

St Agnes Church of England Primary School

Hamilton Road, Longsight, Manchester M13 0PE

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not sustained the quality of the school since the previous inspection. Important aspects of the school have declined.
- In recent years, the achievement of some pupils has been weak.
- Some teaching is not skilful. Some teachers do not challenge pupils enough or help them know how to improve their work.
- Middle leaders for science, geography and history have too little influence on the quality of teaching in their subjects.
- Senior leaders do not have enough impact on the quality of the curriculum in science and geography. As a result, some pupils do not make enough progress.
- Since the previous inspection, some teachers have not effectively implemented changes to the national curriculum and assessment.

The school has the following strengths

- Over the past year, senior leaders and governors have developed a much better understanding of the school's work. Their actions are improving pupils' education.
- Training and help for staff are improving the quality of teaching. As a result, the attainment of current pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is also improving.
- Leaders and governors ensure that staff teach pupils to be responsible British citizens who care about their local community. They understand the importance of people living together peacefully.
- Leaders and governors make certain that pupils are safe in school. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils, parents and carers are exemplary.
- Children in early years have a secure start to their education. Staff teach children capably. Children develop the skills and confidence to learn successfully. Leadership of the school's work in early years is good.
- The school is wonderfully calm yet full of talk. Pupils are sensible, caring and well behaved.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment and progress, by making sure that:
 - teaching, in year groups and across subjects, is sufficiently challenging
 - teachers help pupils to know how to improve their work
 - all teachers have the skills, knowledge and confidence to implement changes to the national curriculum and assessment.
- Revise the curriculum in science and geography so that all pupils develop enough of the subject knowledge that they need.
- Improve leadership and management, by:
 - providing middle leaders in science, geography and history with greater support to improve teaching and learning in their subjects
 - senior leaders keeping a much closer check on the quality of pupils' work in science and geography, so that they are in a much better position to raise the standards of teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- In the years following the previous inspection, the quality of education at the school declined. Staff struggled to keep up to date with changes to the national curriculum and assessment. Leaders did not make certain that teaching remained of a high standard. This negatively affected pupils' learning.
- Governors, senior leaders and staff are now working closely with the local authority. Together they are reversing this decline in quality. The work of the school is once again heading in the right direction. Even so, the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are not consistently good over time.
- Senior leaders have a reliable understanding of many of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, particularly in mathematics and English. They know which actions they and staff need to take to improve the school. Senior leaders lead mathematics and English at the school well. They have strong subject knowledge and a clear insight into the school's work and priorities for development in their subjects.
- While middle leaders for science, geography and history are equally aware of the need to improve the school, they do not have enough comprehension of how to achieve this. Senior leaders are beginning to support middle leaders, but it is too soon to see the impact of any revised work.
- Senior leaders have not had enough impact on the quality of the curriculum in geography and science. They are not fully aware of the variability in the quality of teaching and weaknesses in some pupils' work in these subjects.
- Senior leaders have worked with staff to strengthen pupils' vocabulary throughout the curriculum. Leaders ensure that staff give pupils opportunities to practise their growing language skills. Pupils undertake worthwhile trips, for example visiting the sand dunes at Formby Point and discussing their observations and experiences of the beach and squirrels.
- Senior leaders have had a significant impact on improving pupils' learning about the spiritual, moral and social aspects of their lives. Leaders ensure that staff teach pupils to understand what it means to be a citizen of Longsight, of Britain and the wider global community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Leaders have created an impressively calm school where staff give careful attention to celebrating faith, culture and learning, including in attractive displays. Many displays and learning areas also promote the value of books and reading, including comics. Leaders and staff value reading as a lifelong habit.
- The leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is good. Leaders have a clear understanding of pupils' needs and the impact of staff support for pupils.
- Senior leaders have developed much better training for teachers and teaching assistants. They do not shy away from challenging weaker teaching when they check individual teachers' work. The quality of teaching is improving. Staff morale is high. They have confidence in the senior leadership of the school to help them to improve.

- Leaders use the pupil premium funding well to assist pupils' learning throughout the school.
- Leaders have developed a range of worthwhile extra-curricular activities for pupils, including choir and homework club. In planning these activities, they are mindful of the fact that many pupils then attend 'mosque school' after their day at St Agnes.

Governance of the school

- Governors recognise that they have overseen a decline in the quality of the school since the previous inspection. They are clear about the current strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have a realistic view of what more they and leaders need to do to ensure that the school provides the quality of education that they desire.
- Governors use advisers from the local authority to help to improve their own work. They now challenge and review the work of the school confidently. They speak to a range of school leaders to understand how much the school is improving.
- Governors double-check the work of the school to safeguard pupils. They keep themselves fully informed of school and community issues. They attend regular training on their responsibilities for safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the safeguarding risks to pupils living in the local area. They consider this information carefully when developing the work of the school. They examine issues of pupils' attendance in detail when working with individual families.
- A group of highly trained senior staff share responsibility for the leadership of safeguarding. This is because leaders and governors decided that pupils, families and staff should always be able to obtain advice and support at the school.
- The school's family support adviser undertakes a range of important work to keep pupils and families safe. Leaders and staff communicate effectively with one another and with parents about pupils' lives.
- Leaders make certain that staff complete regular training on child protection. They inform staff regularly about wider issues in Manchester and beyond. School safeguarding policies and procedures are extremely clear because of leaders' attention to detail.
- Staff comprehend their responsibilities. They are vigilant and report their concerns about safeguarding appropriately. Senior leaders liaise promptly and fully with external agencies whenever needed. They have a detailed understanding of the lives of individual pupils attending the school and how staff have acted to support pupils' safety and well-being.
- Leaders and staff give pupils many ways to raise any concerns that they may have about their lives, including knowledge of national telephone advice lines.

- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at St Agnes. They know that staff will treat any of their concerns seriously.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because there is not enough consistency in the quality of teachers' work across subjects and classes. There is variability in the quality of some pupils' learning, for instance when the planned tasks do not challenge pupils enough. Some pupils' work indicated a sound understanding of the objectives for their studies. However, in other cases, pupils loved the topic that they were discussing, but did not know what they were learning or how to make their work better.
- Inspectors found that pupils' work showed some inconsistent teaching and learning in science and geography. An example was experiments in which pupils had copied out identical predictions and results. This held back pupils' ability to evaluate an experiment scientifically. Another example was mapping activities that were mainly low-level colouring in. This restricted their acquisition of new geographical knowledge.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving. Staff are developing their knowledge of the subject. They are thinking more deeply about their teaching of specific mathematical concepts, for instance through having access to external training. Pupils told inspectors that teaching in mathematics 'has changed for the better'. They said that they are pleased with more frequent opportunities to practise applying their learning.
- Pupils value opportunities in mathematics to solve problems with practical resources. They said that they enjoy online resources that strengthen their learning further. Parents also told inspectors that the online resources are very helpful for improving their children's mathematical skills. Pupils in upper key stage 2 told inspectors that staff's revised grouping of pupils for mathematics lessons enables them to learn better.
- At times, staff display good subject knowledge, such as in phonics teaching in Year 1. Throughout the school, staff plan opportunities that inspire pupils to read. Some boys told inspectors that teachers encourage them to read widely and often.
- In some of the most successful activities, staff use their assessments carefully to match learning to pupils' needs. For example, in an English activity, staff specifically helped pupils to improve their grasp of grammar based on identified weaknesses in their understanding. However, in another class, teachers did not use assessment successfully. Pupils were set work on adverbials even though they had a weak awareness of verbs, which was the essential prior knowledge that they needed.
- Inspectors found three consistent strengths in teaching. The relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school are consistently positive. Teachers value and benefit greatly from the expert contribution of teaching assistants. The way staff assisted pupils with SEND in class and in support sessions was patient and skilful.
- In some of the most successful learning seen by inspectors, staff questioned pupils thoughtfully, probing their understanding, and asking questions such as, 'Why is this?'
- In one activity, key stage 2 pupils focused determinedly on learning sewing skills as they made good-luck felt ornaments for Chinese New Year. They did so while listening calmly to Chinese instrumental music. This activity succeeded because the teacher

planned and organised the lesson well. In contrast, an activity for pupils in a different class, in design and technology, did not challenge pupils enough and held their learning back.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are self-confident and self-aware. They act responsibly and thoughtfully to improve their school and community. They have very positive attitudes towards learning.
- Pupils know that their views matter. Leaders and staff give pupils splendid opportunities to develop peace between local people. Pupils have developed a sophisticated grasp of the importance of peace for successful living.
- The school fosters the well-being of its pupils. The curriculum gives them many worthwhile occasions to develop respectful attitudes towards different people and communities.
- Pupils are developing the attitudes to learning and to life in modern Britain that they need to succeed. For instance, some pupils explained clearly to an inspector the importance of their reading on racism and the law.
- Leaders and staff make sure that the school curriculum helps pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe and how to develop their emotional health. Pupils have good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe online.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, eager to talk about the school and cooperate with one another and staff properly. Parents are pleased with pupils' behaviour and the respect they demonstrate towards staff.
- Bullying is rare, low level and addressed quickly by staff.
- Staff, particularly teaching assistants, support pupils who struggle to manage their own behaviour extremely competently.
- There was no disruption to lessons throughout the inspection. Lessons started promptly, and pupils arrived calm and ready to learn.
- Pupils' attendance is average. However, pupils' persistent absence is above average. This is because some parents take pupils on extended holidays. Governors and leaders are taking many steps to improve the attendance of those pupils who are absent from school most frequently.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The main reason why outcomes require improvement is because lingering weaknesses in teaching mean that some pupils do not make the progress that they should.

