

# Inspection of a good school: Brindle St James' Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Water Street, Brindle, Chorley, Lancashire PR6 8NH

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Inspection date:

13 September 2022

## Outcome

Brindle St James' Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and feel safe at this school. Children in the Reception/key stage 1 class settle well because staff take many steps to help them to make a smooth start to their education. Parents and carers told inspectors that this is a school with a great family feeling and a warm welcome.

Pupils said that teachers care for them. They feel that teachers are interested in their ideas and opinions. Pupils make friends easily. They develop a strong identity to their classes, in which different year groups of pupils learn together. Pupils achieve well because of staff's high expectations.

Pupils are polite to visitors and keen to explain about their many worthwhile experiences at Brindle St James'. The school has a quiet hubbub of learning because of pupils' good behaviour and their concentration on their work. They value learning new knowledge. Pupils said that leaders and staff manage incidents of bullying well when they arise.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), confidently take part in many extra opportunities to develop their skills and talents. Pupils gain new knowledge through diverse opportunities such as cookery, flying discs and cycling.

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

Leaders and staff have a good understanding of how to organise and teach the curriculum. Together, they are successfully further strengthening subject curriculums. They have ensured that the school's curriculum focuses on appropriate content, including key knowledge that pupils do not understand or have forgotten due to the COVID-19

pandemic. As a result, pupils and children in the early years achieve well academically. Older pupils are prepared well for secondary school.

Leaders and staff make sure that all pupils, including pupils with SEND, follow the same curriculum. Where needed, staff break the curriculum content into smaller chunks so that pupils can learn essential information more easily. Pupils are confident and articulate. They are able to explain their thinking and their recent learning. However, in a few subjects, leaders and staff have not fully considered which subject-specific vocabulary pupils should be taught and when. In these subjects, pupils are not developing the vocabulary that they need to know to progress well.

Teachers assess pupils' knowledge regularly. This helps staff to identify what they need to re-explain or opportunities that pupils need for extra practice. Staff make effective use of assessment techniques to identify and support pupils with SEND. Furthermore, staff liaise productively with children's previous nurseries to understand children's starting points and additional needs.

Pupils learn to read with confidence and fluency. Staff in the Reception/key stage 1 class make reading and books an important focus. Pupils use the well-resourced library often. They enjoy reading a wide range of high-quality fiction and non-fiction books. Leaders ensure that pupils who struggle to learn to read are given extra support. Leaders work closely with other professionals to support pupils whose SEND may affect their ability to read. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to learn to read even more successfully. They have recently introduced a new phonics programme, alongside training. This is providing staff with even deeper knowledge of how to teach phonics well.

In the main, pupils focus sensibly on their learning activities in classrooms. On occasion, a few pupils are unsettled but this low-level disruption is short-lived because it is well managed by staff.

Leaders enhance the curriculum by providing pupils with a range of extra opportunities. All pupils visit the theatre together annually. All pupils, including those with SEND, have opportunities to take part in sporting events. Pupils are calm and thoughtful. This is because staff teach pupils about the importance of managing their emotions and having a positive interest and respect for oneself and others. Pupils can talk about world issues. They learn to act responsibly, such as by raising funds for charitable causes.

The headteacher and the governing body know the school well. They understand the school's strengths and know which developments are needed to refine the school's curriculum further. That said, a small number of subject leaders do not have a good enough grasp of the subject that they lead. These subject leaders rely too much on the knowledge and insights of other leaders to improve some aspects of their curriculums.

All staff enjoy working at the school. Most staff feel well supported by leaders and the actions that they take to support their well-being and workload.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff complete annual training from experts on their responsibilities for safeguarding. They know what action to take if they become concerned about the safety or well-being of a pupil or adult. Leaders carefully record and review information about safeguarding concerns. They liaise well with other agencies to support pupils where necessary. Governors ensure that leaders' arrangements for safeguarding are well managed.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Parents value the workshops that leaders provide to help them understand how to support online safety at home.

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

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

- In a few subjects, leaders have not identified the subject-specific vocabulary that staff should teach and when this knowledge should be taught. This means that pupils do not understand some of the vocabulary that they should. Leaders should ensure that essential vocabulary is identified and taught effectively.
- A small number of subject leaders do not have a sufficient knowledge of the subject that they lead. This means that they are unable to challenge and support the work of their colleagues as much as they should. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have the training that they need to lead their areas of responsibility successfully.

## 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 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.

## 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>	119462
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212423
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	68
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kathy Whyte
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracy Austin
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.brindle-st-james.lancs.sch.uk">www.brindle-st-james.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher is new to post since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- The most recent section 48 inspection of denominational education for pupils, and the content of collective worship, took place in March 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders, subject leaders and members of staff. They spoke with four members of the governing body, including the

chair of governors. Inspectors spoke with the school's adviser and met with a representative of the Diocese of Blackburn.

- Inspectors spoke with pupils and leaders about behaviour and wider activities to promote pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted surveys of pupils and staff. Inspectors spoke with some parents as well as reviewing responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils at the school to hear their views about their education.
- Inspectors discussed safeguarding with leaders, governors, staff and pupils as well as reviewing a sample of school safeguarding policies and records.

### **Inspection team**

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gaynor Rennie

Ofsted Inspector

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