

St Margaret's Anfield Church of England Primary School

Lower Breck Road, Anfield, Liverpool, Merseyside L6 4BX

Inspection dates

1–2 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The senior leadership team is ambitious for its pupils and has taken effective action to drive improvement forward. Leaders carefully analyse the impact that their actions are having on pupils' achievement and teaching.
- Leaders' systematic monitoring is improving teaching and learning. An effective system of sharing good practice among teachers is contributing well to improved pupils' progress.
- Leaders and staff have created a community with respect and care for others at its heart. Pupils' personal development and welfare, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are a strength of the school.
- The curriculum has been developed through the provision of rich and varied experiences that bring learning to life for pupils.
- Governors work closely with leaders to ensure that they both challenge and support their work. They are knowledgeable about their school and what needs to improve further.
- Leaders are vigilant in ensuring that there is a strong culture of safeguarding and that vulnerable pupils receive the support needed.
- Children in early years make good progress because their needs are assessed carefully. There is a strong focus on learning both inside and outside the classroom.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress is improving because their needs are analysed with greater precision and they receive effective support to help them to catch up. The most able disadvantaged pupils, however, do not make the same rates of progress.
- Pupils' progress in writing has improved because of the careful focus on developing real enthusiasm for writing across the curriculum.
- In 2017, standards in key stage 2 declined. Progress for current pupils in reading and mathematics is now more rapid. In key stage 1, the low attainment in the past is beginning to improve for current pupils.
- Teaching does not provide enough challenge to enable the most able pupils to reach their full potential.
- Pupils' attendance has improved, but it is still below the national average. Persistent absence remains too high.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - continuing to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most-able, so that a higher proportion achieve the expected standard or above
 - ensuring that teachers provide the most able pupils with suitably challenging activities to enable this group to reach their potential
 - ensuring that the recent improvements in pupils' attainment in key stage 1 are secured and built on further.
- Further improve attendance across the school and reduce the high levels of persistent absence of some pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Pupils' outcomes at the end of 2017 dipped sharply. Progress in reading was especially weak and the standards pupils reached were below the national averages. This was due to staffing turbulence and ineffective strategies to spot pupils' underachievement early enough.
- The headteacher and her committed team of leaders responded swiftly to the disappointing published data. Teachers have been supported through a new coaching approach to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently strong across the school.
- A rigorous system for checking on pupils' progress has been introduced. This is ensuring that pupils in danger of falling behind are identified quickly and are helped to catch up quickly. Teachers are being held to account for the progress that the pupils in their class make. Furthermore, a new system for assessing pupils' progress means that teachers have timely access to accurate information, which enables them to plan work that matches the learning needs of most pupils. As a result of this effective action, pupils are making much swifter progress than in the past and the decline in pupils' outcomes has been halted.
- The leader for assessment provides support and challenge for teachers to ensure that small group and individual support sessions are carefully targeted to help pupils bridge the gaps in their knowledge, understanding and skills. The progress of those pupils who receive this additional support is monitored rigorously, to make sure that it is making a difference to their learning.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers are well supported to improve their practice. This involves access to appropriate training alongside many opportunities to work with others in the school so that good practice is shared. This has led to a consistent approach to teaching and learning and has built a harmonious working atmosphere. Staff share the headteacher's determination to ensure that pupils in their school overcome the many barriers to learning that some may face.
- Leaders know their pupils' needs well. They provide additional support for pupils who are vulnerable. Leaders are also aware of the need to support and promote pupils' social and emotional development. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Staff and pupils speak highly of the weekly opportunity that they have to focus on personal, social and health education. Pupils are consequently more aware of how negative emotions can prevent their progress in learning. They explained how reflecting on their feelings is important and they value the time they have to do so.
- The school uses the funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively. Leaders carefully target this funding to support these pupils. Leaders have high expectations for the achievement of this group. The recently appointed learning mentor is now adding to the strength of the team that supports these pupils. The differences in progress between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are now much smaller than in the past.

