

# Kettleshulme St James CofE (VA) Primary School

Macclesfield Road, Kettleshulme, High Peak, Derbyshire SK23 7QU

## Inspection dates

24–25 April 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher's commitment and enthusiasm for knowledge are shared by staff and governors. The school's Christian values of 'Acceptance, Love and Forgiveness' are woven through all aspects of the school's work.
- Governors use their knowledge and expertise well to hold leaders to account and to uphold the good quality of education that pupils receive. They are proud to be associated with this small village school, which is the hub of the local community.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school is accurate and honest. They have identified correctly the priorities for further improvement and are taking the appropriate action to bring them to fruition.
- Improvements to the way reading is taught are beginning to have a positive impact on increasing the vocabulary that pupils use in their writing.
- In mathematics, older pupils apply their knowledge and understanding effectively to solve increasingly challenging problems and explain their reasoning. Strategies to improve pupils' basic mathematical knowledge in lower key stage 2 are beginning to impact positively on the progress that they make.
- Effective teaching is underpinned by teachers' strong subject knowledge and the good training that they receive. This contributes to the good progress that pupils make.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that reflects the interests of pupils and ignites their enthusiasm for learning. However, in some subjects, plans to ensure that knowledge builds on what pupils already know are not fully embedded.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make at least good progress from their starting points. This is because of the high-quality support they receive from skilled staff.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, and their manners are impeccable. Extremely positive attitudes to learning are modelled and promoted consistently by staff. Pupils, especially the youngest, thrive in a safe and nurturing environment.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through the wide range of opportunities leaders provide. Pupils are prepared well to be responsible citizens in modern Britain.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. A typical comment was: 'This is an amazing little school at the heart of the community. It's more than just a school, it's a family.'

## Full report

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

- Improve outcomes for pupils, by:
  - ensuring that pupils' learning in subjects other than English and mathematics builds on what pupils already know in order to deepen their knowledge and understanding
  - developing pupils' vocabulary so that the quality of their writing improves and more achieve at a greater depth
  - increasing pupils' basic mathematical knowledge, particularly in lower key stage 2, to accelerate their progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Under the guidance of the headteacher, the good quality of education in this small rural school has been maintained. The headteacher's clear vision for the future has enabled leaders successfully to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Staff and governors are committed to providing the very best education for pupils. Staff feel valued and well supported. Their morale is high.
- Leaders have effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of the school's provision. This enables them to plan appropriate actions to bring about improvements. Leaders ensure that teachers have the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need to support pupils' learning effectively. Leaders engage well with other small schools in the local area. Together, they provide opportunities for staff to share knowledge, expertise and resources through professional dialogue and training.
- Leaders of English and mathematics have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaker areas in their subjects. They lead relevant training for staff and check the impact of their actions on pupils' progress.
- The subject leader for mathematics has provided training for staff on how to use questions skilfully to improve pupils' ability to solve increasingly complex problems and explain their reasoning. This has been successful, particularly for older pupils.
- In English, leaders have accurately identified that pupils' limited vocabulary hinders the progress they make in writing, particularly at a greater depth. Changes in the way reading is taught, along with training for staff on how to develop pupils' knowledge of more challenging vocabulary, have had a positive impact on the quality of writing for current pupils.
- Leaders ensure that phonics is taught systematically and consistently from Reception. They provide opportunities for staff to share good practice and expertise. Pupils, including the youngest, use their phonic knowledge effectively in their own writing.
- Pupils' love of reading is promoted well so that they are becoming confident and competent readers. Training for staff has had a positive impact on how they use questions to improve pupils' inference skills when reading. Leaders ensure that the school library is well resourced with good-quality texts in a range of genres. These improvements have enhanced pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. A high proportion of pupils reach the higher standard in reading by the end of key stage 2.
- The special educational needs coordinator shares her expertise well with staff to enable them to quickly identify pupils who are struggling. Leaders work effectively with outside agencies and other professionals to provide training and additional guidance for staff. Programmes of support are put in place to help pupils to catch up. The impact of the help that pupils receive is reviewed regularly, including with parents, and changes made if necessary. The small proportion of pupils with SEND make at least good progress from their individual starting points.
- The additional funding for physical education and sport is used creatively to provide training for staff and experiences for pupils. Pupils participate in competitions with

