

Inspection of Aughton Christ Church Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Long Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 5AS

Inspection dates: 30 April and 1 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 12 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 graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. 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 graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils delight in attending this exceptional school. They bask in the care and support that the school provides. This begins in the early years, where children are nurtured by warm and welcoming staff. Pupils love to learn and have a great thirst for knowledge.

The school has an unwavering ambition for pupils' achievement. Pupils proudly rise to meet these high expectations. They achieve extremely well across the curriculum.

Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), behave impeccably well. They embody the school's values in all that they do. They are extremely considerate towards each other and to staff.

Pupils spoke animatedly about the many ways in which they contribute to the life of the school and the wider community. They particularly appreciate the strong links that they have with pupils in a school in Uganda. These, and other experiences, help them to appreciate and respect people from different backgrounds and cultures to their own.

Pupils described the school as 'a family', where everyone works together in harmony to achieve their best. Parents and carers, who shared their views with inspectors, could not praise the school highly enough. They felt very much a part of this tight-knit community.

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

The school has worked with governors, staff and pupils to meticulously craft an engaging, bespoke and highly ambitious curriculum. The school makes exceptionally good use of its well-resourced grounds and the local area to bring learning to life and to foster a love of learning.

The school has ensured that staff have an in-depth knowledge of what pupils will learn and when they will learn it. Teachers ensure that pupils build on their knowledge in logical steps from the beginning of the Reception Year to the end of Year 6. Classrooms are a hive of activity and teachers' enthusiasm for learning is infectious.

Staff skilfully check that pupils understand what has been taught. They quickly address any misconceptions that pupils may have so that they develop a strong body of knowledge over time. Pupils are incredibly keen to share their learning with others.

Staff quickly and accurately identify any additional needs of pupils with SEND. These pupils benefit from highly effective support so that they confidently access the same learning as their peers. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress through the curriculum and achieve extremely well.

The school leaves no stone unturned in its quest to ensure that pupils learn to read. Pupils appreciate the many opportunities that they have to learn about high-quality books and texts by authors from a range of different backgrounds and cultures. This begins in the early years where children listen with great concentration to much-loved stories and rhymes.

Children benefit from an extremely well-implemented reading curriculum. Any struggling readers receive timely and effective support. They read confidently and fluently. Older pupils spoke in detail and with maturity about the books that they have enjoyed. They read with flair and enthusiasm, showing a strong understanding of complex themes and ideas.

Pupils live and breathe the school's values in all aspects of school life. They are exceptionally well behaved. The school makes sure that pupils and their families understand the importance of high attendance. Pupils have high attendance and love to come to school each day.

The school has developed an impressive programme of exceptionally well-designed events, trips and visits to enhance and deepen pupils' learning and to develop their character. Pupils spoke animatedly about the residential visits that they enjoy every year in key stage 2. These well-thought-out activities help to develop pupils' confidence and resilience and prepare them extremely well for later life.

Pupils avidly participate in a wide array of clubs and take on many roles in school. These activities develop their leadership skills, talents and interests to an exemplary level. Pupils also learn important life skills, such as budgeting, as part of entrepreneurial events and activities.

Pupils go out of their way to support worthy causes that are close to their heart. For example, they spoke fondly about entertaining older residents by sharing uplifting songs. They also sponsored endangered orangutans and raised money for the local children's hospital.

Governors work highly effectively with the school to ensure that pupils flourish academically, socially and emotionally. They provide their unwavering support for the wealth of activities that enhance pupils' learning and broaden their horizons. As a result, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future lives.

Staff are incredibly proud to be part of such a positive and successful team. They appreciate all that the school does to help their well-being, such as changing the marking policy to help with workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	119370
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10294319
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Heyes
Headteacher	David Kennedy
Website	www.aughtonchristchurch.lancs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 June 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school that is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The most recent section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in June 2017. The next section 48 inspection is scheduled to take place this academic year.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Some new governors have been appointed since the previous inspection, including a new chair of governors.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered other subjects on the school's curriculum. They talked to the leaders of these subjects. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work in these subjects.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors spoke with different groups of pupils to gather their views on the school and held discussions about their behaviour and learning. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtime.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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. Inspectors met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. They scrutinised a range of documents in relation to safeguarding. They also spoke with governors, staff, parents and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents provided by school leaders and staff. These included the school's priority action plan, minutes of governing body meetings, headteacher reports and the school's self-evaluation document.

Inspection team

Louise McArdle, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nicky Parkinson

Ofsted Inspector

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