- Leaders have developed the school's curriculum carefully to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders emphasise how they ensure that it is appropriate for the needs of pupils in this school. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective, thoughtful learners. Pupils grow and develop into caring members of their community because they are given responsibility for helping other pupils in the school. This is also because of the school's ethos of service to others. For example, pupils explained how they formed their own 'eco' team to look after their environment. The school takes every opportunity to develop pupils' understanding of their place in a diverse world and prepares them well for the next stage of their learning.
- The curriculum, including lunchtime and after-school activities, provides a variety of experiences that contribute to raising pupils' achievement and promoting their personal development. Pupils have opportunities to develop their understanding of British values through activities such as polling day, when they vote for their school council representatives. Enrichment weeks are carefully planned, enabling pupils to learn about the past. Exciting topics are valued by teachers and pupils. A recent 'Decades week' developed pupils' understanding of the history of music. Pupils experienced high-quality musical workshops and planned activities. Pupils' positive learning experiences are, therefore, contributing well to their growth as successful learners.
- Leaders have ensured that every aspect of the school day is planned well. This includes breaktimes, when pupils are given the opportunities to socialise and play. Positive relationships between pupils are developed well through the provision of designated play areas. Pupils have the space that they need to play and socialise happily.
- Procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress are a shared responsibility. The headteacher has created a team in the school that cares deeply about both pupils' well-being and their progress in learning.
- Senior leaders have given middle leaders the support that they need to be effective leaders of their subjects. Middle leaders speak knowledgeably about their work in developing the school's curriculum. They monitor the effectiveness of teaching closely in their subjects through checking on the work in pupils' books and on pupils' progress.
- Relationships with parents are typically good. Although the findings from Parent View are not wholly positive, discussion with parents and the school's own parental questionnaire indicate that parents are supportive of the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well. They visit the school regularly and ensure that they receive the information that they need to hold leaders to account. They are aware of where the school needs to improve.
- Governors speak knowledgeably about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They understand the pupils' needs and support leaders in ensuring that funding is targeted effectively. For example, funding is used effectively for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Consequently, this group is making good progress in their learning.

- Governors understand where the focus for improvement needs to be. For example, they are well aware that pupils' attendance is not as good as it should be when compared to the national average.
- Governors also understand where the school is being successful. For example, governors spoke about the new approach to improving teaching and learning and the positive impact that this is having on improving pupils' progress.
- Governors are knowledgeable about safeguarding and have attended training in the school. In addition, they have attended 'Prevent' duty training. As a result of this, they understand their responsibilities well.
- Governors chose to have a review of governance in September 2017. New governors have now joined the governing body. They are undertaking their responsibilities effectively, including the new SEN governor, who is keen to provide support and challenge.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are vigilant about the safety and welfare of pupils. This is an important priority in the school, where the needs of pupils can be complex. The school has a particular focus on supporting its pupils in their social and emotional development. Staff ensure that pupils are not forgotten whatever their needs are. Staff often 'go the extra mile' for pupils, particularly when the level of support that they may need is not typical. For example, staff meet weekly to discuss vulnerable pupils' individual action plans. The safeguarding team work closely with individual families to provide additional support when this is needed.
- The school's safeguarding work is supported by the creation of a team of staff who provide support to individual pupils. They are well trained and use their skills and expertise effectively.
- All staff and governors have received appropriate training that enables them to protect pupils from harm and understand the procedures for informing others if a pupil is at risk.
- Leaders ensure that record-keeping is robust and that where there are concerns they are quickly followed up. Leaders keep a close check on any low-level issues about pupils' welfare in case information indicates more serious concerns. Leaders make appropriate links with other agencies to protect pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers share their good practice regularly. This is having a very positive impact on ensuring a consistent approach to teaching across the school. For example, teachers have developed strong questioning skills which they use well to check on pupils' understanding. In addition, teachers are skilled at helping pupils to understand what successful learning looks like, so that pupils can go on to produce quality work in a range of subjects.

