

Inspection of a good school: Appley Bridge All Saints Church of England Primary School

Finch Lane, Appley Bridge, Wigan, Lancashire WN6 9DT

Inspection date:

2 December 2022

Outcome

Appley Bridge All Saints Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone knows each other at this small, caring and welcoming school. Pupils, parents and carers described the school as being at 'the heart of the community'. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly and most pupils rarely miss a day. The school is a happy place for pupils to learn.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' achievement. They offer them an interesting and balanced curriculum. Pupils achieve well. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leaders expect pupils to behave well. Inspectors saw purposeful and calm behaviour in classrooms. Pupils interact well and play happily with their friends at breaktimes. Children in the early years settle quickly into the school routines. On the rare occasions that bullying occurs, it is reported and dealt with effectively. Pupils feel safe.

Pupils said that staff support and nurture them well so that they can strive to be the best that they can be. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the vast array of clubs and activities that they can take part in, for example ukulele club, coding club and chess club. Parents and staff who spoke with inspectors were positive about the school.

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

Leaders have created a broad and varied curriculum that sets out clearly what pupils should learn and when. They have considered how each subject builds year on year, from the early years to Year 6, so that pupils can make links across their learning. The curriculum enables all pupils to achieve highly, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Across subjects, leaders have identified the building blocks of knowledge that pupils are expected to learn, and the order in which this knowledge should be taught. Leaders have ensured that teachers are clear about what to teach. Most teachers deliver the curriculum well. As a result, most pupils develop a secure understanding of key concepts that build on what they already know. This helps them to learn well.

On occasions, teachers in some subjects, including reading at key stage 2, do not choose the most appropriate activities to enable pupils to learn the knowledge in the curriculum well. At times, activities chosen by teachers prevent pupils from reaching ambitious end points. Leaders recognise this is because teachers have not had the opportunity to draw on wider professional development to ensure that the curriculum is appropriately challenging for all.

Teachers use assessment strategies effectively to check what pupils know and to spot any misunderstandings that pupils may have. This means that teachers can quickly identify pupils' misconceptions before moving on to new learning.

There is a consistent approach to teaching phonics, and children in the early years get off to a flying start. Leaders have ensured that pupils learn to read in a logical order. Teachers make sure that pupils use their phonics knowledge successfully when reading unfamiliar words. Leaders have taken steps to ensure that the books that children and pupils read are matched to the sounds that they know. This means that they are confident and fluent readers. When pupils fall behind, adults spot this quickly and support them to keep up. Older pupils spoke excitedly about stories that they have listened to and authors that they know. Staff have created a culture in the school where reading for pleasure is celebrated, starting in the early years with stories, songs and rhymes.

Early years staff are passionate that children get the best start in their formal education. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum prepares children for learning in key stage 1. Speech and vocabulary development are central to learning activities in the early years. Staff help children to understand the importance of listening and paying attention.

Pupils with SEND access an equally ambitious curriculum and are fully involved in all aspects of school life. Leaders identify the individual needs for pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. Teachers adapt the delivery of learning activities effectively to ensure that the needs of this group of pupils are being met securely in the classroom.

Pupils manage their own behaviour well. In the early years, children are calm, cooperative and considerate. Across the school, pupils listen attentively and engage in their learning. There is very little low-level disruption. Pupils are respectful of each other and their teachers.

Leaders place great importance on pupils' personal development. Pupils are supported to be active and responsible citizens, for example, through the charitable work they do with staff. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Pupils are taught to understand and celebrate difference. They learn about diversity, inclusion and tolerance.

Pupils are proud to contribute to school life. They are encouraged to take on leadership responsibilities, for example, as house captains or on the student council. Leaders provide visits and activities that deepen and enrich pupils' wider cultural understanding. For example, pupils visit historical cities, such as Edinburgh and York, to support their learning in history.

Governors know the school well. They support the leaders well to ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of pupils. Staff are proud to work at this school. They feel that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff at all levels are alert to the risks that pupils may face. Leaders ensure that all staff have regular and detailed safeguarding training, including weekly updates. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about the welfare of a pupil and take swift action when concerns arise.

Leaders work closely with external agencies, including health and social care, to support and protect pupils who may be at risk of harm. They are persistent in ensuring that appropriate and timely support is in place for vulnerable pupils and their families.

The curriculum that leaders have planned helps pupils to stay safe. For example, pupils learn about water and road safety. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when working online. Pupils know who they can speak to if they are feeling worried.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, including reading at key stage 2, teachers do not always provide pupils with activities that best enable pupils to learn the knowledge in the curriculum. This means that pupils are not supported as well as they could be in reaching ambitious end points.
- Leaders recognise that not all teachers have had access to subject-specific training for all subjects. This means that teachers have not had the opportunity to draw on wider professional development opportunities that would develop a range of teaching approaches, to meet the needs of all pupils. Leaders should ensure that all teachers have access to wider subject development opportunities in order to hone their pedagogical and subject expertise.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 in December 2017.

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	119497
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10256204
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	148
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachel Edwards Barrott
Headteacher	Janet Dunn
Website	www.appleybridgeallsaints.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Blackburn. The previous section 48 inspection was carried out in December 2017.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision for pupils at the school.

Information about this inspection

- 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 spoke with the headteacher, subject leaders and other members of staff. Inspectors also spoke with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.

- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including leaders' self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Kate Bowker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Linda Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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