

Bamber Bridge St Aidan's Church of England Primary School

Larch Grove, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancashire PR5 6GX

Inspection dates 19–20 January 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a rapidly improving school which is led by a well-organised headteacher who leaves nothing to chance. Together with the assistant headteacher and a rejuvenated governing body, she has ensured that the school has gone from strength to strength.
- Good leadership, and close partnership with the church and community, have ensured that pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to make learning both interesting and memorable.
- All aspects of the early years provision are good. Children are highly curious, sociable, and keen to share and talk about their learning.
- Pupils say that they always feel safe and well looked after. They attend school regularly and have very positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils have a good appreciation of British values. They are fair and considerate, and know that with their rights come responsibilities.
- All groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged and those with disabilities or special educational needs, make good progress. At the end of Year 6 in 2015 pupils made outstanding progress in reading and writing.
- The vast majority of parents are very positive about the school. They say that they are well informed and happy with their children's progress.
- Excellent use of primary school sports funding has helped to ensure that this is an award-winning school in a number of areas of sport.
- Governors know the school very well and are fully involved in school life. They support and challenge school leaders in equal measure.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few opportunities are available for pupils to practise and refine their writing skills, particularly in subjects other than English.
- Teaching does not always ensure that the most- and the least-able pupils make the best possible progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further and raise achievement across the school by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their writing skills, particularly in subjects other than English
 - making sure that teaching always ensures that the most- and least-able pupils make the best possible progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has a strong, ambitious vision for the school. She has galvanised the support of teachers, governors, parents and the church, and ensured that all procedures, including those for safeguarding and monitoring the performance of pupils, are firmly established. Her actions and those of senior leaders have made sure that this is a rapidly improving school, with an ambitious culture and raised aspirations.
- Subject leaders, including those responsible for mathematics and English, play an effective role in raising standards. They ensure that they are fully up to date with developments in their specialist areas and play a full role in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Subject leaders do this through observing each other's good practice, monitoring the quality of work in pupils' books and canvassing pupils' views on their learning.
- Effective systems are in place to manage the performance of teachers. Teachers are set challenging targets linked to the school's priorities, including continually improving levels of attainment for pupils. Teachers are highly appreciative of the training and support that they receive, which is helping to improve their teaching and enable them to reach their targets. Inspection evidence shows this to be the case.
- Additional sports funding is used exceptionally well to increase pupils' participation in a range of sporting activities, and to provide training opportunities for staff to enhance the quality of teaching in physical education. Pupils regularly compete in, for example, football, tennis and cross-country, and have won regional and national recognition for their sporting excellence.
- Pupils benefit from an imaginative and stimulating curriculum which promotes their reading and mathematical skills well across all subjects. The wide range of subjects on offer, including various lunchtime and after-school clubs, ensure that pupils develop well academically, and that their personal development and well-being is good. Pupils' writing skills are not always promoted across the curriculum as much as reading and mathematics. Senior leaders are fully aware of this and have made it a priority to ensure greater opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their writing skills across the curriculum.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their appreciation of British values, is effective. Pupils enjoy learning about the major world faiths, celebrating various cultural festivals, and visiting the local church. They enjoy art and dance, and studying topics such as life in Victorian England, and myths and legends.
- Pupils regularly visit museums and theatres and prepare special assemblies for national commemoration events, such as Remembrance Day. Pupils have a good and developing appreciation of the culturally diverse nature of British society. They regularly raise money for various causes, including cardiac charities, and make their views known. Pupils did this recently when they wrote to the local council to express their views about the state of the roads around the school.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used exceptionally well to ensure that they participate in all aspects of school life. These pupils attend school very regularly and often make better than expected progress because of the quality of provision they receive throughout the school, including in the early years. Funding used to support the nurture group has helped to develop pupils into confident learners who manage their behaviour well.
- Parents are very complimentary about the school. They feel well informed about their children's progress and say that they have seen many positive changes over the last 18 months. Parents of younger children are particularly appreciative of opportunities to get involved in the weekly 'mum and toddler' group, and 'stay and play' activities. The school's samples of parents' views show that these sentiments are typical.
- The school works well with the local authority to continually improve standards. Most recently the local authority has supported in further developing the governing body, and improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are skilled and knowledgeable. They know the school well, and have a clear understanding of what it needs to do to improve further. Governors' knowledge of the school comes from their direct involvement. All have specific responsibilities, for English, mathematics and safeguarding for example, which they execute diligently. Governors attend celebration assemblies, plays and concerts.
 - Governors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching, which they say is good. They know this because they receive regular reports from the headteacher, check on pupils' achievement, and regularly come into school to talk to teachers and pupils and gain first-hand information.
 - Governors make sure that the school's resources, including additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils, are being used effectively.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All members of staff are highly vigilant when it comes to pupils' safety, welfare and protection. Procedures are clear and understood by all members of staff, who ensure that they are consistently applied.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- School leaders have continued to improve and develop the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Throughout the school teachers have good subject knowledge, and high expectations of what pupils should achieve.
- Teachers and teaching assistants, including in the early years, work exceptionally well together in this small and unified school. They openly share their good practice with colleagues in school and further afield, and are eager to work with various cluster groups and partnerships in order to ensure the quality of teaching continually improves.
- All staff apply the school's marking policy consistently, and check for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation in all subjects. Teachers frequently pose additional questions in their marking to challenge pupils' thinking and develop their skills further. Consequently, most pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve and mistakes in their work are rarely repeated.
- The quality of teaching of mathematics has improved. Evidence in pupils' books shows that teachers provide many opportunities for them to apply their mathematical skills to practical problem-solving activities. Pupils are skilled at using different calculation methods to check their answers, and have a good understanding of different aspects of mathematics, including geometry. This was evidenced in a lower Key Stage 2 class where pupils confidently identified the number of sides, vertices and straight lines in various cylinders, cubes and rectangular shapes. Such improvements are due to the good specialist support that teachers have benefited from, which has helped so that they take a consistent approach to teaching mathematics.
- Teachers are not afraid to deviate from their planned teaching activities to clarify misapprehensions. This was evident in a Key Stage 1 English class where pupils were required to use their imagination and creative skills to describe a forest. Not long into the activity the teacher realised that some pupils were confusing nouns with adjectives. She stopped the lesson, and went back to the 'drawing-board'. After asking pupils to name objects in the room, such as 'blinds', 'tables', 'lights', she then asked pupils to describe them. At the end of the session pupils gave the 'thumbs up' to indicate that they had 'got it', and were well prepared for their writing activity.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in English is good. This was evident in an upper Key Stage 2 class where pupils were sharing their thoughts on a book by Bear Grylls and preparing to write a journalistic article. The teacher was highly effective in extending pupils' language, ensuring that they fully understood words such as 'hyperbole', 'personification' and 'genre'. Her insistence that pupils should review previous work and learn from it ensured they were well prepared for their writing activity. However, a scrutiny of pupils' books reveals that opportunities for them to practise and refine their writing skills across the curriculum are sometimes missed, particularly in subjects other than English.
- Teachers overall use the information they have about the wide range of pupils' abilities to plan different activities with varying levels of difficulty. However, occasionally activities do not always enable all groups of pupils, including the most and least able, to make the best possible progress because they are either too hard, or too easy.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils, and children in the early years, say that they feel safe and happy in school. They know that they can go to any adult with a concern, and they will be taken seriously.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Older pupils know how to administer CPR, and give 'rescue breaths' and 'compressions' to someone who has suffered a suspected heart attack. Younger pupils say that the new school entrance 'fob' pads and fencing around the perimeter of school makes them feel safe.
- Pupils know how to stay safe while using the internet and have a developing understanding of cyber bullying. They know never to post personal details such as their address, passwords or telephone numbers while online, and to check with an adult if they are not sure if a website is safe.

