



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR  
ST JOHN FISHER CATHOLIC  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

<b>Name of School:</b>	St John Fisher Catholic Primary School
<b>Headteacher/Principal:</b>	Michelle Forrest
<b>Hub:</b>	Aspire
<b>School type:</b>	Voluntary Aided Primary School
<b>MAT (if applicable):</b>	Not applicable

<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Effective
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	11/03/2020
<b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review (if applicable)</b>	Not applicable
<b>Date of last QA Review (if applicable)</b>	Not applicable
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Good
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	15/04/2016



## 1. Context and character of the school

St John Fisher is a small but growing one-form entry primary school which provides wrap around care. A 30-place nursery offering 30-hour provision was opened on site by the school in January 2019. This, along with the raised profile of the school, has had a significant impact on increasing pupil numbers.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is similar to the national average. Stability of the school population is slightly below that seen nationally and deprivation for the school population is higher than that of the locality. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low.

Pupils are provided with specialist science, music, computing and modern foreign language teaching and opportunities are provided for talented pupils to develop their skills further. St John Fisher works closely with other schools in the local authority and leads on areas of professional development such as wellbeing, for which they have gained a national award.

### 2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- Leaders at all levels have a clear ambition to ensure that the school vision, created jointly by all stakeholders, has a dynamic impact upon culture, curriculum and standards. Everyone in the school community is challenged to reach their full potential and 'shine' through the school aims of 'engagement, high expectations, respect and dignity'. They are delivered through the curriculum, underpinning all aspects of school life and reinforced by the strong Catholic ethos.
- 'Learning powers', including perseverance and collaboration, are constantly emphasised by staff and they embed the aims of the vision. Consequently, pupils become resilient and confident learners.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. A wealth of purposeful training opportunities, including coaching partners, supports teachers' professional development. Work with other schools in areas such as moderation and subject leadership, along with staff forums where teachers and teaching assistants make presentations to colleagues on areas of expertise or interest, also enhance professional development.
- Links with the church and local community are strong. Key Stage 2 pupils often lead mass in church, whilst Key Stage 1 pupils deliver assemblies for parents and visitors. Each class is challenged to 'make a difference' as part of a community campaign. In Year 5, this involved delivering leaflets in the local area to offer free bird boxes pupils had made through a project with a local high school.
- Provision for wellbeing is strong and takes high priority. This includes an annual

inset day dedicated to wellbeing. Leaders have reviewed the marking policy to include more verbal feedback; the monitoring policy has been revised and pupil data is now collected termly rather than half termly.

- Pupils are carefully identified for additional support, challenge and intervention from detailed tracking of outcomes. Teachers take ownership of these and are accountable through pupil progress meetings.
- A range of enrichment opportunities enhance learning very effectively and develop pupils' cultural capital. These include a Year 2 visit to Crosby beach to support learning about the seaside and trips to the theatre. The wide variety of extra-curricular clubs has a high uptake and further opportunities are provided for target group challenges, including times tables and greater depth mathematics.
- British Council links have enabled connections with a school in India. The planned exchange visits of staff and other developing international links are establishing a strong global dimension to the already well-enriched curriculum.
- Parents are immediately welcomed to the school family. This important relationship continues throughout their child's school journey. They also participate in a range of events, parent workshops and family learning.
- Pupils are prepared well for their transfer to high school through liaison and the specialist teaching they already receive in some subjects.

## **2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if...**

...leaders ensured that there was greater clarity in how SMSC, British Values and PSHE are interwoven through the curriculum.

...subject leaders supported staff in quality assuring the sequence of lessons before teaching begins.

## **3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well**

- A strong focus on communication and language skills in Nursery ensures that, as children progress through their Reception year, literacy and numeracy skills are developed well. Consequently, by the end of Reception, the proportion of children meeting the early learning goals in literacy and mathematics is above the national average, as is their good level of development (GLD). This sound progress continues in Year 1, where the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics is above that seen nationally.
- At Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils meeting age related expectations in 2019 in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average. Progress made by the end of Key Stage 2 in reading has been well above that seen nationally for the last three years, leading to above average attainment at both age related expectations and the higher standard. Prior to a dip in progress in 2019, there was also strong progress in mathematics. In 2019, pupils made

average progress in writing to achieve broadly in line with national age related expectations.

- Phonics outcomes are high because pupils are regularly assessed and appropriately grouped to meet their needs and address any barriers to learning. Once Year 2 pupils are fluent in phonics, their learning is rapidly moved on to develop comprehension skills. A love of reading is fostered through a reading spine which includes a range of high quality texts, a well-stocked and attractive library and adults reading daily to pupils. A clear whole school reading strategy, reinforced through homework, provides regular and consistent opportunities to explain, retrieve and interpret information.
- 'Power Maths' has been introduced to develop the school's mastery approach further. This is currently being embedded across the school. Working walls and practical resources are used well to support mathematical learning for pupils of all abilities as they utilise concrete, abstract and pictorial methods. Work with the local mathematics hub supports this well and provides relevant professional development for staff.
- A well-designed revised curriculum, incorporating cross-curricular links and enrichment opportunities, is currently being embedded throughout the school. For example, the Year 3 topic on Ancient Greece is linked to a focus on Greece in geography, Greek myths as core texts and re-telling Greek myths in writing. Driven by high quality literature, the curriculum was carefully created with the involvement of all staff and identifies detailed knowledge and skills progression in every subject.
- A range of teaching strategies are used skilfully. For example, paired talk is used effectively to enhance 'learning powers', deepen thinking and develop listening skills. Consequently, from an early age, children's resilience and independence are developed. This was evident in Reception as a group of children following a recipe considered and explored where they might find the stones they needed to make Gruffalo cookies. Effective, open-ended questioning, reinforcement of learning through knowledge organisers and vocabulary mats support learning well. Modelling and opportunities to build on prior learning also ensure that pupils are engaged in their learning and display positive behaviours.
- Pupils care about their school, they take a pride in their work and appreciate the supportive, caring relationships that exist across the school. Consequently, pupils want to come to school. Their attitudes to learning are very positive and attendance is above the national average.