- Teachers know their pupils increasingly well and set work at the correct level for most pupils. However, this is more varied for the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils. Some most-able pupils have the opportunity to respond to demanding work. For example, the Year 5 science books show that the most able pupils have gained a very good understanding of the movement of planets in the solar system. However, in some classrooms the most able pupils are not able to replicate this strong progress because they do not receive enough challenge.
- Improving the teaching of writing has been a whole school focus. This has had a positive impact. Pupils' achievement in writing has improved because of the regular opportunities that they have to develop and practise their skills by writing across the curriculum.
- In key stage 2, in particular, teachers emphasise the importance of pupils' developing good-quality handwriting skills to ensure that pupils can write fluently and legibly. This accounts for the good presentation in pupils' books and their willingness to write at length and for different purposes.
- Pupils' progress in reading is improving due to the renewed focus on teaching reading and improved phonics teaching. Teachers question pupils in guided reading sessions carefully, ensuring that pupils search for answers and give evidence from their reading text. Pupils read regularly at home and in school as shown in pupils' reading journals. Pupils recognise the importance of reading and use the school library to choose books that they enjoy. The organisation of phonics in the school is now more rigorous than in the past and the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check is improving over time.
- The teaching of mathematics has also improved. Teachers model new strategies carefully and ask questions which encourage pupils to explain their thinking. Teachers encourage pupils to work together and to discuss their work. This is helping pupils to deepen their understanding. Some pupils have the responsibility of being 'mathematics ambassadors'. These pupils organise mathematical games at playtimes and promote the enjoyment of mathematics. Pupils throughout the school are positive about mathematics.
- Carefully targeted small group and individual support is helping pupils who have fallen behind to catch up quickly. This is having a positive impact on improving pupils' progress, including the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils are focused in their lessons and respond quickly to teachers. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. This is shown in pupils' positive behaviour in lessons, and in their books where standards of presentation are high.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Leaders place great importance on nurturing pupils so that they are respectful and caring. This underpins everything that happens in the school. Leaders want pupils to achieve in a community that cares.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and understand that they are in school to work hard and be successful. They talked about their headteacher as someone who likes to reward them if they improve.
- Leaders provide a variety of after-school clubs to develop pupils' social skills and widen their experiences. Pupils enjoy the many and varied after-school clubs that they have. For example, they explained how they enjoyed drama club when they produced a version of 'The Lion King'. Such opportunities are enabling pupils to try new and exciting activities instead of 'sitting in front of a screen' as one pupil said.
- Pupils feel safe in their school and explained how some pupils help them to stay safe as well as their teachers. Some pupils have a role as an 'internet safety ambassador'. They keep other pupils alert to online safety issues in assemblies every week.
- Leaders give a high priority to pupils' personal development. They emphasise the importance of mental well-being. A new initiative each Friday encourages pupils and staff to reflect on their week. It is having a very positive effect on creating a calm and orderly environment that enables pupils to thrive. It is part of a new personal, social, health education programme designed to improve pupils' capacity to learn.
- Staff take every opportunity to develop pupils' personal skills through the planning of the curriculum. For example, pupils learn about other faiths as well as their own. Classroom worship in Year 3 included how to be a good friend. Pupils are encouraged to think of others and enjoy fund raising for good causes. As a result of this continued focus on others, pupils develop strong personal skills and become respectful members of their school and wider community.
- A member of staff appointed to support parents and their children gives pupils additional help when they need it. For example, support is provided during times of transition. This includes pupils who speak English as an additional language. As a result of this, such pupils are well-supported when they start in the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around school is calm, orderly and respectful of others.
- Pupils' behaviour in classrooms is good and is contributing to the current improvements in pupils' progress. Pupils respond quickly to teachers' instructions and they are keen to work hard.
- Pupils are polite and friendly to all, including visitors to the school.
- Teachers encourage pupils to reflect carefully when they make mistakes in their relationships with other pupils. Pupils explained that if they get angry they are asked to think of ways to cope with their problems that will be more effective. Teachers in the school offer them examples of how to manage their feelings. Such work is benefiting

pupils greatly and contributing to improvements in behaviour. Leaders now tackle inappropriate behaviour in school well. Consequently, exclusions have fallen.

- Pupils' attendance at school is improving, but it remains below the national average. Leaders are working with parents to support pupils who need additional help to improve their attendance. Nonetheless, persistent absence remains high.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, Year 6 pupils made slow progress in mathematics and writing. Progress in reading was particularly weak. The standards that they achieved in reading, writing and mathematics were below the national averages. The school's own data and information from pupils' books show that the dip in pupils' outcomes has been arrested and reversed. Progress across the school is improving for current pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and a greater proportion of pupils are working at age-related expectations.
- Despite the good progress that Year 2 pupils make over key stage 1, the standards that they have reached in reading, writing and mathematics have been below average. The 2017 data points to an improving picture, which is being sustained by those pupils currently in Year 2. Nonetheless, the rate of improvement in key stage 1 is not as strong as that seen in key stage 2.
- Most disadvantaged pupils are making typically strong progress, which is helping to close the attainment gap between them and other pupils nationally. However, there is still work to be done, as differences in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the school and other pupils nationally are still too great, particularly in key stage 1.
- The 2017 test results for the end of Year 6 showed that the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth was below the national average. This was also true for the most able disadvantaged pupils. The achievement of the most able pupils currently in the school is varied across classes and subjects. This is because teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough.
- Although the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check dipped in 2017, the overall trend in phonics performance since the previous inspection has been positive. Pupils currently in Year 1 are making good progress in phonics currently, which is helping them to develop good early reading skills.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because their progress is carefully tracked and additional support is provided when needed. The special educational needs coordinator ensures, through her strong leadership, that pupils enjoy their learning and want to be successful.
- Teachers place importance on developing pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum. Pupils' books show that they make good progress across a range of different subjects beyond English and mathematics. For example, in Year 4, pupils had written an explanation text about the layers of the rainforest. In Year 6, pupils produced a diary entry from the viewpoint of a slave. The quality of language chosen and the organisation of the writing by pupils show an increasing level of skill in pupils' work.

