

Inspection of a good school: St Giles Church of England Primary School

Walsall Street, Willenhall, West Midlands WV13 2ER

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 April 2024

Outcome

St Giles Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are keen to come to school each day. They enjoy learning, eager to learn new things in different subjects. Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum offer. The wide range of lunchtime and after-school activities, including sports and music, enriches their school experiences.

The school provides a welcoming environment. Pupils value playing and learning in a diverse community. Leaders and staff make sure that each and every pupil can fully take part in school life, including attending sports clubs. The school has thought carefully about what is offered to appeal to as many pupils as possible.

Pupils are diligent in their studies. From the early years through to Year 6, pupils work together well. In lessons, pupils' talk about their learning is focused.

Pupils feel safe, and are kept safe, in school. They often cite trusted adults as a key reason for this. They know who they can talk to with any concerns, and do so when they need to.

Staff expect pupils to learn and behave as well as they can. Pupils step up to these expectations. The school's values live and breathe at St Giles. Pupils know that staff listen to their views.

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

Pupils get a good curriculum deal at St Giles. The school ensures that pupils learn the most useful content in all subjects. When to teach skills and knowledge is carefully planned. This means that pupils are able to build their new learning on what has been taught before. Children's learning and play in the early years is very much part of this planning. In history, for example, children explored artefacts such as telephones, demonstrating a curiosity about how these devices worked.

Disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn as well as their peers. Staff identify what these groups of pupils need to help them build understanding. This can include taking time for pupils to revisit words and sentences which help them to develop a greater vocabulary and to better explain their views. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND progress well through the curriculum.

Pupils develop secure speaking and listening skills. In all subjects, pupils frequently talk with both adults and peers. Staff demonstrate how to communicate accurately. This prepares pupils well for more complex learning. For example, in mathematics, pupils use their improved written skills to explain their reasoning clearly. This language focus begins in the early years, where staff continually rehearse correct sentence construction with children.

Reading is prioritised at St Giles. Pupils get off to a great start in learning how to decode and build words. Staff teach phonics well. They check that each pupil moves securely through each stage of the phonics programme. With such skills and knowledge in place, pupils go on to read fluently. If pupils need more time to practise letter sounds and blends, then staff make additional time available. Any pupil at risk of falling behind is quickly supported to get back on track.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of reading opportunities. The school has a range of texts and reading areas that pupils enjoy using. Areas are attractive, therefore encouraging pupils to stay and read. The books help pupils learn about and respect the diverse world we live in. Authors and characters from various ethnic groups and backgrounds are promoted. Children in the early years enjoy listening to rhymes and stories that help prepare them for reading.

The school supports staff well in developing their skills to deliver the curriculum effectively through their teaching. Teachers are becoming increasingly secure in their subject knowledge. Teachers ensure that the delivery of the curriculum is consistent with the agreed expectations of the school. For example, activities designed to help pupils recall previous learning all take place at the start of lessons. However, the school is not rigorous enough in checking that such practice is having the desired effect on pupils' learning. This includes how well teachers check that pupils can recall previous learning before moving on.

Pupils' conduct is exemplary. They show very positive attitudes to their learning. From the moment they start in the early years, children learn how to interact courteously with one another. Consequently, very little learning time is lost. Pupils attend well, largely owing to effective school and family engagement.

Pupils embrace the school's passion for its Christian ethos. They thrive in a harmonious environment. The mantra of 'treat others how you would like to be treated' helps pupils develop their character. Pupils experience awe and wonder in many activities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school is not always rigorous enough in checking the effectiveness of how well pupils are learning the subjects being taught. This means that specific improvements to the implementation of the curriculum are not always identified and addressed. The school should gain a better understanding of how effectively the curriculum is taught and use this information to address any shortcomings in curriculum delivery.
- Occasionally, teachers do not check closely enough on the extent to which pupils have remembered their previous learning. Consequently, pupils' gaps in their knowledge are not identified and addressed. The school should ensure that checks on pupils' recall of previous learning are used to help pupils progress well through units of study.

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 March 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	104226
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10322727
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	460
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Angie James
Headteacher	Mark Dakin
Website	www.st-giles.walsall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Giles Church of England Primary School is part of the Diocese of Lichfield. Its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in June 2017. The next inspection will be within eight years of the previous section 48 inspection.
- Currently, a few pupils attend alternative provision to support their medical needs.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first 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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders and other leaders. He also met with members of the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers

and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Pupils were observed reading to members of staff. Other subjects were considered as part of the inspection.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, pupils, and parents and carers; and 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 in lessons and around the school. He spoke with pupils about their experiences in school, including how safe they feel.
- The inspector considered the views of parents submitted via Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector considered the views of staff and pupils through surveys and discussions.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents shared by school leaders.
- The inspector spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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