### **3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if...**

- ...an increased proportion of pupils reached greater depth at Key Stage 1 and the higher standard at Key Stage 2, especially in writing.
- ...long term curriculum planning made links between year groups visually explicit.

#### **4.1 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - What went well**

- Leaders have placed significant focus through the school's vision and aims on removing barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils so that their resilience and self-esteem is developed well. Consequently, this small proportion of pupils makes at least expected progress from their starting points. They articulate their learning well and work in books demonstrates the same expectation as for their non-disadvantaged peers.
- The suitably adapted curriculum enables all pupils to access and enjoy learning. Therefore, behaviour for learning of all pupils is equally strong.
- Rigorous tracking of progress and attainment with regular pupil progress meetings ensures that the needs of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are carefully identified. These are then addressed through both quality first teaching, adapted to need, and also targeted interventions delivered by skilled staff. 'Pre-teach' and 'keep-up' sessions also support these pupils effectively. Phonics lessons very specifically target individual requirements and staff use a bank of strategies to include and engage those who find it difficult to focus.
- Barriers to learning are identified early because leaders and teachers work closely with families and get to know them well. Personal provision plans and individual raising attainment plans are clear and specific so that support is carefully focused and monitored. Parents of pupils with SEND or those who have vulnerabilities work in partnership with the school to help their child. Additional support and specific assessments are also provided by a specialist SEND teacher who works with the school. Consequently, SEND pupils make appropriate progress.
- The take up of extra-curricular activities for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND is monitored and encouraged. All pupils are provided with equal opportunity for curriculum enrichment visits and supported with this, where necessary.
- As pupils with SEND or other vulnerabilities move on to high school, additional liaison and support enable the best possible transition.

#### **4.2 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - Even better if...**

...the proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching the higher standard by the end of Key Stage 2 was closer to the national average.

## **5. Area of Excellence**

### **Accredited**

#### **Driving culture and curriculum through your vision.**

### **5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength? What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?**

All stakeholders have together created a shared vision through which everyone is enabled to 'shine'. This vision is at the heart of the school and drives everything it does. Pupils, staff, governors and parents know that this is what they strive for. The vision is driven by explicit aims of 'engagement, high expectation, resilience and dignity'. These flow through the daily life and culture of the school and are constantly reinforced by all staff. When policies are created or revised and the curriculum planned, the question of how a decision is going to support the school to achieve its vision, is always asked. It sits at the heart of the school's positive behaviour policy and is referred to constantly with pupils. Worship, assemblies, professional development, the school development plan and governor action plan are all underpinned by this vision, aims and the Catholic ethos. It is interwoven through the code of conduct expected of all stakeholders and through expectations and relationships with parents. A focus on the 'learning powers' of empathy and listening, questioning and reasoning, collaboration, planning, imagining, perseverance, revising and absorption, supports the achievement of the vision. Pupils are reminded of these 'learning powers' and praised for displaying them as they work and socialise. Consequently, resilience and independence are developed well in enabling pupils to 'shine'.

Expertise has been developed because all stakeholders have been involved from the outset and are therefore partners in creating the vision. Consultation and collaboration have been key to gathering and refining information. Therefore, whatever is being developed is created from a common understanding of how it fits within the vision. All professional development is related back to this. Senior leaders support middle leaders, who in turn support staff, to ensure that at all levels there is the same consistent message. Any next step actions for the school have the vision embedded and new staff are provided with clear induction and support so that they are quickly immersed in this shared culture and common understanding. The rapidity with which two relatively new senior leaders have become experts in promoting and supporting this strategy is testimony to the robust and long-term sustainability of the area of excellence.

### **5.2 What evidence is there of the impact on pupils' outcomes?**

Having the school's vision at the heart of school improvement and central to all decision making ensures consistency. Consequently, the good level of development for children



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at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has remained consistently above the national average for the last four years, as has the proportion of pupils meeting expectations in the Year 1 phonics screening check. At Key Stage 1, outcomes for reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standard are above the national average and attainment for both expected and the higher standard in reading is very strong at Key Stage 2, as is progress over time. Hence, evidence of consistency and aspiration is clearly evident in most outcomes. The school is now focusing on a greater proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard in writing and mathematics, following their successful achievement of this in reading.

#### **5.3 What is the name, job title and email address of the staff lead in this area?**

Name: Michelle Forrest

Title: Headteacher

Email: stjohnfisher.de@knowsley.gov.uk

#### **6. What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?**

The school continues to work with the Aspire hub to share best practice and further develop the quality of its provision.

**This review will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.**