other small schools. They have the opportunity to try out different activities, such as orienteering and fencing, as well as multi-sports, dance and football. Leaders are developing pupils' understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle through the twice-weekly activity challenge, 'Fit for 15', which includes dance, an obstacle course, hopping, skipping and jumping.

- Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum that suits the context of a small rural school. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well, including the youngest pupils. Learning is enriched through shared experiences, trips and visitors to school. For example, in history, visitors enabled pupils to taste typical Roman recipes and experience what it may have been like to live as a Roman in Britain. Leaders check to ensure that the curriculum content is covered. However, the necessary depth of knowledge and understanding is not fully embedded across all subjects.
- The school's Christian values give strong support to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is promoted extremely well through the wide range of experiences that leaders provide to broaden pupils' horizons and raise their aspirations. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain through the opportunities that they have to be responsible role models for younger pupils and as members of the eco group and the school's pupil-voice team. A recent visit to the Bridgewater Hall to listen to an orchestral performance contributed to the development of pupils' appreciation of a range of musical genres. Residential trips provide pupils with opportunities to develop perseverance and resilience as they face new challenges.
- Parents speak highly of the care, guidance and support that their children receive. They feel well informed about the progress that their children are making and how they can support their children at home. The school is at the centre of the small local community and events and celebrations are well attended by past and present families alike.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors have the experience and knowledge that allow them to challenge leaders and hold them fully to account for all aspects of the school's work. Training ensures that they keep their knowledge and skills up to date. They understand clearly how well pupils are doing compared with other pupils nationally and the challenges that face a small school.
- Governors receive detailed information from leaders. They have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas for further improvement. They check the impact of actions taken, including through talking to staff and by talking to pupils about their learning.
- Governors have high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils. They are ambitious for the future of the school.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Checks are in place to ensure that adults, including volunteers who help in school regularly, are suitable to work with children. All records relating to safeguarding are well maintained. Care is taken to

ensure the safety of pupils and staff. Detailed and appropriate risk assessments for trips and residential visits are completed using an online system.

- The training that staff receive enables them to identify potential signs of abuse or neglect. Procedures in place for the protection of pupils are understood by staff. They are kept up to date with issues relating to safeguarding, including the use of the internet. Any concerns are acted upon appropriately.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers and staff know the pupils extremely well and will often teach pupils for two consecutive years. Teachers have created a calm and nurturing environment which supports pupils' learning effectively. Positive relationships fostered by staff contribute to pupils' very good attitudes to learning and the good progress that they make. Teachers' high expectations encourage pupils to take pride in their work and their achievements. Pupils focus on their learning because teachers make it interesting.
- The good quality of education has been maintained because of teachers' strong subject knowledge and the relevant training that they receive. Teachers appreciate the opportunity to work with colleagues, including those in other small schools, to share knowledge and expertise. This is particularly helpful for teachers with small, mixed-age classes.
- Teachers use assessment effectively to identify the next steps in pupils' learning. They plan lessons that build on what pupils already know to deepen their knowledge and understanding further for most subjects. They design activities that ignite pupils' curiosity. This is particularly successful with the youngest pupils.
- In mathematics, teachers have benefited from focused training. Leaders quickly identified that pupils in lower key stage 2 were struggling to solve problems. Teachers use questions well to probe pupils' understanding further and encourage them to recall what they already know. Strategies to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of basic mathematical concepts are beginning to improve pupils' ability to solve increasingly challenging problems. Pupils who spoke with the inspector said they enjoy the challenges teachers provide because these really make them think.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge also ensures that phonics is taught consistently from Reception. Pupils use their knowledge of phonics successfully to tackle unfamiliar words. They talk confidently about their reading. Highly skilled support staff work with small groups to ensure that pupils who are struggling catch up swiftly.
- Reading is given a high priority. Older pupils read widely from the well-resourced class library areas, which are updated regularly. They talk enthusiastically about the books that they are currently reading and regularly read extended texts in a range of genres. Teachers use questions skilfully to probe pupils' thinking and encourage them to develop and expand their ideas. This is particularly successful in improving pupils' comprehension and inference skills. Teachers discuss the meanings of unfamiliar words to expand pupils' vocabularies further. Pupils are confident and competent readers.
- Pupils' vocabulary is improving as a result of the high-quality texts they read. This is beginning to have a positive impact on their own writing. For example, in poetry, most-able pupils were able to evoke images in the imagination of the reader with their

