

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Agnes CofE Primary School

Knolls Lane, Lees, Oldham, Lancashire OL4 5RU

Inspection date:

14 January 2025

Outcome

St Agnes CofE Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this nurturing school. Children in the early years, along with pupils who are new to school, are given a warm welcome. They settle into school life quickly.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), work hard to meet them. Pupils achieve well at this school. They leave the school well equipped for the challenges of secondary education.

Pupils are polite, extremely well behaved and are positive ambassadors for their school. They attend well. Pupils are proud of the work they do. Classrooms buzz with purposeful learning. Pupils encourage each other to be the best that they can be and to follow the school's mission of 'learning together'.

Pupils participate fully in school life. For instance, the school provides an extensive variety of clubs and activities. These include handbells, knitting and sports clubs. The school ensures that pupils have the chance to seize opportunities to learn something new. For example, pupils are excited to participate in choral speaking and gardening projects. They are keen to take on extra responsibilities, for example by being a role model and looking after other children.

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

The school has established an ambitious vision for the high-quality education that it provides for pupils. The governing board challenges and supports the work of the school well. This has helped to successfully build on the quality of education that the school offers.

From the beginning of the early years to the end of Year 6, the school has designed a broad and rich curriculum. It has thought carefully about the knowledge that pupils should learn. This enables staff to know the important building blocks of information that pupils need to know and remember.

In the main, the curriculum is well delivered. Teachers have strong knowledge of the subjects that they teach, and they present information to pupils clearly. The school ensures that the additional needs of pupils with SEND are quickly identified. In most circumstances, staff successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum and provide appropriate support to those pupils who need it. However, from time to time, some staff do not choose the most effective activities to support pupils in learning all that they can. This means that some pupils do not learn to the depth that they could.

Reading is a high priority across the school, with staff trained to deliver the phonics programme effectively. Children in the early years enjoy stories and rhymes, helping them to develop a love of books. Staff provide effective support for those needing extra help. This builds pupils' confidence, helping most to become fluent, accurate readers. However, the same level of readiness is not reflected in terms of early writing. In the main, pupils develop into successful writers. Nevertheless, some develop errors in relation to their letter formation and spelling. These are not consistently addressed. This hinders the quality of some pupils' written communication.

Relationships between pupils and adults are positive. Pupils follow the school's 'great expectations', where respect and co-operation are key. The school teaches pupils to understand their emotions and supports them with ways to manage them. The school has rigorous systems in place to monitor pupils' attendance. The school promotes the message that any time away from school can lead to missing out on important aspects of learning. Pupils want to be in school as they have a thirst for learning new things. As a result, from a strong starting point, attendance is improving.

The school has ensured that pupils' personal development is at the heart of its work. It has empowered pupils, through a wide range of opportunities, to make a tangible difference to their school community. For example, they raise money for causes close to their hearts. Pupils talked to inspectors about the joy that they get in sharing and celebrating their differences and similarities with each other. Pupils also learn important life lessons on topics such as healthy relationships, strong mental health and online safety. They talked knowledgeably about diversity, having learnt about it from having visitors into school. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for later life.

Parents and carers value the close-knit school community and the support that the school gives to their families. Staff feel valued and proud to work at this school that champions its pupils. Staff appreciate the support offered by school leaders around their well-being as this enables them to deliver their roles well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, some staff do not choose the most appropriate activities to help pupils learn the intended curriculum. This prevents some pupils from developing a deep body of subject knowledge. The school should ensure that teachers make the most appropriate pedagogical choices to teach new content.
- Some pupils do not master accurate letter formation by the time that they leave Year 2. This hinders their writing fluency as they move through the key stage 2 curriculum. The school should ensure that pupils have the skills that they need to be successful writers by the end of key stage 1.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in June 2015.

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	105700
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10347976
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	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Gittins
Headteacher	Sarah Butterworth
Website	www.stagnes.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Church of England school is part of the diocese of Manchester. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in May 2024. The school's next section 48 inspection is due before May 2029.
- There has been a new headteacher appointed since the last inspection.
- The school runs a before- and after- school club for pupils.
- This school uses one registered alternative provision for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine 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 visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed some pupils from Years 1 and 2 read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 spoke with members of the governing body. 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 and around school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

Helen Friend, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gillian Crompton

Ofsted Inspector

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