

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Austwick Church of England VA Primary School

Austwick, Lancaster, Lancashire LA2 8BN

Inspection dates:

19 November 2024

Outcome

Austwick Church of England VA 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 the family atmosphere of this small, friendly school. They learn and play happily together. Relationships are warm and caring. Pupils who join the school feel very welcome here. Older pupils look out for the younger ones. There is very little bullying. Pupils are confident that staff will listen and help them if they have any problems.

The school makes good use of its beautiful surroundings to enhance the broad and interesting curriculum. This helps pupils to rise to the school's high expectations across the curriculum. Pupils take part in a wide range of outdoor activities such as caving, rock scrambling and walking. The school also makes sure that pupils learn about the world beyond the local area. Visits to cities such as Bradford give pupils first-hand experience of other faiths and cultures. Year 6 pupils have visited their Member of Parliament in the Houses of Parliament to learn more about democracy. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils enjoy their responsibilities. The school council, well-being champions, librarians and sports leaders all make a valuable contribution to school life. The school provides various sporting and creative activities for pupils to take part in after school. These change throughout the year and include sports, film club, chess club and gardening.

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

The curriculums for mathematics and English are well established. Staff support the learning of pupils in mixed-age classes effectively. Teachers check pupils' learning and adapt lessons to address any gaps in learning. They help pupils to remember more by

revisiting prior learning. As a result, pupils achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are well supported. Adaptations such as the use of writing programs, scaffolds, prompts and learning breaks help pupils to be successful.

The school has developed and refined the wider curriculum in recent months. A broad and balanced curriculum is in place for all foundation subjects. The curriculum is taught over a three-year cycle. This helps teachers to deliver lessons and activities that meet the needs of pupils with a broad age range in each class. Staff have only recently begun to check what pupils know and remember in the foundation subjects. The school has not had time to use the information from these checks to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge and adapt the curriculum accordingly.

Teachers read to pupils for pleasure. There are a range of different books by diverse authors for pupils to choose from. Children in the early years get off to a strong start in reading. Already they recognise many of the sounds made by letters. They use this knowledge to read and spell simple words. Staff are well trained to deliver the school's chosen phonics scheme. They check pupils' understanding throughout lessons and give help where needed. This helps everyone to keep up. Pupils who need them have extra phonics catch-up sessions. Pupils who are at the earliest stage of reading, read books that are well matched to the sounds they are learning. This helps them to develop confidence and enjoy reading. However, pupils who have secured the basics of reading do not always read books that are suitably matched to their individual needs. This means they do not quickly develop fluency and understanding of what they are reading.

Pupils behave well in class and at breaktimes. Pupils take responsibility for their behaviour and remind each other of the expectations, for example not to talk when another person is talking. The school has recently introduced a new behaviour policy. This is bringing about greater consistency in the approach to behaviour management.

The personal development and well-being of pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils learn how to look after their own mental and physical well-being. The trained pupil 'well-being champions' have led a mental health well-being day. They have also planned and set up a 'well-being' area in school. Pupils learn about important aspects of life in modern Britain. These include fundamental British values, diversity and equality. They learn how to stay safe online and in the local area.

Leaders and governors are mindful of the workload associated with working in a small school. Opportunities to work in partnership with another school have helped to ease this burden. Staff appreciate the opportunities they have to share expertise with colleagues.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Systems for checking what pupils know and remember in the foundation subjects are new. The school has not yet used the information from these checks to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge and to adapt the curriculum to address these. The school should continue to establish these new systems and use the information they provide to ensure that pupils achieve as highly as possible in all of the foundation subjects.
- The reading books of pupils who have secured the basics of reading are not always well matched to pupils' current level of reading. This means that pupils do not always develop their fluency and comprehension as quickly as they should. The school should ensure that the books provided for pupils to practise their reading are suitably matched to their reading level.

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 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2019.

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	121620
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10346354
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lindsey Smith
Headteacher	Claire Pearson
Website	www.austwickprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school works in collaboration with Bentham Community Primary School. The headteacher leads both schools. This arrangement is new since the previous inspection.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not use any provider of alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England primary school within the Diocese of Leeds. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in December 2017. The next section 48 inspection will be within eight years of the previous section 48 inspection.

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.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. In addition, they met with members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors considered how the school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- 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.
- The responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, were reviewed. This included any free-text responses. The responses to Ofsted's online pupil and staff questionnaires were also considered.

Inspection team

Janet Keefe, lead inspector

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