

Inspection of an outstanding school: St Barnabas and St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Oakenhurst Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 1SN

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 February 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils benefit from being part of a warm and welcoming community at St Barnabas and St Paul's Church of England Primary School. Leaders ensure that pupils receive high levels of pastoral care. Pupils said that they feel happy and safe at school. They explained that leaders deal effectively with any incidents of bullying.

Pupils are keen to tell visitors about their learning. They are proud of their school. Pupils appreciate the range of additional opportunities that staff provide to them. These include lessons around life skills and visiting different museums which bring the curriculum to life.

Leaders have established a culture of high expectations for pupils' behaviour and achievement. Staff encourage pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve well. In the main, many pupils do achieve well. However, teachers do not adapt the delivery of the curriculum as effectively as they should for some pupils with SEND. This hinders how well a few pupils with SEND learn new knowledge and information.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times is a strength. They are polite, courteous and respectful to everyone that they meet. They embrace people's differences. From the early years, children sustain high levels of concentration on the task at hand. However, some pupils do not attend school regularly enough.

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

Leaders have made many suitable changes to the curriculum since the previous inspection. They are well on their way with the journey of improvement.

Leaders are aspirational and they expect all pupils to learn a curriculum that is broad, interesting and stimulating. From the early years, leaders think carefully about the order that pupils encounter new knowledge. Across the school, teachers are implementing a curriculum that is increasingly well designed. Overall, this is helping many pupils to build up their understanding in different subjects.

Throughout the curriculum, teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. They ensure that many of the activities that they design support pupils' learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They help many pupils to acquire new knowledge and information. Most pupils are ready for the next stage in their learning. The curriculum in the early years prepares children very well for the demands of Year 1.

Teachers use an appropriate range of different assessment strategies within lessons to check pupils' knowledge and understanding. They address misconceptions as they arise. Furthermore, leaders have well-established processes to identify and assess pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as other pupils. However, sometimes teachers do not use assessment information as effectively as they could to adapt how the curriculum is taught for some pupils with SEND. This prevents these pupils from achieving as well as they could.

Leaders make reading a top priority in the school's curriculum. They successfully prioritise children's vocabulary acquisition when they begin school in the early years. Leaders ensure that pupils have a rich experience of different books and authors to develop their vocabulary and understanding. Older pupils talk confidently about the books that they have read in different lessons and how reading opens the world to them. Children in the early years begin to read through a well-structured phonics programme. Teachers deliver the phonics programme consistently well. All pupils, including those at the early stages of reading, read books which help them to master the sounds that they know. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to support all pupils, including those pupils who find reading more difficult.

There is a calm and respectful atmosphere in the school. Pupils behave well and look forward to their lessons. The learning environment is a hive of purposeful activity. Right from the early years, children and staff form strong relationships which continue throughout the school. Pupils take great pride in their work. When in school, pupils display positive attitudes toward their learning. However, despite leaders' actions, some pupils do not attend school as often as they should. This means that gaps appear in their learning and they miss out on aspects of the curriculum.

The school provides a rich variety of activities for pupils beyond the curriculum. Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular clubs. They said that they are excited about their upcoming trip to London.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves healthy. They demonstrate respect for all religions, beliefs and different types of families. They have an age-appropriate understanding of British values and protected characteristics. This helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their leadership skills, such as by becoming the head boy or girl, or by becoming well-being champions.

Leaders and governors have a secure and honest understanding of what the school does well and where further improvements are required to the quality of education. Staff feel supported with their workload and well-being. Together, they are united in ensuring the best for the pupils. Parents and carers are positive about the experience that their children have in school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of vigilance. Staff understand that keeping pupils safe is a shared responsibility. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to look for any signs of potential harm in pupils. They report these concerns with speed to leaders. Where needed, leaders seek support from various agencies to assist them in their work in keeping pupils safe.

Pupils learn about how to protect themselves from danger. From the early years, they have a strong understanding of online safety. Pupils also learn other ways to keep themselves safe, including any dangers which may be in the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not adapt the delivery of the curriculum as effectively as they should for some pupils with SEND. Occasionally, this hinders how well these pupils learn. Leaders should ensure that staff have the training that they require to adapt how they deliver the curriculum for pupils with SEND.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This prevents them from accessing all that the curriculum has to offer. Leaders must improve pupils' rates of attendance.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in March 2017.

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

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| Unique reference number | 119499 |
| Local authority | Blackburn with Darwen |
| Inspection number | 10256094 |
| 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 | 420 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Jamila Hounslow |
| Headteacher | Debbie Withey |
| Website | www.stbarnabas-stpauls.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 8 and 9 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Several new teachers have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Leaders make use of one alternative provision.
- This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Blackburn. The last section 48 inspection took place in October 2016.

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 that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. He met with a range of leaders who are responsible for the school's pastoral system and personal development programmes.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons,

talked to pupils and looked at pupils' work.

- The inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair of governors. He also met with a representative of the Diocese of Blackburn and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed pupils in Year 1 to Year 3 reading to familiar adults.
- The inspector reviewed leaders' policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. He scrutinised documentation, such as the single central record. The inspector discussed safeguarding with leaders and staff.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes and as they moved around the school. He scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. He spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with parents at the start of the school day. He took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Stuart Perkins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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