- The curriculum supports pupils' personal, social and emotional development well, as do assemblies which often provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on how they can be considerate and caring towards others. Key Stage 2 'buddies' enjoy listening to younger pupils read, and enjoy taking them 'under their arm', and looking after them.
- Attitudes to learning are generally positive as pupils learn to become increasingly more resilient. They are developing the confidence to learn from their mistakes, try new things, and to become more successful learners.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of road safety and often wear their high-visibility jackets to go on walks around the school. Older pupils learn how to ride their bicycles safely.
- Pupils know the difference between bullying and 'falling out', and are of the view that bullying rarely if ever happens in school. They have a developing understanding of discrimination-based bullying such as racism and homophobia. Senior leaders are fully aware of this and have made these areas priorities for development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attendance is good, as is their punctuality. They enjoy coming to school because they find learning interesting. Pupils regularly participate in a wide range of lunchtime and after-school activities including chess, zumba, debate club and street dance.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons, playtime and when moving around the school. They make sure that the school is kept tidy and are appreciative of their generous playgrounds and fields.
- Pupils, parents, teachers and governors are of the view that behaviour is good. The school's own behaviour logs show that behaviour is typically good over time.
- Pupils' behaviour during assembly is exemplary. This was evident when the Reverend from the local church acted out a story from the Bible with his parishioners. Pupils listened intently, before springing to life to answer questions.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2015 were above average in reading, average in writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling, and below average in mathematics. These were the highest standards that the school had attained for at least the last five years and show that a trend of improvement is being sustained.
- Standards attained by pupils in reading and writing dipped to below average at the end of Year 2 in 2015, from being above average the previous year. However, these pupils are very well supported in Year 3, and benefit from good teaching. The school has compelling evidence which charts the progress of this low-attaining cohort, showing that pupils have progressed well from very low starting points on entry to the Reception class. Current Year 2 pupils are back on track, with pupils' achievement returning to its previous high standard.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2015, most pupils made outstanding progress in reading, at least good progress in writing, and good progress in mathematics. Inspection evidence, including the school's own data, shows that in 2015 most pupils made at least good progress across the school in all subjects. The good teaching and effective support that current pupils benefit from is helping to ensure that they are making rapid progress, and are on track to attain well. Effective teacher training and a consistent approach to teaching mathematics is ensuring that pupils' progress in this subject is especially strong. Pupils enjoy reading. They have a good appreciation of different styles of writing, read regularly, and are skilled at reviewing the work of different authors. A broadly average proportion of pupils were secure at the national phonics screening check in Year 1, and all were secure in Year 2. Pupils enjoy poetry, and reading in character. Less-able readers are skilled at using their phonics skills to sound out and read unfamiliar words.
- Pupils enjoy writing, and regularly engage in various projects, pursuing their own interest, in their own time. This is evident in their excellent project work, containing detailed facts and interesting information, about countries such as Japan, Jamaica and Australia. However, some pupils lack confidence in applying their writing skills and do not always have enough opportunities to apply them in subjects other than English.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group is very high. In Year 6 in 2015, almost all pupils were disadvantaged, so it is not possible to make comparisons between their performance and that of non-disadvantaged pupils in school. However, disadvantaged pupils achieved exceptionally well when compared to other pupils nationally. For example, their attainment in mathematics and grammar,