choice of sophisticated vocabulary: 'Menacing and intimidating the enemy edges closer, In the distance a ray of hope glistens through, piercing the dark black clouds.'

- Skilled support staff are deployed well to assist pupils' learning, including in small groups and individually. Pupils who spoke with the inspector said that this really helped them, particularly with their spelling. The small number of pupils with SEND are supported particularly well.
- In curriculum subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers work collaboratively to plan learning that builds progressively on what pupils already know. For example, in geography, younger pupils develop the skills and knowledge that they need to identify familiar places of interest on photographs and maps of the local area. In key stage 2, pupils refine these skills so that older pupils are able to identify a range of human and physical geographical features and contrast their findings with geographical features in other countries around the world. However, plans which build progressively on what pupils already know are not fully embedded across all subjects in the wider curriculum.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils flourish in a caring and nurturing environment which values each individual. Older pupils understand the important responsibility they have as role models for the younger pupils as they welcome them to school each day. The extremely positive relationships fostered in school exemplify the high levels of warmth and respect between staff and pupils.
- The well-organised early-morning club provides pupils with a healthy breakfast in a calm and supportive atmosphere. Pupils chat happily together while helping each other. Donations from parents and members of the community provide a range of appropriate activities for pupils including board games and craft activities. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy coming each day.
- Pupils are extremely well prepared to become thoughtful, caring citizens. Pupils are rightly proud of the work that they do to support people in the local and wider community. For example, through a range of events pupils are raising money to support a bike race across the United States of America in aid of cancer research. They talked enthusiastically about the event and how they are tracking the riders' success through the use of technology.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after. They feel valued and say that their ideas and opinions are listened to. Pupils are considerate of the feelings of others. They are proud of the work by the pupil-voice team to install a 'buddy bench'. Pupils explained that: 'If ever someone is feeling a little sad or lonely they can sit on the bench and someone will come and talk with you, so you feel better.' Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They are confident that if bullying did happen, it would be dealt with quickly and effectively by staff.

- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when they are near water or online, because of the well-planned activities that leaders provide. For example, visitors to school work with pupils on road-safety projects.
- Leaders prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. They foster pupils' respect, tolerance and understanding effectively. This includes learning about other world faiths in religious education. Staff use every opportunity to raise aspirations and expand pupils' horizons. Pupils shared their own aspirations for the future to be farmers, vets, designers and teachers.
- Leaders provide an exciting range of experiences, clubs and activities to further enrich the curriculum. For example, pupils can learn to play an instrument, participate in a school production and visit local museums. They participate in projects, for instance to protect the environment by learning to reduce, reuse and recycle. Visitors from the local community are an important part of the life of the school. They work with pupils on projects to enhance their school environment and celebrate their communities past and future.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school, where all ages socialise well and play together harmoniously. They have high levels of respect for each other and adults in the school. There are very few incidents of inappropriate behaviour and pupils say confidently that, should any occur, they are dealt with appropriately by adults. Younger pupils feel safe and cared for by their older 'buddy', especially at playtimes.
- Pupils' conduct around school and behaviour in lessons are exemplary. Pupils are engrossed in their learning and work hard. They take pride in their work and their extremely positive attitudes to learning contribute significantly to the good progress that they make.
- Pupils' attendance is consistently above the national average. Very few pupils are persistently absent from school. Leaders follow up swiftly if pupils are absent and provide support and guidance where necessary.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Published performance information needs to be interpreted with caution because of the small numbers of pupils in each cohort. One pupil represents a significant percentage and pupil numbers vary from year to year. Work in pupils' books and on display shows that they make good progress and are working at a high standard, particularly by the end of key stage 2.
- It is not appropriate to report on the published academic progress of different groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils or those with SEND, because of the very small numbers. However, evidence seen during the inspection indicates that pupils with SEND make at least good progress from their starting points.
- The youngest children join school in Reception from a number of other early years settings in the local area. They have the knowledge, skills and understanding typical for

