

# Inspection of Bolton-On-Swale St Mary's CofE Primary School

Bolton-on-Swale, Richmond, North Yorkshire DL10 6AQ

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Inspection dates:	15 and 16 October 2024
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>

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

This is an inclusive and welcoming school. The school's strong Christian ethos shines through pupils' behaviour and kindness to each other. The school's termly focus on each of the school's core values helps pupils to feel safe. Pupils show confidence and self-belief. Relationships are warm and trusting. Older pupils show care for younger pupils by being a buddy to play with or reading together. Pupils changed the name of the pupil-led 'army kids club' to the 'happy club' to show that all pupils are welcome. Pupils include everyone, no matter how they may be different.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are courteous to one another, adults and visitors. Pupils take pride in contributing to the life of the school, including by taking on responsibilities as school councillors or sports captains.

The school's high expectations raise pupils' aspirations. Pupils are determined to succeed. Their attitudes to learning are a shining example to others. Pupils achieve well. They are delighted to celebrate the achievements of their peers.

Parents and carers show overwhelming support for the school. The school plays a significant role in the local community. It has strong links to the church. Pupils devise fundraising opportunities linked to community needs.

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

Pupils enjoy a rich, interesting and well-resourced curriculum. In most subjects, the key knowledge that pupils should learn, and the ideas that will connect pupils' learning over time, have been clearly identified. In these subjects, pupils build their knowledge and skills. Children in the early years benefit from a carefully planned curriculum that helps them to learn and achieve well. However, in some subjects, the important knowledge pupils will need has not been identified clearly. When this is the case, pupils struggle to recall and connect their learning.

Pupils make a prompt start in reading because of the well-planned and consistent approach taken by the school to teach phonics. Children in the Reception Year enjoy finding objects that match the sounds they are learning, for example. The school prioritises reading. Books that go home match pupils' reading ability. Pupils read with increasing fluency, expression and confidence. Pupil librarians make recommendations for books during assemblies. Older pupils explain their favourite genre and author clearly and maturely, showing their enjoyment of poetry and classic literature. They could not hide their enthusiasm for books and their love of reading. Pupils at risk of falling behind are supported so they catch up quickly.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Their needs are identified promptly. Pupils with SEND receive additional adult support when

needed. This helps them to learn alongside their peers. The school makes necessary adaptations for pupils with SEND to learn effectively. All pupils access the same curriculum and opportunities. This reflects the school's commitment to equality and inclusion.

The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes in lessons are of very high quality. This starts in the early years. Systems for transition into Year 1 are well thought-through. Pupils are self-motivated to be the best version of themselves. Rates of attendance are above those found nationally. Children in the Reception Year show curiosity and imagination when working together or on their own. Pupils are respectful in and around school. Without fail, they push in chairs, place rubbish in bins and tidy up equipment swiftly at the end of breaktime.

The school encourages pupils to speak publicly and perform in different settings. This helps pupils to develop their character and resilience. Pupils know how to stay physically and mentally healthy. The school uses local community facilities, regional museums and places of worship for different faiths to bring the curriculum to life. Pupils learn to play the violin or cello with enthusiasm. The school helps them understand fundamental British values. They vote for sports leaders and respect other faiths. Assemblies in which pupils receive a 'special mention' continue to be a cornerstone of school life. Pupils also reflect on the school's values and enjoy quiet time to reflect.

The governing body understands its role well, showing commitment to maintaining staff and pupil welfare. Governors have purposeful links to curriculum areas and the staff who are responsible for them. This helps governors understand what is happening in school. Staff value the consideration given to their well-being. Staff morale is high, and they are proud to be part of the team. Parents feel that their children are well supported and cared for by the adults that work with them.

## **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 small number of subjects, the essential knowledge that pupils need to know has not been precisely identified. In these subjects, teachers cannot always check pupils' understanding closely and pupils cannot consistently recall and connect their learning. The school should ensure that the essential knowledge that pupils should know and remember has been identified and checks are made to ensure that this key knowledge is remembered over time.

## 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>	121604
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10346352
<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>	108
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Clare White
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicola Dobson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bolton-on-swale.n-yorks.sch.uk/">www.bolton-on-swale.n-yorks.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- This is a Church of England Voluntary Aided primary school with a Christian character. It is part of the Diocese of Leeds.
- The previous National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools was carried out in November 2023.

## 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 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.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders and teachers as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and physical education. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and teaching assistants. They spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors listened to pupils read with a familiar adult. Inspectors also looked at curriculum documentation for art and design, design technology, history and geography.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 gathered views of parents through responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text responses. The views of staff were considered through the staff survey and through meetings with them. Pupils' views were considered through pupil meetings.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from the governing body, those responsible for school improvement from the local authority and a diocesan representative.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classes, during breaks and at lunchtime.

## Inspection team

Phil Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Emily Stevens

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
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