

# Inspection of Halsall St Cuthbert's Church of England Primary School

New Street, Halsall, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 8RR

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Inspection dates:	4 and 5 February 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since February 2015. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

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

St Cuthbert's is a friendly and happy place in which to learn. The recently established leadership team has developed an ambitious curriculum for pupils to learn. The school mission, 'let your light shine', inspires pupils to achieve the best that they can in most subjects. Overall, pupils flourish academically and socially. They benefit from many opportunities to explore their interests.

In the early years, children get off to a flying start. They find their learning irresistible. Across the school, pupils are enthused when learning something for the first time or mastering a new skill. Pupils extend their skills and contribute to the school community by taking on leadership roles. They support each other well. Older pupils act as positive role models. Reading ambassadors, for instance, use the weekly 'reading den' to help younger pupils to practise their fluency.

The school has consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils follow the school routines and conduct themselves well. If pupils struggle to manage their behaviour and emotions, they receive support that helps them to get back on track. The school makes sure that pupils and families know the importance of being in school. Most pupils attend school regularly.

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

Leaders have established a broad curriculum for pupils to study. In many subjects, such as physical education, pupils achieve very well. For example, younger pupils explain in detail how to undertake an underarm throw and why it is important to have the opposite leg forward for balance and accuracy. In a few other subjects, where the curriculum is still being refined, the school has not thought carefully enough about the most important knowledge that it wants pupils to learn. This hinders teachers from helping pupils to connect new learning to the things that they already know. From time to time, this limits what some pupils know and remember.

The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately and provides effective support to address their needs. Overall, pupils across the school learn well in the subjects that they study. They are inspired by the tasks that they are given to do. However, occasionally, the activities that teachers select do not address some pupils' misconceptions or gaps in knowledge sufficiently well. As a result, these pupils sometimes struggle to apply the new concepts that they are learning to what they already know.

In reading, pupils gain the knowledge that they need to become accomplished and fluent readers. In the early years, children receive exceptional support to learn to read. If pupils struggle with reading, staff give them effective support to catch up. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the books that they read in class. They enjoy the way that their teachers bring these stories to life. Leaders have created a reading culture that inspires pupils to read widely and often.

In the early years, children benefit from an exceptional curriculum. Children build very positive relationships and cooperate consistently well with each other. Staff use their expertise to help children to use new vocabulary and extend their talk. Children use this language confidently and independently. Staff provide activities for children that motivate them to persevere with new tasks. They ensure that children gain the knowledge they need to be ready for Year 1 and beyond.

Pupils behave well in lessons. Learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils understand that they live in a diverse world. They link individual liberty with the importance of not causing harm to others. Pupils treat those around them with kindness and respect.

Pupils receive a well-considered personal development offer. They have a deep understanding of how to stay safe online. The school broadens pupils' experiences by providing opportunities to widen their interests. Some pupils learn musical instruments, for example, while others participate in the many sporting opportunities on offer. A number of pupils contribute as play leaders. They support others at playtime by helping to set up games and activities. These opportunities inspire pupils to be excellent role models for others in the school.

Governors are very knowledgeable about the school. They have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. Governors check that leaders are focused on the right things to improve the quality of education for pupils. The workload and well-being of all staff are priorities for leaders. Staff feel well supported and are proud to work at this school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In a few subjects, the school has not identified clearly enough the important knowledge that pupils should learn. This makes it more difficult for teachers to ensure that pupils acquire and remember essential subject knowledge over time. The school should ensure that teachers are clear about the important knowledge that pupils need to learn in these subjects.
- On occasion, teachers do not take into account gaps in some pupils' knowledge when designing learning. This hinders these pupils from building a rich and connected body of subject knowledge. The school should ensure that teachers select activities for pupils that help them to remedy any misconceptions and learn the curriculum consistently well.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119480
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10348180
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	178
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Angela Christian-Pye
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Hampson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.halsall.lancs.sch.uk">www.halsall.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 February 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England school within the Diocese of Liverpool. Its last section 48 inspection took place in January 2018. The next section 48 inspection is due this academic year.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils in the school.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of other documentation, including minutes of governors' meetings and leaders' evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted pupil survey and spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life.
- To gather the views of parents and carers, inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also met with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted staff survey and met formally with staff to gather their views.

### **Inspection team**

Jen Sloan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

John Littler

Ofsted Inspector

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