children of a similar age. The youngest children make good progress because of the high-quality teaching they receive. Children are prepared well for key stage 1.

- Phonics is taught consistently from Reception. Pupils decode unfamiliar words with increasing confidence. They are able to apply their knowledge of phonics effectively in their reading and writing. Pupils who are struggling are given the help that they need to catch up quickly. These actions have contributed to pupils' good progress in key stage 1.
- The school's own information shows that, in English and mathematics, an increasing proportion of pupils are working at a higher standard. This is supported by the work that the inspector saw in pupils' books and during lessons. Pupils take pride in their work, which is neatly presented, reflecting the high expectations that teachers set.
- Pupils' increasing vocabulary, comprehension and inference skills contribute well to the good progress that they make in reading. For example, pupils who read with the inspector were able to say that the word counselling meant: 'When someone is going through a difficult or upsetting time they may need someone to talk to who can help them to get to a better place emotionally.' Pupils enjoy reading and are confident, competent readers.
- In mathematics, pupils know how to improve their work further as a result of the skilful way in which teachers use questions. Older pupils are able to use their basic mathematical knowledge appropriately to solve increasingly challenging problems and explain their reasoning clearly. Strategies to embed basic mathematical concepts for the younger pupils are increasingly effective. As a result, pupils' progress in mathematics is strengthened.
- In other curriculum subjects, pupils' work shows evidence of well-designed activities that build effectively on their prior knowledge. For example, in art, younger pupils develop their skills with pencil drawings of themselves. Older pupils extend their skills so that they are able to create detailed portraits of historical figures. However, progression of pupils' knowledge and understanding is not fully embedded across all of the subjects in the wider curriculum.



## School details

Unique reference number	111459
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10087775

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julia Carter
Headteacher	Paul Quirk
Telephone number	01663 732 502
Website	<a href="http://www.kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk">www.kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk">head@kettleshulmestjames.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	June 2018

## Information about this school

- Kettleshulme St James is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are entitled to support through the pupil premium is well below the national average.
- Almost all pupils are White British. There are currently no pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- Currently no pupils are supported by an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- There are three classes: one class for Reception-aged children and pupils in Years 1 and 2; one class for pupils in Years 3 and 4; and one class for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- The school provides a before-school breakfast club for some pupils. It is managed by the school's governing body and formed part of this inspection.

- The school is part of a partnership with local small schools.
- During the last academic year, the headteacher supported a small local primary school. He has now returned to Kettlethulme St James full time.
- The school's last section 48 inspection of its religious character was in September 2013.

## Information about this inspection

- With the headteacher, I visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning and behaviour.
- As there was only one pupil in the Reception cohort at the time of the inspection, it is not appropriate to report separately on the early years provision.
- I observed and spoke to pupils during lessons and at playtime. I met formally with a group of pupils and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, middle leaders and members of staff. I also met with four members of the governing body and had phone conversations with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- I scrutinised pupils' work in books and on display with the headteacher. I also looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding.
- I spoke with parents at the start of the school day. I also took account of the 34 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 12 free-text comments from parents. There were no responses to the pupil or staff surveys.

## Inspection team

Amanda Stringer, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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