

Inspection of St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

Bowdon Street, Edgeley, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 9EA

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at this caring primary school. Staff forge strong, supportive relationships with pupils. Leaders take prompt and effective action to resolve any bullying issues or unkind behaviour. This helps pupils to feel safe, well cared for and happy.

Pupils respond well to leaders' high expectations of their behaviour. They usually behave well in the classroom, in the playground and around the school. They told inspectors that leaders' recent changes to the behaviour policy have helped everyone to understand the rules and to be ready to learn. Pupils cooperate well with one another.

Children in the Reception Year through to pupils in Year 6, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enjoy learning and achieve well. They live up to leaders' high expectations. Pupils appreciate the range of opportunities that are available to them. This includes visits and after-school clubs, such as yoga, choir practice and sports club.

Pupils value people's differences. For example, they particularly enjoyed learning about people from other countries and cultures in their world languages day.

Pupils like to make a difference to the school and to make it the best it can be. For example, they enjoyed voting for their favourite piece of play equipment. They also value their roles as mental health ambassadors and play leaders.

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

Leaders have designed a suitably ambitious and broad curriculum for pupils. They have clearly identified the key knowledge that pupils will learn and made it clear to staff when content should be delivered. Subject leaders are equipped well with the skills and knowledge to ensure that they can support teachers to deliver the curriculum with confidence.

Teachers frequently check how well pupils have remembered their earlier learning. Teachers then use this information to shape their future teaching and address pupils' misconceptions. Typically, pupils can make links between what they know and new learning. This helps pupils to build their knowledge securely throughout each topic. Overall, pupils achieve well in most subjects. However, in a small number of subjects, some teachers do not support pupils to recall and revisit their prior knowledge. This means that, in these subjects, some pupils sometimes struggle to recall their earlier learning.

Children in the early years develop positive attitudes to learning. Over time, they learn to concentrate for longer periods. However, in some areas of learning, some staff are still developing their expertise to design learning that deepens children's

understanding. From time to time, this prevents some children from securing the knowledge that they need to be ready for the curriculum in Year 1.

There is a keen focus on the teaching of early reading. Phonics teaching starts from the time that children enter the Reception Year. Leaders ensure that all staff have received the training that they need to deliver the phonics programme well. There is a shared approach to the teaching of phonics across the school. In the main, pupils read books which contain the sounds that they have been taught. Leaders ensure that staff are equipped well to identify any gaps in pupils' reading knowledge. This ensures that pupils receive appropriate support to catch up quickly in reading.

Teachers read to pupils with expression and enthusiasm. They expose pupils to books from a wide range of authors. Added to this, when selecting texts to read to the pupils, staff consider pupils' preferences. This helps to further develop pupils' love of reading.

Leaders have suitable systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders ensure that teachers are knowledgeable about how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum so that pupils with SEND learn and achieve well. Mostly, parents and carers are pleased with how leaders prepare pupils for starting in the Reception class and for their move to secondary school.

Pupils enjoy their learning. Staff deal swiftly and effectively with any rare incidences of low-level disruption. This is because leaders have established effective routines to support pupils to behave well. Pupils attend school regularly.

Leaders provide pupils with many opportunities to learn about the wider world. Pupils know it is important to stay healthy, both mentally and physically. Pupils also learn about different religions and cultures. This helps to prepare them well for life in modern Britain.

Leaders, staff and those responsible for governance are proud of their school and the progress that they have made since the previous inspection. Governors and senior leaders look after staff's well-being and consider ways to reduce workload where possible. Governors are committed to their roles. They challenge leaders to secure the best possible quality of education for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. All staff and governors receive regular safeguarding training. This helps them to notice and then report any signs that may indicate concerns about a pupil's welfare. Leaders maintain comprehensive records of safeguarding concerns. They work collaboratively with other agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support that they need quickly.

Pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe. For example, they are aware of the potential dangers of being online, such as giving out personal details to strangers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, pupils do not have enough opportunities to revisit and embed earlier learning. This means that some pupils are not fully secure in the knowledge and understanding that leaders intend them to gain. Leaders should ensure that pupils recall key learning so that pupils know and remember more over time.
- Some staff in the early years do not have the expertise to deepen children's knowledge in some areas of learning. This means that, in these areas of learning, some children in the early years are not as well prepared for their next stage of education as they should be. Leaders should ensure that staff deliver the curriculum in the early years equally well so that children are fully prepared for the challenges of key stage 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 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](#)' 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	140417
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10240708
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Mason
Headteacher	Stephen Murphy
Website	www.cdatstmatthewsprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a sponsor-led academy and is part of the Chester Diocesan Academies Trust.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in February 2017.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- The governing body manages the breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with two members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors, and a member of the board of trustees. She also met with

representatives from the local authority and the diocese, the chief executive officer and the trust's school improvement officer.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives into early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The lead inspector listened to pupils read with a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered curriculums in other subjects.
- Inspectors observed behaviour as pupils moved around the school, during lessons, in the outdoor play area and in the dining hall.
- Inspectors met with those responsible for governance, leaders, staff, pupils and students to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school. Inspectors checked on leaders' safeguarding procedures, including recruitment checks made on new staff.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, leaders' behaviour and attendance records and minutes of meetings held by those responsible for governance.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Kathy Nichol, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ian Shackleton

Ofsted Inspector

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