

Inspection of St Alban's Church of England Aided Primary School

St Alban's Road, West Leigh, Havant, Hampshire, PO9 2JX

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2021

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 14 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 inspections. 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 inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Alban's is a happy, safe and inclusive school. Christian values, particularly that of stewardship, underpin the school's ethos. The school's 'trailblazer' approach ensures that pupils participate in numerous activities that promote caring for the environment. Pupils love making a difference to their future through such activities as encouraging pollinators such as beetles and butterflies to thrive in their local community. Pupils' ideas about how to do this have been shared with other schools both nationally and internationally.

Children make an excellent start to learning in Reception and continue to work hard as they progress up the school. Pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics are especially positive. However, pupils do not always remember their learning in other subjects. Leaders are well on their way to making sure that this improves.

Pupils behave well and are kind to each other. Pupils say that bullying is exceptionally rare, but that an adult would help if it did happen. Older pupils relish opportunities to be a 'buddy' to a younger pupil and help them with reading and settling into school. 'Ambassador' roles are extremely popular and allow pupils to represent their class in activities such as sports, worship and the school council.

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

All pupils study a broad range of subjects. Pupils' knowledge in English and mathematics is especially strong. Reading is a real strength. Pupils learn phonics right from the start of Reception. Well-trained staff make sure that pupils have lots of opportunities to practise the sounds they are taught by reading books that are well matched to what they know. Staff have expert knowledge about what pupils can and cannot yet do. They provide targeted extra help for any pupil who has gaps in their knowledge. Consequently, nearly all pupils learn to read fluently by the end of Year 2. Pupils from all year groups told inspectors that they love reading.

The mathematics curriculum is well organised so that pupils develop a secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics as they progress through the school. In Reception, teachers expertly ensure that children quickly develop a sense of number. For example, when joining in with the song 'ten green bottles', children enthusiastically told the teacher how many more bottles were needed to make ten and corrected her when she 'accidentally' missed out a number as she counted. Older pupils are adept at using mathematical resources to help them reason and solve problems.

Leaders and governors recognise that, over time, pupils have not developed strong enough knowledge in subjects other than English and mathematics. They are working hard to change this. New curriculum plans set high expectations for pupils'

achievements. There is now more information available to help teachers plan learning in these subjects.

However, currently, the important knowledge that pupils should know and remember in each unit of work has not been identified clearly enough in all subjects. Sometimes teachers do not check that pupils have learned what they need to before moving on. Because of these issues, pupils do not learn as much as they could overall.

The challenges presented by the pandemic and changes to leadership roles have meant that monitoring in some subjects has not developed as strongly as leaders would have liked. Subject leaders are keen and enthusiastic. They are starting to check the quality of learning in their subjects more consistently. A few subject leaders require more training and support to be able to carry out their roles fully effectively.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Leaders and staff are quick to identify pupils' needs. Work to liaise with the nurseries that children attend before joining Reception helps to make sure that children's needs are known right from the start. Staff at all levels are well trained in meeting pupils' needs in the classroom. Extra targeted help, including from external partners, further helps pupils' learning and development. As a result, most pupils with SEND achieve in line with their peers by the end of Year 6.

Leaders have high expectations of staff. Staff work closely together to ensure that pupils' needs are met. This year, a focus on mental health is helping pupils to settle back into school following the disruption caused by the pandemic. New teachers are especially well supported as they start their careers. Leaders have made some useful changes to reduce staff workload. Governors are currently exploring further ways to ensure that staff well-being is maintained.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular, appropriate safeguarding training. Consequently, they know how to report any concerns they have about a pupil's welfare or safety. Leaders act promptly to support pupils, including those who need extra help from external safeguarding partners. The single central record shows that all the appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that staff are recruited safely.

Leaders have ensured that staff, parents and pupils are knowledgeable about online safety. Pupils are confident about what to do if anything they see online upsets them. Pupils know that adults will help them if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned in some subjects. However, it is clear that leaders have already taken action to improve the curriculum by ensuring that each subject has a clear rationale for what should be taught and in what order. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.
- Some subject plans do not contain enough information to help teachers plan effective sequences of learning. The important knowledge that pupils need to remember in each subject is not consistently clear. Leaders need to make sure that curriculum plans identify clearly the key knowledge pupils should know by the end of each unit of work. Teachers should check that pupils have learned this knowledge before moving on to new learning. Consequently, pupils will know more and remember more across the curriculum.

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.

If you are the school and 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	116362
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10199411
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	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tracey Smith
Headteacher	Nicola Hordell
Website	www.stalbansprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in 2014. Several other staff are new to the school since the previous inspection. Currently, nearly half of teachers are new to the profession.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary aided Church of England faith school. Its most recent section 48 inspection, in 2018, rated the school as outstanding.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The school has not been inspected for 14 years, which is longer than the normal interval between inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long

time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made most outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They also met with a range of teachers and other staff. Inspectors held a discussion with governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector held telephone conversations with representatives of the local authority and the Diocese of Portsmouth.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and personal, social and health education. This involved discussion with the leaders in these subjects, checking curriculum plans, visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking with pupils, teachers and teaching assistants about learning in these subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and other safeguarding leaders and spoke to a range of staff and pupils. Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding records, including those relating to the safer recruitment of staff.
- Inspectors met formally with some pupils in Years 5 and 6. Inspectors spoke informally to other pupils throughout the inspection.
- An inspector spoke to some parents as they dropped their children off at school on the morning of the second day of inspection. Inspectors also considered the 69 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 29 staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey and from conversations with staff held during the inspection.

Inspection team

Catherine Old, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Chris Ellison

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021