- Some pupils' work indicates that they do not have enough grasp of key scientific knowledge or language. In geography, some pupils do not develop enough subject knowledge.
- In the case of some pupils, previously weak teaching still negatively affects their views of mathematics. Other pupils are beginning to flourish in their understanding of mathematics this year. Some upper key stage 2 pupils are developing exact knowledge about adding and subtracting fractions. Pupils in key stage 1 are becoming more able to explain their reasoning, such as when dividing numbers by 2 and 5.
- Pupils read with fluency, confidence and understanding. In key stage 1, pupils use their phonics skills well to read unfamiliar words. Boys are becoming keen readers. They find the books available to them at school engaging and they enjoy a range of fiction and non-fiction. They recognise the importance of reading and as one older boy said, 'If we read a lot then our writing gets better because we learn more vocabulary.'
- The quality of pupils' writing is improving. Some pupils in Year 4, for example, were clear about how to improve their writing, telling the inspector, 'I need to get better at using the correct punctuation,' and, 'I need to improve my sentences by using better openers.' However, where teaching is weaker, pupils do not develop the grammar, punctuation and handwriting skills that they should.
- Pupils' vocabulary and their confidence to speak with other people and communities are growing quickly because of better teaching. Pupils, including those with SEND, were keen to talk with inspectors. Nevertheless, they do not use a rich variety of scientific or geographical vocabulary in their work.
- Pupils with SEND learn successfully because of the skilful help that they receive in lessons and in support sessions.
- In recent years, pupils' attainment in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics has improved from a low point in 2016 and is now average.
- In key stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics improved, but remained below the national average in 2018. Pupils' progress in mathematics in 2018 was significantly below average and their progress in reading was below average. Disadvantaged pupils generally make average progress at the school. The difference in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is diminishing.
- School information indicates that most current pupils in key stage 2 are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics this year.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders are clear about the strengths of the early years classes at the school and the actions that they are taking to improve teaching and learning. Leadership of early years is strong. It is a shared endeavour between the phase leaders, the deputy headteacher and the acting headteacher.
- Children manage their feelings and behaviour properly. They enjoy their time at school and develop much confidence in mixing with others and trying activities for themselves.
- Children's achievement of a good level of development has improved steadily over recent years and is close to the national average. Leaders make sure that the

curriculum in early years focuses strongly on developing their confidence, their physical skills, their understanding of the world and their speaking skills and vocabulary. From weak starting points, children make good progress.

- Staff undertake worthwhile preparation work with parents before children take up a place at the school. This helps them to settle quickly and parents to feel at ease. One parent proudly told an inspector that his child was the first in the extended family to have settled so happily at school.
- Leaders consider assessment information about children's abilities carefully to decide on the next steps for their learning. They also review what this information suggests that they should improve in staff's work.
- Leaders make good use of training and advice from experts outside the school to develop their own work and staff's teaching. Leaders are up to date in their knowledge of early years education. They are determined to keep on learning and improving their work.
- The leadership of SEND in early years is very positive. Children receive much help from a speech and language therapist, funded by the early years pupil premium. Leaders have a clear understanding of what staff do to support the therapist's work. This indicates that leaders use funding well to support those children that need help most.
- Staff take many steps to share information with parents about children's schooling. They help parents to support and extend children's learning at home.

School details

Unique reference number	105500
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10086859

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	467
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Thompson
Acting Headteacher	Shoab Uddin
Telephone number	0161 224 6829
Website	www.st-agnes.manchester.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@st-agnes.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 October 2012

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The number of pupils on roll has increased over recent years.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) is above average. Most of the pupils in each year group speak EAL.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average and has increased in recent years.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is average.
- Almost all pupils are from a minority ethnic heritage. Most of them are Pakistani or Bangladeshi.
- The substantive headteacher and the chair of governors are new to their roles since the previous inspection.

- At the time of this inspection, the substantive headteacher was on secondment away from the school. The deputy headteacher was the acting headteacher.
- The school is designated as having a religious character and received a section 48 inspection on 26 April 2018.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes throughout the school. Three inspectors undertook a series of joint observations with the acting headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents about their views of the school. There were too few responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, to analyse.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school information, including evidence of current pupils' achievement and attendance and a range of policies and documents available on the school's website.
- Inspectors evaluated with leaders a sample of pupils' work in mathematics and English to see what their learning and progress have been like this year. They reviewed a sample of pupils' work in science and geography and discussed some examples with the headteacher.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in classes and around the school. They listened to some pupils from key stage 2 read. Inspectors met with a random sample of 10 pupils from upper key stage 2 to discuss their reading and with seven pupils to discuss their learning in mathematics. They spoke with six pupils from the school council and five pupils from the school's peace group.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders to consider their reviews of the school and their plans for improvement. They met with the school leaders for English, phonics, mathematics, science, geography, history, teaching and learning, SEND and early years.
- The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority and spoke with a local authority adviser by telephone.
- Inspectors studied the responses from staff to a recent school questionnaire.
- Inspectors discussed the care and protection of pupils with senior staff, including the school's family support adviser. The lead inspector examined the school's record of checks on the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers to work with pupils, with the business manager and the headteacher.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sue Dymond	Ofsted Inspector
Kathy Hall	Ofsted Inspector
Sandie La Porta	Ofsted Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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