

Inspection of a good school: St Agnes CofE Primary School

Knolls Lane, Lees, Oldham, Lancashire OL4 5RU

Inspection dates: 3 December 2019

Outcome

St Agnes CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and excited to be a part of this school. They are friendly and polite to adults and each other alike. Pupils love learning. They especially enjoy reading stories. Teachers make learning fun and interesting for them. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct. Pupils told us that they rarely fall out and if they do, it would be quickly sorted by the teachers. They, as well as parents, carers and staff, agree that bullying is not tolerated in the school. Pupils are safe in school. All newcomers to the school are welcomed.

Pupils know the school's 'Great Expectations' well. They understand the importance of being kind, respectful and tolerant of difference. The vast majority of pupils attend school regularly because school is so enjoyable for them. A typical comment from a parent was, 'My child is happy and wants to come to school.'

As well as learning well in lessons, pupils take part in a range of activities that spark their interests. For example, they enjoy taking part in the handbells, art and knitting clubs. The school council is proud of its work to paint the school's gazebo.

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

Leaders have developed the school's curriculum well since the last inspection. They have successfully invested in securing good subject knowledge and skills among staff. Leaders have thought hard about the topics they wish pupils to learn about. Teachers help pupils to make links between different subjects. For example, they have learned about Mary Seacole in history and about Jamaica in geography, as it was her country of origin. Pupils' good behaviour helps everyone to learn.

Teachers make sure that pupils learn to read. Pupils of all ages relish listening to stories and reading books. Children in Reception learn simple letters and sounds in a fun way. By the end of Year 1, the majority of pupils reach the expected standard in the national

phonics screening check. Skilled and effective teachers and teaching assistants help those pupils who fall behind. Older pupils speak confidently about the books they have read. Teachers and pupils make recommendations to others based on their reading experience.

Teachers have planned the curriculum for mathematics well across the school. They expect children in Reception to recognise numbers and to do simple additions. Teachers encourage pupils in all classes to apply their knowledge to real situations. This helps pupils to become confident. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 achieve well. The curriculum in most other subjects is mapped out thoughtfully for all year groups. The plans support mixed-age teaching appropriately. Pupils are beginning to understand the skills and knowledge they need to achieve well in design and technology. In key stage 2, they have enjoyed investigating the uses and dangers of plastics. Leaders are developing the curriculum plans for this subject during this school year. As such, these plans are not as strong as those for most other subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Leaders keep close contact with parents. Staff know the needs of pupils well. Teachers encourage all pupils to take part in all aspects of school life. Teaching assistants provide sensitive and effective support for pupils with additional needs. Consequently, these pupils thrive in this school. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are supported well. Pupils attend specific after-school activities to boost their confidence and resilience. These activities are delivered by trained teachers.

Leaders, including governors, know the school well. They make sure that the school's vision and values have a high profile in the school. These aims inform the school's curriculum, policies and recruitment decisions. Parents participate in school life. Parents told us that they would highly recommend this school to others. Leaders consider the work-life balance of teachers. Staff are excited to work at the school. Their training and development are supported well through the Dovestone Learning Partnership.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders for safeguarding have put in place strong systems to monitor pupils who may be at risk and provide support when this is needed. Teachers have a good understanding of their responsibilities. Leaders make sure that the right professional support is in place to help families in crisis.

The school provides well for pupils' mental health. 'The calm place' provides additional support for those pupils who find it difficult to manage their emotions.

Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe, including online. The safeguarding leader is knowledgeable about social media and its risks to pupils. She encourages open conversations about pupils' internet use. Pupils are taught valuable skills and knowledge about managing risk. School is considered a safe place by pupils, parents and staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have devised strong long-term plans for most subjects across the school, including English and mathematics. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and apply this knowledge well to make learning engaging and exciting for pupils. The curriculums in some foundation subjects are in the process of being developed by leaders, such as design and technology. The full sequence of lessons across the year for these subjects is not yet in place. Leaders should ensure that the plans for those less well-developed subjects are in place, so that pupils can build on their knowledge and skills in order from one unit of work to another over the year.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged St Agnes CofE Primary School to be good on 30 June–1 July 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	105700
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10087772
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	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mr Christopher Cartwright
Headteacher	Caroline Ireland
Website	www.stagnes.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 June–1 July 2015

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher took up post in September 2018. She is a headteacher of a local primary school. A head of school was appointed in September 2018.
- The school is a Church of England school and part of the Diocese of Manchester.
- The school is part of the Dovestone Learning Partnership.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the executive headteacher and the head of school, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the school's improvement partner. We met with subject coordinators, teachers and support staff.
- We examined in depth the quality of the curriculum in reading, mathematics, and design and technology. This involved examining curriculum plans, speaking with leaders, visiting lessons and speaking with pupils about their work. We also listened to pupils read and spoke with teachers about the learning in the lessons we visited.
- We evaluated the safeguarding arrangements in the school by examining the school's child protection records, talking with safeguarding leaders, speaking with pupils, staff and parents. We examined the school's safeguarding and the anti-bullying policies. We

checked the school's recruitment practices. We considered staff and parents' views about safeguarding as part of their review of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Zarina Connolly, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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