

Inspection of St Barnabas CofE Primary Academy

Parkhouse Street, Openshaw, Manchester M11 2JX

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at school. They make lots of friends. Pupils told inspectors that they feel privileged to attend this school so that they can benefit from the wide range of opportunities on offer. Staff take good care of pupils. Leaders deal with incidents such as bullying swiftly and with sensitivity.

Children in the early years settle quickly into established routines. Pupils' behaviour in class and on the playground reflects leaders' high expectations and the school's values. Staff help pupils to build up confidence and independence. Pupils are polite, respectful and caring towards each other and to adults.

Leaders expect pupils to achieve well. However, these aspirations are not being met. This is because over time pupils have not benefited from an ambitious curriculum that builds their knowledge. This is particularly true for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils make great strides in their personal development during their time at the school. Pupils make the most of the wide range of activities on offer to them. These include clubs and trips that capture pupils' interest. Leaders support pupils to foster a strong sense of personal responsibility. Pupils acquire resilience and an ability to regulate their own behaviour.

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

Until recently, the curriculum that pupils followed lacked ambition and was ill-constructed. This means that many pupils in the school have gaps in their learning. This makes it difficult for them to build their knowledge in different subjects. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Leaders have begun to devise a more appropriate and aspirational curriculum for children in the early years and for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. Leaders now provide clearer guidance to teachers about what they want pupils to know and the order in which this knowledge should be taught. However, this curriculum is in its infancy and its impact in the classroom is varied.

Leaders are in the process of helping teachers to understand how to deliver the new curriculums. Their efforts have been thwarted by considerable changes to staff and leadership over recent months, coupled with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many curriculum leaders are new to their roles. They are still developing their own knowledge of their curriculum areas. They are not well equipped to support teachers in their delivery of the curriculum. In turn, this means that pupils' grasp of curriculum content is uneven.

Leaders and teachers have a clear understanding of where children and older pupils have gaps in their knowledge in reading and mathematics. They use this information well to plan what pupils need to learn next. Leaders' changes to these subject curriculums are helping pupils to catch up quickly. In other subjects, staff are still developing their understanding of what pupils need to learn. Leaders do not ensure that teachers follow their subject guidance. Consequently, progress across the curriculum is patchy.

Leaders have invested in a new phonics programme. Staff have been trained well to deliver this new programme. Leaders have also invested in new reading books that match the sounds that children and pupils are learning. However, some children and pupils across the school have not benefited from the new phonics programme. For example, many children in the early years have fallen behind where they should be in learning to read. This limits how well-prepared children are for the demands of the Year 1 curriculum.

Leaders have also provided other enticing books to enrich pupils' exposure to literature. Pupils enjoy listening to and reading a wide range of high-quality texts. They told inspectors that they look forward to reading times or selecting a book from their new library.

Leaders do not ensure that all teachers know how to identify the particular needs of pupils with SEND. In addition, leaders have not made sure that teachers understand how to support pupils with SEND to access each aspect of the curriculum. At times, some pupils with SEND lose focus or become disheartened. They do not make the progress that they are capable of as a result.

All pupils have a clear understanding of how they are expected to behave. Learning is rarely disturbed. Pupils enjoy learning.

Leaders ensure that all pupils benefit from a rich set of experiences. The activities that leaders provide broaden pupils' awareness of opportunities in their own locality and in the wider world. Leaders support pupils to develop a range of new interests.

Leaders, members of the local advisory board and staff value the support that they receive from trustees. Leaders have taken judicious action to improve pupils' quality of education. They demonstrate consideration of staff's workload when making decisions about the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff know how to keep pupils safe. Staff are alert to any potential harm that their pupils may face. They respond quickly when they notice that pupils might be at risk. Staff report concerns about pupils to leaders responsible for safeguarding in a timely manner.

Leaders are strong advocates for vulnerable pupils. Leaders liaise with a wide range of external agencies to provide effective support for pupils and their families when needed.

Leaders make sure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, especially when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is at the early stages of being implemented in most subjects. Pupils do not build up their knowledge as well as leaders expect them to. Leaders should ensure that teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils need to learn in each subject. Leaders should also ensure that teachers are trained well to deliver subject curriculums effectively.
- Some children and pupils across the school have gaps in their reading knowledge. This hinders how well they access the wider curriculum. Leaders should ensure that children and pupils who are behind with their reading are supported well to catch up quickly.
- There is inconsistency in how well curriculum leaders understand their role in improving the delivery of their subject curriculums. As a result, pupils across the school have an uneven experience of learning. Senior leaders, governors and trustees need to provide curriculum leaders with the training that they need to lead their curriculum areas effectively.
- Leaders have not ensured that staff receive the guidance that they need to meet the needs of some pupils with SEND. Some of these pupils do not access the curriculum as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that teaching staff are well trained to provide the support that each pupil with SEND needs to access 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	137866
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10210933
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of local advisory board	Nicki Clinton
Principal	Charmain May
Website	www.stbarnabas.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 and 23 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school became part of The Vantage Trust in 2018. It was previously a stand-alone academy.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- There have been a number of temporary arrangements for leadership prior to the appointment of the current principal.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school. They spoke with a group of governors and trustees, including the chair of the local governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.

- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation relating to safeguarding. This included: the school's central record of staff and visitors; staff training records; records of safeguarding and samples of the records kept on individual pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and music. They talked with the curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. They looked at samples of work from other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school. They considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils and Ofsted's online survey for staff.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kathy Nichol

Ofsted Inspector

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