

Inspection of St Agnes RC School

Thorverton Road, Cricklewood, London NW2 1RG

Inspection dates: 16–17 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils look forward to coming to school because it is an exciting and friendly place to be. They learn new knowledge and skills, steadily building on what they have been taught before. Teachers expect pupils to work well together and try their best. Pupils achieve well academically. One pupil said, 'I love my school and my teachers. They are great and are teaching me lots of new things.'

Leaders, staff and governors live and work by the school's Roman Catholic ethos. They ensure that pupils learn about other faiths and are respectful of people who have different beliefs. All pupils who responded to the survey said that staff encouraged them to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally.

Pupils learn how to behave towards one another. One parent told us that this starts in early years and helps to 'sow the seeds of confidence'. Pupils told us that pupils are seldom naughty and that bullying rarely happens. It is quickly dealt with if it does. One parent summed up this exceptional school's ethos very well indeed, commenting, 'Every child is encouraged to embrace challenges and always give their best, while respecting and taking account of the needs of others.'

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

Leaders and teachers provide an education of exceptional quality. They help pupils to achieve academic success, play their part in the school community and prepare for their place in the wider world.

Leaders help pupils to deepen their understanding. Pupils learn new facts and concepts, deepening their learning over time. Teachers plan series of lessons which include memorable experiences.

Children in early years thoroughly enjoyed playing at the water tray. They poured water down a pipe, using containers of different shapes and sizes. They kept trying. They noticed that the more water they poured the better chance they had of catching it at the other end. They apply these early skills of scientific enquiry in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Year 2 learned how different animals live. They observed different animals, finding out that their habitats varied depending on factors such as size and food. They learned about the life cycle of bees and wrote their own 'bee' information books.

In personal, social and health education, pupils in Year 5 used drama to explore different situations to deepen their understanding of 'tolerance'. This built on their learning in Year 3 about supporting other people and about diversity. In history, pupils in Year 4 visited the Old Operating Theatre Museum. They learned about the ways operations were performed in the past and nowadays. They explained that in the past people often died because of poor hygiene. Pupils in Year 6 continue to develop an understanding of consequence through learning about the second world

war and its impact on people's lives. Pupils' work is celebrated through high-quality displays and impeccably neat workbooks.

Leaders prioritise learning to read and developing a love of reading. Every day pupils in early years and Year 1 learn new sounds and practise old ones. Teachers teach lessons that are memorable and fun. Pupils enjoy games, including 'what's in the box?', and happily join in with rhyming songs. Pupils take books home regularly, reading to their special 'reading bear' if there is no one they can read with. Pupils enjoy reading books related to their current topic.

Teachers skilfully adapt activities to help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn alongside their classmates. Teaching assistants and teachers make time to support pupils with SEND to remember new knowledge and practise recently acquired skills if needed.

Teachers effectively support pupils who are disadvantaged. They take the trouble to find out if there are any gaps in knowledge, as well as finding out how they can best support these pupils.

Pupils have many opportunities to hold positions of responsibility. Play leaders help organise games and make sure that everyone has someone to play with. School council members appreciate the opportunity to represent the views of their year group.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the headteacher and her team. They told inspectors how welcome they feel and how much they value the headteacher's approachable manner.

Staff develop skills and gain experience, for example in leading different subjects. They value the training and guidance leaders give them. Leaders appreciate that staff 'go the extra mile', such as when they willingly volunteer for the Year 6 weekend residential. One member of staff told us that, 'Leaders care about both pupils and staff.'

Governors are experienced and knowledgeable. They know their community well. They support and challenge the headteacher and her team to make sure that all decisions, including the recent decision to expand the school, are taken with the needs of pupils firmly at the centre.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders provide regular training so that staff are clear about their responsibilities. Recruitment and health and safety checks are complete and securely managed.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They learn about risks, such as being bullied online. Pupils know that if they have a worry or concern they can speak to their teachers.

Leaders are vigilant about pupils' safety, spotting the earliest possible signs, for example poor attendance and neglect. Leaders work in partnership with external agencies as needed to provide early help or more intensive intervention.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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

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| Unique reference number | 101332 |
| Local authority | Barnet |
| Inspection number | 10110393 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary-aided school |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 374 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Gill Abbott |
| Headteacher | Susan O'Reilly |
| Website | stagnesrc.net |
| Date of previous inspection | October 2018 |

Information about this school

- In September 2016, the school began its expansion to have two forms of entry. Prior to this, the school was designated a 1.5 form of entry. At the time of the inspection, building work was about to start to accommodate the increased number of pupils.
- In December 2015, the school was inspected under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this inspection

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

- During the inspection, we met with the headteacher and her leadership team. We met with five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. We also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection focused deeply on reading, science, history and personal, social and health education. Through this focus, we spoke to pupils, teachers and subject leaders. We also sampled pupils' books and heard pupils read.

- Inspectors met with subject leaders, teachers, pupils and other members of staff to discuss a range of themes, including the quality of education, behaviour, safeguarding and workload.
- We met with the headteacher in her role as designated safeguarding lead. We reviewed the school's single central record and other relevant information about safeguarding and health and safety.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Adam Vincent

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Ofsted Inspector

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