

# Inspection of a good school: Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School

Old Lane, Rainford, St Helens, Merseyside WA11 8JF

---

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 April 2023

## **Outcome**

Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils, including children in the early years, benefit from a high-quality education at this small, family-orientated school. They arrive each day eager to learn. Friendly staff get to know pupils and their families well.

Governors, leaders and staff are united in their aim to provide pupils with the best possible education. To this end, leaders have designed a curriculum which interests pupils and helps them to achieve well across a range of subjects.

Pupils enjoy learning in the calm and nurturing environment that leaders have created. This helps pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to feel happy and safe in school.

Leaders expect pupils to behave well and most pupils rise admirably to these expectations. Staff act as positive role models for pupils, leading by example to show pupils how to use their manners. Pupils are polite and they move around the school in an orderly manner.

Pupils are keen to look after each other. Any falling-out between friends is resolved quickly. Leaders act swiftly to deal with any instances of bullying. Pupils know who to go to if they have any worries and they are confident that staff would help them if needed.

Pupils enjoy contributing to leaders' decision-making through their roles as eco-warriors, school councillors and well-being ambassadors. There is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities to support pupils to pursue their interests and talents. For instance, pupils enjoy honing their sporting skills and singing in the choir.

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

Leaders and staff have designed a curriculum that is ambitious and meets the needs of pupils, including those with SEND. In many subjects, leaders are clear about the essential

knowledge and skills that pupils should learn and the order in which this content should be delivered by teachers. Leaders have considered carefully the subject-specific vocabulary that pupils must learn. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders are not clear about the order in which key vocabulary should be taught. This hinders some teachers in designing learning for pupils.

For the most part, staff are equipped well to deliver curriculums with confidence. Subject leaders ensure that the subject curriculums are being delivered well and provide appropriate support for staff when needed.

Teachers check that pupils have understood prior learning before introducing new concepts. This helps pupils to apply what they already know when learning something new. Teachers explain new learning clearly and they deal with misconceptions as soon as they arise. Pupils listen well in class and there is very little disruption to learning.

Leaders have ensured that, in the main, staff have received training to deliver the early reading curriculum well. Children are introduced to the joys of stories, rhymes and poems as soon as they start in the early years. For instance, attractive book areas in classrooms help to promote pupils' and children's love of reading. However, a small number of staff are still honing their expertise to deliver some aspects of the phonics curriculum as leaders intend.

Pupils, including those with SEND, read books that are matched accurately to the sounds and words that they know. Leaders ensure that those pupils who fall behind receive the support that they need to help them catch up with their peers. Older pupils read with fluency and expression. They talk with enthusiasm about their favourite authors and the different types of books that they like to read.

Highly skilled staff identify the needs of pupils with SEND promptly, including in the early years. Teachers adapt how they deliver the curriculum through additional support and resources to ensure that pupils with SEND learn alongside their friends in class. Leaders work closely with outside agencies to make sure that pupils with SEND get the support that they need.

Pupils develop an awareness of the world around them and learn to become responsible citizens. For example, they recognise the need to protect the planet by recycling and turning off lights to save electricity. Pupils are accepting and respectful of others. They understand and appreciate differences, such as different types of family. Pupils recognise the importance of eating a balanced diet and taking regular exercise to keep themselves healthy. Leaders ensure that pupils receive appropriate pastoral support to help them to look after their mental health. Pupils enjoy raising money for charitable causes and supporting others who may be facing challenging circumstances.

Governors are well informed about all aspects of leaders' work. They take their duties seriously and offer leaders an appropriate level of support and challenge. Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate all that leaders do to promote their well-being and ensure that they have an acceptable workload.

Almost all parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They would happily recommend the school to others.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. All staff have a clear understanding of their roles in safeguarding pupils. Staff are extremely vigilant and they are equipped well to quickly identify any changes in a pupil's manner or behaviour and respond appropriately.

Staff are fully aware of the procedures that they must follow if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare. Leaders work well with other agencies to ensure that vulnerable families receive the support that they need. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.

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

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

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not given enough thought to the order in which some aspects of key curriculum vocabulary should be taught. This hinders teachers in designing learning in these subjects. Leaders should refine their curriculum thinking so that teachers are clear about the order in which pupils should learn essential subject-specific vocabulary.
- At times, some staff do not use subject-specific vocabulary when teaching phonics. This slows some pupils' progress in deepening their understanding of the school's phonics programme. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the support that they need so that they are confident in using the correct terminology when teaching phonics and in reading opportunities across the curriculum.

## **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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2014.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104814
<b>Local authority</b>	St Helens
<b>Inspection number</b>	10283624
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	155
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Robert Reynolds
<b>Headteacher</b>	Samantha Birchall
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.corpuschristirainford.co.uk">www.corpuschristirainford.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in May 2019.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken this into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with governors, the headteacher and other staff.
- The inspector met with a representative of the local authority and with two representatives of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and with some pupils about their learning. She also looked at a sample of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils

read with a familiar adult. She also discussed the curriculum with leaders in other subjects.

- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding. She spoke with leaders, staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.
- She observed behaviour as pupils moved around the school, in class, in the dinner hall and the outdoor play area.
- The inspector considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. This included free-text comments. She spoke with parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the school day. The inspector also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Sheila Iwaskow, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023