect pupils to show that they are ready to learn. Teachers deal with any low-level disruption effectively so that pupils can learn without interruption.

The school prioritises pupils' wider development and embraces the diversity of the local community. Over time, pupils develop their understanding of, and respect for, cultures and religions that are different to their own. For example, pupils enjoy listening to guest speakers who are representatives from local places of worship. There is an extensive programme of visits for pupils to enjoy. For instance, pupils take part in residential trips to places of cultural significance, such as London. The school welcomes a wide range of visitors and organisations into the school, which helps to broaden pupils' horizons.

The school carefully considers staff's well-being. For example, it takes appropriate steps to reduce unnecessary workload when making decisions about changes to the curriculum.

The school makes pupils' attendance a high priority. It has acted appropriately to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. For example, it runs a free breakfast club every morning, which helps parents to get their children to school on time and regularly.

Parents appreciate the way in which the school works with them to support their children's well-being and education. For example, there are phonics and early reading workshops for parents of children in the Nursery and Reception classes. This helps parents to support their children with reading.

While those responsible for governance provide appropriate support to the school, some aspects of their knowledge of the school are not as strong as they should be. This means that, on occasion, governors do not hold the school to account sufficiently well.

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, weaknesses in how the previous curriculum was designed have left some pupils with gaps in their knowledge. This makes it difficult for these pupils to connect new knowledge with prior learning. The school should ensure that teachers are equipped to identify and address these gaps in pupils' learning so that pupils can successfully build their knowledge over time.
- Governors' oversight of some aspects of the school is not as strong as it should be. This means that they are not fully equipped to challenge the school as effectively as they could. Governors should ensure that they have a clear knowledge of the school's strengths and priorities for further development.

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 December 2012.

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	132176
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10268795
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	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mike Griffin
Headteacher	Jo Campbell
Website	www.kirkdalestlawrence.com
Date of previous inspection	16 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England voluntary-aided school. It is part of the Diocese of Liverpool. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in December 2022. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in 2027.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the school was last inspected.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and a wide range of other staff.

- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector met with a representative of the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about their work and their wider school life.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. The inspector considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour around the school and while in lessons.
- The inspector considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics and history. She spoke with the staff who lead these subjects, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. She also spoke with pupils about their learning and viewed examples of their work.
- The inspector also reviewed examples of pupils' work in a range of other subjects.
- The inspector observed pupils in Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Liz Davidson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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