

Inspection of a good school: St Oswald's CofE Aided Primary School

St Oswald's Road, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear NE31 1HT

Inspection dates:

5–6 November 2019

Outcome

St Oswald's CofE Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like their cheerful, happy school. Attendance is good. Pupils are kept safe and are well looked after. Pupils and staff get along well. They listen and respond respectfully to each other. There are smiles and laughter aplenty.

Pupils behave well. They are friendly and polite. Pupils say that staff deal with any poorer behaviour. Bullying is rare. Pupils know what to look out for to protect themselves from bullying. They say adults will help them if they have worries.

Pupils know their opinions matter. They take their extra responsibilities seriously. The pupil council like working with leaders to make improvements. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem develop well.

Leaders offer an exciting curriculum. Interesting topics, trips, visitors and after-school clubs grab pupils' attention. In most subjects, teachers build effectively on what pupils already know and can do. Leaders' planning and sequencing of subjects, such as history, are improving.

Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. However, some pupils in key stage 1 and Reception have trouble reading their books. A few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) also struggle. Leaders know this. Extra phonics-based books are being bought. Leaders know that all pupils need books that closely match their phonics needs.

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

The headteacher wants the very best for all pupils and staff. Staff say they enjoy working here. They feel that they have a good work–life balance because the headteacher and governors are considerate of their workload.

Senior leaders know pupils and families well. The school's 'aspire, believe and connect' motto is evident in all that they do. Leaders reach out to the local community. They work well with other agencies to provide support for those who need it. They help pupils to believe in themselves. Pupils are encouraged to reach for the stars. Good physical and mental health are promoted. Some of the school's efforts are recognised in the awards they have achieved. These include their work to keep pupils safe. Pupils' punctuality and attendance improved considerably in recent years. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is a strength of leaders' work.

Teachers inspire pupils to think about life beyond school. Pupils discuss different jobs. Artists, firefighters, police officers, nurses and local businesses work with pupils regularly. Pupils debate issues that affect their own and others' lives. They identify risks, including those related to technology. Staff help pupils to understand what it means to be a kind, tolerant neighbour and a good citizen. A strong sense of equality, moral purpose and spirituality is fostered. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern-day Britain.

The mathematics curriculum is well organised. Important content is sequenced carefully. Plans are detailed. Children's books show that they learn about mathematics right from the start of Reception. They practise writing numbers correctly. Numbers are visible everywhere, inside and outdoors. As they move through school, pupils build on what they already know and can do. Pupils practise facts, like times tables, again and again. This helps them to remember important number knowledge. Pupils tackle tricky problems and calculations with more and more success. By the end of Year 6, pupils are ready for the key stage 3 mathematics curriculum.

Some pupils have difficulties with speech, language and/or communication when they start school. Teachers teach phonics, reading and writing every day. Adults create cosy reading dens that entice pupils to read. They read stories to pupils with enormous enthusiasm. Adults and pupils love reading. The stories that staff want pupils to know by heart are still being agreed. Teaching staff have strong subject knowledge. The links between sounds and letters are explained clearly to pupils. Staff pronounce sounds correctly. Some Reception children and pupils in key stage 1 have trouble reading the books that adults select for them. This includes some pupils with SEND. Sometimes, books are not closely matched to pupils' phonics needs.

Leaders have thought carefully about the wider curriculum. In all subjects, expectations are high. Teachers bring cultures and countries beyond pupils' doorsteps to life. The history of the local community is examined well. Pupils can explain why the Jarrow March of 1936 was organised. They talk knowledgably about how it affected the lives of those in the past. Curriculum planning for history and some other subjects is still developing. Leaders are well on their way to sequencing subject-specific content and knowledge in better detail.

The early years is well led. Kind, patient staff think carefully about each child. They plan activities that build on what children can already do. There are exciting, well-organised things on offer. Children could tell me all about Guy Fawkes and bonfire night. They explained the risks associated with fireworks. They knew how to keep themselves safe. Right from the start, children practise reading, writing and working with numbers. They

quickly learn to link sounds with letters. Children's books show that their letter formation is developing well. They are given many chances to write indoors and outside. They behave well, are happy and have lots of fun. Most are well prepared for Year 1.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors ensure that adults working with pupils are suitable to do so. The headteacher is the designated safeguarding leader. Her work is thorough. Staff get frequent updates and training. They know what to look out for to keep pupils safe from harm. Effective systems are in place for adults to log any concerns. Child protection records are detailed. Leaders act promptly to address any issues that arise.

All staff know about the risks associated with county lines. One or two adults, however, lack the confidence to explain how this might apply to them in their day-to-day work.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders prioritise reading. Teachers make the link between sounds and letters crystal clear for pupils. They support any pupils falling behind giving them the additional support that they need to catch up. Phonics training has helped all staff to spot gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge. Year 1 phonics outcomes are good. However, leaders know that they do not have enough phonics-based books to go around. Some pupils with SEND and some readers in Reception and key stage 1 do not read books that are linked closely to their phonics needs. Leaders should remedy this issue promptly.
- Leaders have decided which genre of books pupils should experience by the end of each year group. They should agree which stories they want pupils to know inside out to further strengthen pupils' recognition of simple recurring literary language in stories and poems and to inform pupils' own writing.
- Leaders provide a good quality of education overall. Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Pupils' personal, health, social and emotional development are strengths of the school's curriculum. Leaders should strengthen the planning of subjects, such as history, further. Subject-specific content needs to be better sequenced so that what pupils need to know and remember, and when, is spelled out precisely.
- Leaders, governors and staff take their duties to protect pupils seriously. There are rigorous systems in place to help them to do so. Leaders should devise ways to check that all adults are confident to explain their duties with regards to county lines.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged St Oswald's CofE Aided Primary School to be good on 3–4 June 2015.

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 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

Unique reference number	108711
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10088946
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Adam Ellison
Headteacher	Helen Smith
Website	www.stoswaldscofe.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 June 2015

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- There have been significant changes in leadership since the previous inspection. A new deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) have been appointed. The chair of governors is new to the post. The senior leadership team has been restructured.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, the SENCo and governors, including the chair of the governing body. I held telephone conversations with local authority and diocesan partners.
- I looked closely at reading, mathematics and history. I visited lessons and looked at pupils' work from each key stage with school leaders. I met with subject leaders and talked with teachers and pupils about each subject. I listened to pupils reading and looked at the records of their reading.

- I took the views of 89 pupils who responded to Ofsted’s survey into account. I talked with pupils formally and informally throughout the inspection. I observed their behaviour and interactions across the day.
- I examined documents related to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour. I spoke with staff and governors about their duties in protecting pupils from harm and their knowledge of statutory safeguarding requirements.
- I took account of the views of 45 parents who responded to Ofsted’s survey and those who offered free-text comments.
- I considered the views of staff through meetings, discussion and the 25 responses to Ofsted’s survey.

Inspection team

Fiona Manuel, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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