

# Inspection of a good school: St Hilda's Church of England High School

Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool, Merseyside L17 3AL

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Inspection dates:

28 and 29 September 2021

## **Outcome**

St Hilda's Church of England High School continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils, including those students in the sixth form, are full of praise for this school. They feel that it is a happy and safe place to be.

Pupils said that staff support them to thrive as individuals. Pupils understand that people are different. They accept and value each other's differences. Pupils feel confident to be themselves, because they live out the school's values of dignity and equality. They behave well and bullying is rare. Pupils said that staff resolve any incidents of bullying quickly and effectively.

Pupils behave very well during social times. They pay attention and concentrate on their work in lessons. They are keen to learn. They have access to a wide range of activities to support their wider personal development. For example, all pupils follow the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme as part of their Year 9 curriculum.

Leaders, governors and staff have high ambitions for all pupils. They do all that they can to help pupils do well in school and to be prepared for their future lives. Pupils, including those students in the sixth form, receive a strong quality of education and they achieve well. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and disadvantaged pupils.

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

Leaders, including governors, are united in their desire to ensure that pupils have access to a high-quality, broad and ambitious curriculum across all key stages. Leaders and governors are successful in achieving this.

Almost all subjects across the curriculum, and in all key stages, are well planned. This is not true for a small number of subjects. In these subjects, pupils are not able to build on what they know and remember. Leaders are in the process of fine tuning their curriculum plans in these subjects further.

Leaders have appropriately checked, and adjusted, most subject curriculum plans in key stages 3 and 4 to take account of the impact of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic on pupils' learning. They have also successfully adapted the curriculum plans for those courses offered in the sixth form. This is to take account of lost or forgotten learning.

Across the school, including in the sixth form, teachers deliver curriculum plans effectively. They have secure subject knowledge. Teachers successfully help pupils to build up the essential knowledge that they need to deepen their learning. As they move through the school, pupils apply with confidence what they have learned in previous years to new and more ambitious learning. All pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well.

Classrooms are vibrant and positive places to learn. Pupils are curious to hear what others know and think, and to find out more about the subjects that they study. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is very strong. Pupils are very positive about the behaviour management system which leaders have introduced and how teachers apply it.

Teachers routinely check how well pupils are learning. They are skilled in pinpointing exactly what pupils know and understand. Teachers are quick to help pupils to overcome any misconceptions. They provide pupils with clear, effective feedback. Pupils are proud of their schoolwork and are not dismayed when they make mistakes. Instead, pupils are confident to correct any errors that they may have made.

Leaders support pupils to read well. They provide an appropriate catch-up reading curriculum for those pupils who require it. Consequently, those pupils who fall behind in reading quickly become confident readers. Leaders ensure that all pupils, including students in the sixth form, read often across a range of different subjects. This means pupils, including those with SEND, and those who are disadvantaged, read widely, fluently and accurately. Pupils get to know and remember more subject-specific knowledge and they build up their general knowledge.

Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support. Leaders and teachers are adept at identifying the individual needs that pupils with SEND may have. They provide staff with information that they need to adapt the curriculum well.

Recently, leaders redesigned the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum to take into consideration the views of pupils, including students in the sixth form. Teachers are receiving training and support so that they can deliver the new curriculum sensitively and effectively. However, it is too soon to judge the impact of the changes that leaders have made to the PSHE curriculum on pupils' wider development.

Leaders aim to capture the interest of every pupil with the wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that they provide. They also provide an inspiring programme of activities for students in the sixth form. Pupils benefit from sports, music, drama and debating clubs.

Leaders have made sure that there is an effective careers education, information, advice and guidance programme in place.

Staff appreciate how leaders and governors protect them from excessive workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors prioritise safeguarding. Staff are comprehensively trained to spot the signs that pupils are at risk of harm. This includes online risks. Adults identify and act quickly if pupils require additional support from external agencies.

Leaders have effective procedures in place to spot, record and act on the risks of peer-on-peer abuse. Pupils told inspectors that they are confident that they can report any worries that they may have and seek help from staff. Staff process safeguarding information in a timely manner.

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

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

- A minority of curriculum areas are not planned as effectively as leaders want them to be. As a result, some pupils do not remember as much knowledge as they should in these subjects. Leaders should finalise the remaining curriculum plans that they are working on to ensure that pupils know and remember more of the intended curriculum.
- The recently revised PSHE curriculum is in the process of being rolled out and staff require ongoing training to deliver it effectively. It is too early to see the impact of the new PSHE programme on pupils' wider development. Leaders should monitor and evaluate how effectively the programme meets pupils' needs and how well staff are delivering the intended 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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2012.

## 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.

If you are the school and 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104721
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199565
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1099
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	249
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	J. Stein
<b>Headteacher</b>	J. Code
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-hildas.co.uk">www.st-hildas.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 November 2015, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at Alder Centre for Education.
- At the time of the last inspection, all pupils on roll from the ages of 11 to 16 were girls. The sixth form accepted boys and girls. The school now admits boys and girls into all year groups, including the sixth form.
- The Diocese of Liverpool carried out the last section 48 inspection in March 2017. The next section 48 inspection is due in March 2022.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the Diocese of Liverpool.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of safeguarding checks and referrals to the local authority. Inspectors spoke with staff about how they keep pupils safe. Inspectors also asked the pupils how they keep themselves safe and what to do if they have concerns.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and considered the 64 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from all year groups and considered the 149 responses to Ofsted's online pupils' questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 151 parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. This included the 99 free-text responses.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, science and history. Inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and looked at pupils' work from some other subjects.

### **Inspection team**

Stephen Ruddy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Phill Walmsley	Ofsted Inspector

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