

# Inspection of a good school: Alston Lane Catholic Primary School, Longridge

Preston Road, Alston, Preston PR3 3BJ

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Inspection dates:

18 and 19 October 2022

## **Outcome**

Alston Lane Catholic Primary School, Longridge continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils respond well to the high expectations of leaders at Alston Lane Catholic Primary. Leaders expect pupils to be friendly and courteous at all times. Pupils exemplify this through their hard work and their positive relationships with one another and with adults who work in the school.

Around school pupils behave well. In lessons, they listen with care to what each pupil has to say. Positive behaviours are instilled from the moment children enter the two-year-old provision. Pupils are very positive in their views about behaviour in school. If bullying should happen, leaders take swift actions to stop it reoccurring. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe in school.

There are many pupil leadership roles that pupils take on. They can become sports captains or members of the animal welfare or eco teams. Other pupils take on the roles of librarians or play buddies. Pupils relish these responsibilities, especially if it involves looking after the school chickens.

Pupils do not tolerate any form of discrimination. They recognise that they are all different. Pupils know their rights and responsibilities. They know that all children should be treated equally regardless of their faith or ethnicity.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious and challenging curriculum. They have taken their time to carefully plan each subject in turn. This work is almost complete. In most subject areas, leaders have identified the important knowledge they want pupils to learn. They have mapped out a logically ordered curriculum from the early years through to the end of Year 6. In a very small number of subjects, leaders are finalising their curriculums.

Governors know the school well. They hold leaders to account and ensure that they fulfil their safeguarding and equality duties. Governors provide leaders with strong challenge about curriculum improvements.

All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), access a broad and ambitious curriculum. Pupils who leave at the end of Year 6 are ready for the challenges of high school.

Leaders make sure that all staff engage in regular professional training. This means that they deliver the curriculum expertly. Teachers use a range of effective assessment strategies to support pupils with their learning. They explain new concepts well and make sure that new learning builds on what pupils already know.

In lessons, pupils demonstrate positive behaviours. They listen to their teachers and show an eagerness to learn. Learning is rarely interrupted by poor behaviour.

Leaders have made sure that reading is a top priority. All staff have been well trained to deliver an effective early reading and phonics programme. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 learn new sounds in a logical order. Staff make sure that any pupil who falls behind receives swift support to help them catch up quickly. Pupils take home books to read that match the sounds they learn in class. They confidently talk about their favourite books and stories.

Leaders have well-tested systems in place to quickly identify which pupils have SEND and need additional support. Pupils with SEND receive a wide range of support from staff in school and from external agencies. This ensures that these pupils can successfully access the same curriculum as their friends and achieve well.

Pupils engage in a wide range of activities beyond the taught curriculum. They have opportunities to participate in sporting events to represent the school. The football team has enjoyed many recent successes against local schools. Pupils enjoy the many well-planned trips that take them out of the classroom. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about a recent trip to France. Others spoke about kayaking on Lake Windermere. Pupils learn to care for others. Most recently, they have collected food hampers for a local food bank and a women's refuge.

Staff feel supported in their roles. They appreciate actions that leaders have taken to support their professional development and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. They are able to quickly identify possible signs of neglect or harm. There are effective systems in school for recording and passing on all concerns. School leaders make sure that pupils and their families who need support are referred to relevant agencies quickly.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn to keep themselves safe in a range of situations.

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

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

- In a very small number of subjects, leaders are still refining their curriculum design. As a result, some pupils do not know these curriculums as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that all curriculums are complete and logically ordered, and that they set out the most important things that pupils need to know and remember. This is to ensure that all pupils are even better prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **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 April 2013.

## **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>	119635
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240771
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	232
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jan Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark FitzGibbon
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.alstonlane.lancs.sch.uk">www.alstonlane.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a voluntary aided Catholic Primary School. The most recent section 48 inspection of religious education was in October 2018.
- In 2018, the school extended the age range to incorporate two-year-old children into the early years.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken this into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, middle leaders and teachers.
- The inspector met with five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

- The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted’s staff and pupil surveys. The inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector viewed a range of documentation relating to safeguarding in the school. He checked systems for safe recruitment and spoke with staff about their knowledge of how to protect children.
- The inspector observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons and at break times. He spoke with groups of pupils to gather their views about the school.
- The inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read to a trusted adult.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. He spoke to the subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and viewed examples of their work. The inspector also spoke with teachers.

### **Inspection team**

John Donald, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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