- Pupils for whom English is an additional language make particularly strong progress from their starting points on entry to school. In 2017, the attainment of this group of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was typically higher than that of other pupils in the school.

Early years provision

Good

- A large proportion of children start school in early years with skills, knowledge and understanding below those typical for their age. Often, children's speech and language has been delayed. The development of early language skills is an important focus in early years. This focus has had an effective impact on children achieving a good level of development which, in 2017, was close to the national figure.
- Strong leadership and good teaching in the early years setting ensures that children are well prepared for their transition to key stage 1.
- The early years leader works closely with her own staff and with the staff of the private nursery that shares the school site. As a result, children make a smooth transition into Reception because staff have a good understanding of children's academic, social and personal needs.
- A carefully planned and engaging curriculum supports children in developing effective characteristics of learning. This is evident in children's learning journeys. Children's work is carefully assessed and their progress is shown through work samples. For example, there are many opportunities for children to develop their writing and number skills. Adults choose reading books with care and these are used to develop children's writing. For example, children wrote quality sentences about what the 'very hungry caterpillar' ate on Wednesday.
- There is a strong focus on learning and preparing children for the next stage of their education. However, sometimes opportunities to challenge children are missed. For example, when children have completed a task they sometimes wait for an adult to offer them another activity.
- Funding to support the learning of disadvantaged children is used well in early years and many of these children make rapid gains in their learning. Staff receive training in those areas where children need additional support. For example, all staff received training in developing early language skills. As a result, children are able to quickly overcome the speech and language difficulties that many have when they join the school.
- Partnerships with parents are strong and parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning at home. Parents spoke highly of staff when dropping their children off at school. Developing a love of reading starts early in Nursery, where an increasing number of parents are taking home reading books, including 'tricky' challenging reading books for their children.
- Children are able to work independently and also to stay focused on tasks under the direction of adults. There are opportunities for children to develop their reading, writing and number skills inside the classroom and in the outdoors environment. For example, children have a cosy reading corner in the outdoor area as well as an area for planting and growing where there are labelled instructions for caring for the plants. Children are

encouraged to explore and investigate through well-organised learning opportunities. For example, children investigated vehicles as they moved down ramps and listened to sounds that they could make with musical instruments. Children played imaginatively in the 'dinosaur den' and used resources that encouraged them to explore and be curious.

- Children's behaviour is good. They work cooperatively with each other and are able to do this independently as well as under the direction of adults. Expectations of children's behaviour in early years are high and children respond positively to staff. They listen carefully and follow instructions well. For example, children worked independently using technology to find mirror images of patterns. They were successful in their task and supported each other in the group.
- Safeguarding is rigorous and careful attention is paid to children who need support. Leaders ensure that all statutory welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	134245
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10042494

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	455
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Peter Winn
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Hughes
Telephone number	01512 605 522
Website	www.stmargaretsanfield.co.uk
Email address	admin@st-margaretsanfield.liverpool.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 May 2014

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- There is a new headteacher in post since the previous inspection in 2014. There have been further staff changes that have taken place during the period of time since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2017, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the school. Three observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and one with a senior member of staff. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks and listened to a group of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during the school day and observed them during playtimes. They also met formally with two groups of pupils to talk about their learning, behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including information about pupils' progress, school improvement plans, minutes of governors' meetings, information about teachers' performance and external reviews of the school. An inspector scrutinised leaders' records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke to some parents in school and considered 25 responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent view. Inspectors considered responses from 26 staff to Ofsted's questionnaire.
- Inspectors took note of displays around the school and information from the school's website.

Inspection team

Christine Howard, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Sandie La Porta	Ofsted Inspector

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