

# Inspection of St Berteline's CofE Primary School

Norton Lane, Norton, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 6QN

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Inspection dates: 25–26 February 2020

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in December 2006 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework, as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 14 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

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

Pupils at St Berteline's feel like part of a family. They are happy at school. There is a genuine warmth among staff and pupils. Pupils feel cared for and well supported. Pupils demonstrate the school's vision of 'A love of life, a love of learning' in their actions. They are enthusiastic learners.

The pupils that we spoke to said that they feel safe at school and there are no issues with behaviour or bullying. They feel protected because staff act swiftly to resolve any minor disputes or rare instances of bullying. Pupils respect each other's differences. They behave well. There are no disruptions to learning.

Pupils are successful in their learning because the high expectations that staff set match the national curriculum well in all subjects.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of opportunities to enrich their learning. Pupils feel included in all aspects of school life. For example, after-school clubs are chosen so that they match pupils' interests. Key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils enjoy residential trips that are linked well to the topics they learn. These visits bring pupils' learning to life.

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

Senior leaders and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They make sure that everyone is included in school life. Staff said that senior leaders are supportive and that their workload is generally manageable.

Pupils achieve well. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 is often as good as, and sometimes better than, that of other pupils nationally.

Leaders have set clear aims for children's learning in phonics in the early years. This is improving consistency between classes so that the phonics programme is taught well to all children. Children who fall behind are supported to catch up. This support continues into Year 1, where pupils apply their phonics knowledge well. However, some pupils struggle to read fluently by the end of key stage 1. They do not recognise familiar words quickly enough. Despite this, older pupils progress to become accomplished readers by the end of key stage 2.

In writing, some pupils do not apply some of their learning consistently enough because they forget key points. Pupils make simple errors in their work. They do not apply their prior learning consistently when using punctuation and grammar. Pupils' writing is often better in their topic books. This is because they use specific vocabulary to match their area of learning, such as in Year 5 when writing about the Second World War.

In mathematics, the curriculum is well planned. In the early years, children are supported effectively to develop their understanding of number. For example, children in the Nursery class play games to match numbers to quantities of objects. However, there are some minor inconsistencies in the way in which the mathematics curriculum is delivered in the early years and in lower key stage 2. This results in pupils not remembering some of their prior learning. Some pupils are not confident when solving problems mentally. Although they are eventually successful, they do not apply their knowledge as efficiently as they could.

In the early years, the leader is improving the provision by setting more consistent goals for children's learning. She has put in place clear curriculum expectations but these are not yet applied well enough across the early years. This means that some children do not progress through the curriculum as quickly as they could. Staff nurture children well. They are patient and attentive, allowing children to express their ideas. Children demonstrate their positive attitudes and behaviours by working well with others and exploring their learning.

In other subjects, pupils study a lively and engaging curriculum. They remember their learning well, although few excel. The curriculum is enriched by a range of visitors and trips where pupils have opportunities to apply their learning. Pupils talked to us with enthusiasm about the learning they had gained during residential visits. This helped them to deepen their knowledge of many curriculum areas, such as art, music and geography. Subject leaders are presently reviewing the curriculum to set even higher expectations so that learning has more depth.

Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. They are attentive and engaged in their work. Pupils develop a good understanding of their own and others' cultures. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain and have a strong understanding of equalities. After-school opportunities help pupils to continue their talent or interests, particularly in music and performing arts.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils have a strong awareness of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when online. Pupils feel that staff listen well to their opinions and concerns.

Staff are trained well on safeguarding matters. They are vigilant for the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. The positive relationships that staff have with parents and carers mean that they engage well with parents to help them in times of need. Governors also receive appropriate training for their roles, including training for the safer recruitment of staff.

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

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

- Leaders are currently revising their curriculum to make it even better. Presently, few pupils learn subjects in depth. Subject leaders should ensure that they raise expectations of pupils' learning even further by developing curriculum plans to more clearly define the essential learning for each topic at key points in the year. They should ensure that they identify how this learning will enable pupils' future learning.
- Some pupils do not recall some of their essential learning quickly enough in key subjects. This means that some pupils cannot apply their prior learning automatically in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders should ensure that pupils have opportunities to consolidate their learning so that they apply their skills automatically. This will help pupils to be more assured when reading in key stage 1 and when writing and solving mathematical problems in key stage 2.
- In the early years, there is a lack of consistency between the expectations set in different classes. This means that some children achieve better than others. Leaders should ensure that there are clear expectations set for children's learning at key points in the year. They should help adults to make sure that these expectations are met for all children so that they are even better prepared for Year 1.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111383
<b>Local authority</b>	Halton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122163
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	292
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mrs Lesley Austin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Julie Barron
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stbertelines.org.uk">www.stbertelines.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 December 2006

## Information about this school

- St Berteline's is a Church of England school. The school's last section 48 inspection for schools with a religious character took place in March 2018.
- The school took over the management of the on-site pre-school in September 2015.
- There have been relatively few changes in staff since the last inspection. Senior leaders remain in post and seven teachers and three teaching assistants are still at the school since the last inspection 14 years ago.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in December 2006 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework, as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 14 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made most outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject leaders throughout the inspection.
- We spoke with representatives from Halton local authority and from the Diocese of Chester.
- We met with groups of pupils from across the school to ask them about safeguarding. We also met with the headteacher, governors, teachers and teaching assistants. We reviewed documentation which included the school's safeguarding policy, the register of checks carried out on new employees and safeguarding records.
- We looked at the school's behaviour records, observed pupils at breaktimes and discussed behaviour and bullying with pupils.
- We spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and geography. For these subjects, we spoke with the headteacher, met with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils, undertook an analysis of pupils' work and visited lessons. We heard pupils read. We also looked at pupils' work in subjects across the curriculum and met with other subject leaders.

### **Inspection team**

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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