punctuation and spelling was average, and above average in reading and writing, and they made outstanding progress in reading and writing, and good progress in mathematics. All such pupils make at least good progress throughout the school. There is little difference between their performance and that of non-disadvantaged pupils.

- Although pupils' achievement in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015 was not as good as in other subjects, this is not replicated across the school. Currently pupils are making rapid progress in mathematics. This is because teachers have successfully tackled pupils' weaker skills. Pupils are now more confident, and think through their answers logically. Teachers also make mathematics fun, providing many opportunities for pupils to compete with each other to solve challenging problems.
- Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs are well cared for by skilled and caring staff, who work well in partnership with parents and a range of specialists. The school's many initiatives, including one-to-one support and small-group teaching activities, are closely monitored and evaluated. Assessment information, and work in pupils' books, shows that these pupils are making good and better progress, and attaining well.
- The most-able pupils overall are challenged to work hard and achieve well, and their progress is good. However, occasionally work does not fully extend their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Early years provision

is good

- The leadership and management of all aspects of the early years provision are good. Teachers and teaching assistants make learning memorable, closely assess how well children are performing, and capture their achievements in various books and journals which they share with parents. Children learn in stimulating classrooms and outdoor areas, which celebrate their work, and clearly link displays and resources to different areas of learning.
- Staff carry out careful assessments and observations of children's learning. This process begins with baseline assessments when each child has been in the Reception class for three weeks. Assessments show that many children's skills in a number of areas of learning, including speaking, listening and personal development, are not as strong as those typically expected for their age. As a result, staff closely focus on developing children's skills in these areas. Additional funding for disadvantaged children is helping to narrow the gaps between their performance and that of their peers.
- In 2015 most children made good progress through the Reception class in all areas of learning. An average proportion entered Year 1 with the skills and abilities necessary for the next stage of their learning. This year children have got off to an exceptionally good start, provision has improved and children have access to a stimulating and highly interactive multi-sensory room. Here children enjoy exploring light and colour, manipulating tactile shapes, exercise and physical activity, and role play. Children are adept at stamping and collecting mail from the post office, and weighing, selling, and adding various fruit and vegetables to their trolleys at the local shop. Early indicators are that they are well prepared for Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good. This was shown when children worked in different groups to practise their reading and writing skills. The most able were encouraged to sound out various words with the 'or' sound, including 'sword', 'cork' and 'fork', and use their 'robot' voices and 'chopping' skills to break words up and blend them. In a larger group children stretched words, identified individual letters, and then put them back together to make words such as 'tap', before writing simple three-letter words on their whiteboards.
- Children behave sensibly and safely at all times. This includes when racing their wheeled toys with Key Stage 1 pupils in the soft outdoor playing area, and when negotiating and running between the large objects in the multi-sensory room.
- Parents are happy that their children are safe and well looked after, and say that they are regularly provided with information on their children's progress.
- Senior leaders have made it a priority to further develop children's skills by encouraging them to engage more frequently in independent reading and writing activities. They are continuing to explore ways to work with parents so that they are able to support their children's learning at home.

School details

Unique reference number	119380
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10002241

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Kirkland
Headteacher	Leanne Finch
Telephone number	01772 337321
Website	www.staidansprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	head@st-aidans-pri.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 December 2013

Information about this school

- This is a well below average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is more than twice the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- Children attend the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection there have been a number of appointments, including a new headteacher, and a newly qualified teacher. Several governors, including a new Chair of the Governing Body, have been appointed. Various building work has taken place, resulting in a new reception area, office space, a classroom and a multi-sensory room.
- A before-school club is based on the site. This is subject to a separate inspection.
- The school experiences high levels of pupil mobility throughout the year.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read. Two joint observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised in class and separately with the headteacher.
- The inspector considered 12 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and met informally with parents at the start of the school day. The school's own surveys of pupils' views were also taken into account, as well as responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by six members of staff and 14 pupils.
- The inspector held a meeting with five governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. He also held meetings with school leaders responsible for provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and the leader for early years provision. A meeting took place with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' progress, the school's reviews of its own performance, checks on the quality of teaching, development plans, safeguarding documentation, and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

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 looked after children, 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.

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, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

