

Inspection of St Agnes RC Primary School

Rainhill Way, Bow, London E3 3ER

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 February 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since June 2012.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Agnes is an exceptional school where pupils are nurtured and supported to achieve their very best in all areas of school life. Leaders have high expectations and aspirations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have created an ambitious and interesting curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes towards their education are extremely positive. They are enthusiastic and curious participants in lessons. Pupils are taught to be active and responsible citizens. They learn how to keep themselves safe. Behaviour is impeccable. Pupils are polite and helpful and they treat others with respect. They can talk about the different ways they are taught to appreciate and respect people's differences.

Bullying is rare, and pupils know that there will always be a trusted adult they can talk to about their worries or concerns. This helps to ensure that pupils feel safe and are kept safe in school.

The development of character is exemplary. Pupils, including those with SEND, readily engage in the wide range of additional opportunities and visits that are provided to develop their talents and interests. For example, pupils enjoy attending multi-sports and chess clubs, as well as visits to Colchester Castle and the Ragged School Museum.

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

Pupils learn an ambitious curriculum that matches the breadth of what is expected nationally. In each subject, leaders have identified what they expect pupils to learn and when. This ensures that pupils develop a depth of understanding in each subject and use what they know to tackle more complex ideas. For example, in mathematics, children in early years practise counting forward and back in different steps. This helps them when they begin to learn their multiplication tables. Older pupils use this knowledge confidently when calculating the ratio of different fruits used in a kebab or ingredients in a flapjack.

The rich curriculum begins in early years, where there is a strong focus on developing communication and language. Children learn to listen attentively and respond appropriately to questions and instructions. An excellent range of activities are chosen to support the different areas of learning. For example, children practise planting seeds in the forest school and measuring ingredients in the mud kitchen. Adults across the setting help children to use an increasing range of vocabulary with accuracy and precision.

Reading is a high priority across the school. Pupils are very well supported to read fluently. This enables them to access the full breadth of the curriculum and fosters a genuine love of reading. Staff have been well trained to implement the agreed

phonics programme with precision. Pupils' reading is carefully tracked. If any pupils fall behind, they receive additional support to catch up.

Pupils with SEND are swiftly identified. Information, including advice and guidance from external agencies, is communicated effectively with teachers. Staff use this information effectively to make appropriate adaptations to tasks and activities. This helps to ensure that pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. This is because staff have high expectations and implement the school's systems consistently. Leaders have provided training to help staff to identify the feelings and motivation behind any instances of weaker behaviour. Pupils embody the school's values of belief, contribution and perseverance. They play a strong role in creating a positive and inclusive school environment. For example, pupils know that discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated. Leaders prioritise ensuring that pupils attend school regularly and on time. Systems such as first-day calls home and meetings with parents and carers have raised the profile of strong attendance across the school.

Pupils' personal development is exceptional. They are given lots of opportunities to develop their character and explore their talents and interests. The curriculum has been designed to help pupils learn about the law, the importance of democracy and that actions have consequences. Pupils readily and confidently debate complex issues. They are keen to make a positive contribution to their school and the wider community. For example, they volunteer in the local area and raise money for charities. Pupils enjoy positions of responsibility, including as librarians, school councillors and playtime monitors.

Staff are rightly proud to work at the school. They value the support they receive from leaders to develop professionally and to manage their workload and welfare. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. For example, they hold leaders to account for the quality of education at the school. Parents are very positive about the school and the education it provides.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100949
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10296580
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Luke McDonald
Headteacher	Brid McDaid
Website	www.st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 June 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is designated as having a religious character. The school is in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster. The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was in January 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders and subject leaders. They also held meetings with the members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff were gathered through both discussion and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Eleanor Ross, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Bailey OBE

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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