

Inspection of a good school: Calder Vale St John Church of England Primary School

Calder Vale, Garstang, Preston, Lancashire, PR3 1SR

Inspection date:

1 December 2021

Outcome

Calder Vale St John Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and happy at Calder Vale school. They are able to grow, learn and explore together in this small school which sits at the heart of the rural community. Leaders' high expectations are shared by governors and staff. They are ambitious for all pupils to be successful. Pupils achieve well in a range of subjects. Parents and carers speak highly of the school and would recommend it to others.

Children in the early years thrive in the nurturing environment that leaders have created. They enjoy learning and playing with the other pupils in the school. Pupils are polite and well mannered. Pupils said that behaviour is good, and that bullying is rare. They are confident that should it happen, then staff would deal with it quickly.

Pupils are proud of the contributions that they make to help improve the school. As members of committees, they help to organise fundraising events to support local charities. Pupils enjoy the wider opportunities that leaders provide. These include performing with the school band and working with a local artist. Pupils develop their confidence, resilience, and perseverance further through activities, such as horse riding and learning outdoors.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that is suitable for pupils who are taught in mixed aged classes. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In most subjects, curriculum plans identify what pupils need to know. Learning is ordered carefully across and between subjects. This helps pupils to apply what they know and can do when they are learning something new.

Subjects are led well. Staff make frequent checks on how effectively the curriculum enables pupils to know more and remember more over time. Leaders provide a range of training opportunities for staff, for example working with colleagues in other schools. This enhances staff's subject knowledge further.

Assessment information is used skilfully by staff. Teachers' frequent checks on what pupils know and can do helps them to plan what pupils need to learn next. However, in a few subjects, curriculum plans do not clearly identify what pupils in different year groups need to know at key points in time. This, sometimes, hinders teachers' ability to plan for different age groups who are in the same class.

A love of reading is fostered from the time pupils start school. Children in the early years eagerly join in with familiar songs and rhymes. In key stage 1, pupils fondly recalled their favourite stories. Older pupils recommend their favourite books and authors to each other. Pupils are excited about the work that they are doing with an author to publish a book in time for the 2022 World Book Day.

Skilled staff deliver the reading curriculum consistently well. This helps pupils to learn the sounds that letters represent. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they are learning. Pupils use their phonics knowledge successfully to read unfamiliar words. Most pupils quickly become confident and fluent readers. Pupils who find reading challenging benefit from the extra help that they receive. This includes those pupils at the early stages of reading in key stage 2.

Pupils work hard in the positive culture that leaders have created. Behaviour is good and pupils are polite and well mannered. Older pupils act as helpful role models, helping everyone to understand how they should behave. There are few disruptions in lessons. Pupils achieve well and celebrate each other's achievements.

Staff are skilled in identifying and supporting pupils with SEND. This enables pupils with SEND to access all that the school has to offer.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities to enhance the curriculum further. For example, links with schools in other areas help pupils in this rural community to appreciate different faiths and cultures. Field work, and trips to places of interest, help to support pupils' work in a range of subjects. Visits from people who work in a range of different jobs help to broaden pupils' aspirations for future careers.

Governors use their knowledge effectively to provide leaders with appropriate challenge and support. Governors are mindful of staff's well-being. Staff feel well supported by leaders. They are proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and their families well. Training ensures that staff have the knowledge that they need to quickly recognise any changes in pupils' conduct or appearance. Well

established procedures ensure that staff share any concerns that they have about pupils with leaders. Leaders manage these concerns well and ensure that vulnerable pupils quickly receive the help that they need.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. For example, when they are learning in the outdoors and when they are using the internet. Leaders provide guidance for parents on how to keep their children safe when they are using the internet at home.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of curriculum plans do not clearly identify the knowledge that pupils need to know at key points in time. This, sometimes, hinders teachers' planning for pupils in different year groups within the same class. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans, in all subjects, clearly identify what pupils need to learn from the early years to Year 6.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2016.

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	119518
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10204432
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	17
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kim Carlyle
Headteacher	Rebecca Scholz
Website	www.caldervale.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school had its most recent section 48 inspection, undertaken by the Diocese of Blackburn, in September 2016.
- A new headteacher was appointed in April 2020. She is also the headteacher at another school in the area. Both schools form part of a formal collaborative arrangement.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and staff and have taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors spoke with representatives from the governing body, the headteacher, members of the leadership team and staff.
- Inspectors had a telephone conversation with representatives from the local authority and a telephone conversation with a representative from the diocese.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. Inspectors also reviewed a range of evidence for history and geography. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke to staff. They also spoke to pupils about their learning and their experiences of the school. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the free-text comments. They also met with parents at the start of the school day. Inspector considered the responses to both the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Amanda Stringer, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nick Capron

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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