Inspection of St Barnabas and St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Oakenhurst Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 1SN

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 July 2024

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

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 seven years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy warm and supportive relationships with staff. They are well cared for. Pupils are happy and safe in school. They work and play together well, demonstrating positive attitudes to their lessons. Pupils are extremely polite and respectful towards their peers, staff and visitors.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), respond well to the high expectations that the school has for their achievement. They achieve well across a broad range of subjects.

Children in the early years, develop confidence in their abilities and learn to communicate with increasing clarity. They flourish and achieve exceptionally well, academically and socially.

Pupils benefit from an impressive range of opportunities that help them to grow and develop into well-rounded citizens of the future. Pupils develop their talents by attending a range of clubs, such as sports, music and art clubs. Carefully designed trips, including to museums and places of worship, closely match what pupils are learning in class.

Pupils represent the school exceptionally well as role models and ambassadors. Older pupils have chances to take on leadership roles, such as being librarians, playground helpers and school council members. This helps them to gain confidence as well as understand the importance of responsibility.

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

The school has established a well-structured curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. Across each subject, the school has defined the important knowledge that pupils should learn and when this content should be taught.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. This allows them to deliver the curriculum in a way that enables most pupils to build their knowledge over time. Teachers are adept at checking that pupils remember what they have been taught before introducing new learning. As a result, pupils across the school, including those with SEND, are well prepared for the next steps in their learning.

Children in the early years excel. They benefit from a very well-thought-through curriculum that is delivered exceptionally well. This helps children to learn all that they should across each area of learning. They are extremely well prepared for key stage 1.

Children in the early years develop their ability to communicate clearly. However, this is not built on well enough across key stages 1 and 2. This is because there is not enough emphasis placed on developing and expanding pupils' vocabulary. This

hinders some pupils from understanding what they read. It also makes it difficult for them to learn key vocabulary relating to different subjects.

The school places a high priority on teaching pupils to read. Staff are well trained. They deliver the school's phonics programme consistently well. Staff carefully check for any gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge. Timely extra support addresses these gaps and helps pupils to catch up with the phonics programme quickly.

Children begin to develop a love of books in the early years. As pupils begin to read books, the school ensures that these closely match the sounds that they have learned. Pupils use effective strategies to read unfamiliar words. This helps them to experience the pleasure that comes from reading a book. Many pupils become fluent readers by the end of key stage 1.

The school ensures that the additional needs of pupils with SEND are identified quickly. Staff skilfully deliver the curriculum to enable pupils with SEND to successfully learn alongside their peers. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

The school has established strong routines, from the early years to Year 6. This helps to ensure that most children and pupils display high standards of behaviour. Pupils' positive attitudes help to create a peaceful and focused environment in which pupils can learn without disruption. The school provides a wealth of support for families to successfully overcome any barriers to securing good attendance. Pupils attend school regularly.

The school has designed an extensive personal development programme that extends beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils learn essential life skills, such as online safety and community awareness. They have a secure understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils demonstrate their deep empathy and kindness by actively supporting local and national charities, as well as donating to those in need. In doing so, pupils make a positive impact in their school and local community. These experiences prepare pupils with the knowledge and confidence to thrive in modern Britain.

Members of the governing body have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for further improvement. They provide effective support and challenge linked to the quality of education.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the school's consideration of their workload and well-being. Staff, including those who are at the early stages of their careers, value the support provided by the school to enhance their subject expertise.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- In some subjects, the school has not identified the key vocabulary that pupils need in order to access the full curriculum and understand the books that they read. This hampers pupils from building a secure body of knowledge in different subjects. It also limits some pupils' access to more complex texts. The school should ensure that, in these subjects, teachers are clear about the key vocabulary that pupils should acquire in order to make sense of their learning.

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	119499
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10321368
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	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Clayton
Headteacher	Debbie Withey
Website	http://www.stbarnabas-stpauls.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and23 February 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Blackburn. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in October 2023. The school's next section 48 inspection is due before July 2029.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school runs a before-school club.

Information about this inspection

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 graded inspection the school 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 carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, design and technology, history and geography. They met with subject leaders and teachers. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning. Inspectors observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with members of the governing board, including the chair of governors. They also spoke with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors met with leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documentation relating to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, lunchtime and when moving around school. Inspectors visited the breakfast club.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors met with parents and carers at the start of the school day. They took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Julie Brown, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Hollister	Ofsted Inspector
Sharon Cliff	Ofsted Inspector

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