

Inspection of Accrington St John with St Augustine Church of England Primary School

Maudsley Street, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 6AD

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and happy at St John with St Augustine Church of England Primary School. They said that staff are kind and look after them well. Pupils told inspectors that staff nurture and encourage them to prepare them for life's journey. Pupils new to the school quickly make friends. Parents and carers said that staff make everyone feel welcome. Pupils, including children in the early years, thrive at this school.

Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils rise to these expectations. Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. The school is calm and peaceful. Pupils enjoy their lessons without distractions. They achieve well.

Teachers forge positive relationships with all pupils. Pupils said that they can speak to staff freely about their worries and that staff will listen to them. Pupils are confident that any concerns will be dealt with quickly. Pupils understand what bullying is, and when it happens, staff act swiftly to sort it out. Staff help pupils to successfully resolve squabbles and restore friendships.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enjoy all aspects of school life, including the range of extra-curricular visits and activities that they are offered. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the experiences that they have, for example having an afternoon tea, getting soaking wet in the rain, stargazing and being able to perform for grandparents.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. It reflects the breadth of the national curriculum and connects what children learn to the school's values. Leaders have prioritised pupils' language development. They have designed a curriculum which emphasises the development of pupils' oracy skills. The curriculum affords pupils many valuable opportunities to talk, discuss and debate their ideas. This helps pupils to learn well.

In many subjects, leaders have carefully defined the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn and when this content should be taught. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not specified the most important knowledge for subsequent learning clearly enough. This sometimes hinders teachers in designing learning that builds on what pupils already know. As a result, in these subjects, some pupils do not deepen their learning as well as they should.

Teachers use assessment well to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Skilled staff support pupils to address these gaps in knowledge and to catch up quickly. This is particularly effective in the teaching of early reading. For example, staff revisit sounds and words which pupils are finding difficult until pupils can read these instantly. Staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well.

Leaders have ensured that reading is a high priority and is well resourced. For instance, there are beautiful libraries, book displays and reading areas throughout the school. Well-trained staff foster a love of reading in pupils across the school. Pupils readily spoke about the whole-class texts that they have studied. Pupils enjoy reading. Older pupils said that they come away from their devices to read the books that they are given.

Leaders have ensured that there are well established systems for identifying children with SEND from a young age. They have made sure that targets for pupils with SEND are focused on specific areas of need. These are broken down into smaller steps throughout the year, so that pupils achieve well. Support staff have regular training and know pupils and their families well. Staff adapt lessons to make sure all pupils can enjoy learning through adapted texts, visual resources, voice recordings, drama and talk partners.

From the youngest age, leaders have high expectations of children's behaviour. In the early years, children remain focused on playing, talking, sharing and reading for long periods of time. Children are highly motivated to learn. Adults successfully support children to develop their communication and language skills. For example, teachers are scrupulous about accurate letter formation, so that all children, including those with SEND, can apply their reading knowledge to their writing.

Leaders and teachers have established positive behaviour as the norm across the school. Pupils behave exceptionally well. They learn without disruption. Pupils' excellent manners extend outside the classrooms to the playground, where they play harmoniously.

Leaders have put in place many strategies which have successfully improved pupils' rates of attendance. These strategies are helping pupils with emotional needs to have the confidence to attend school more regularly. All staff have key vulnerable pupils for whom they provide additional pastoral support throughout pupils' school lives. This system has provided stability and built pupils' confidence in readiness for the next stage of their education.

Leaders provide exceptional opportunities for pupils' wider development, for example offering pupils the chance to give back to their community. Pupils said that they enjoy visitors to their worship, grandparents' afternoons and helping at local care homes. Teachers have ensured that all pupils have opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Leaders offer pupils a plethora of clubs, including construction and Messy Church. Pupils are knowledgeable about life in modern Britain, and they demonstrate mature attitudes towards equality, diversity and justice.

Governors provide appropriate levels of support and challenge for leaders. Staff appreciate the way that leaders are conscious of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The culture of safeguarding is strong. Staff are vigilant and know how to share their concerns about a pupil's welfare. Record-keeping is accurate. Leaders engage closely with external partners to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive appropriate and timely support.

Leaders ensure that pupils are taught about online safety. There is a no-nonsense approach to teaching about sexual harassment and online abuse. As a result, pupils have the language and skills to talk about these issues confidently.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not finalised the knowledge that is essential for pupils' subsequent learning. This sometimes hinders teachers in designing learning that builds on pupils' prior knowledge. Leaders should ensure that they define the essential knowledge in these remaining subjects and that teachers are clear about the learning that they should deliver.

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

Unique reference number	119445
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10269096
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sally Walsh
Headteacher	Mark Proctor
Website	www.st-john-augustine.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make any use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and other members of staff. Inspectors met with the members of the local governing body and the vicar. The lead inspector had a face-to-face conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some teachers and pupils about their

learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also met with other subject leaders and teachers.

- Inspectors considered a range of documentation about the school. This includes minutes from meetings of the governing body and records relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. They met with leaders, staff and pupils to understand how pupils are kept safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at playtimes and when moving around the school.
- Inspectors spoke to staff about well-being and workload. Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors observed pupils from each key stage reading to a trusted adult.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Trish Merritt, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Garry White

Ofsted Inspector

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