

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Newchurch-In-Pendle St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Spenbrook Road, Newchurch-in-Pendle, Burnley, Lancashire BB12 9JP

Inspection date:

24 June 2025

Outcome

Newchurch-In-Pendle St Mary's Church of England Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Pauline Nightingale. This school is part of the Cidari Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Peter Ashworth, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John McClelland.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, parents and staff describe this school affectionately as 'a big family'. Pupils appreciate the safe, calm and nurturing environment that this picturesque village school provides. Strong, supportive relationships with staff help pupils to feel happy and safe.

The school is ambitious in its expectations for what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve. Pupils fulfil these expectations. They approach lessons with enthusiasm and confidently recall their prior learning.

From the beginning of the early years to Year 6, there is a friendly and purposeful atmosphere that enables pupils to focus completely on their learning. Their exemplary behaviour is underpinned by the positive relationships that pervade the school. Pupils get along well with each other and are courteous to adults. They are respectful of each other's needs and show empathy and tolerance.

Pupils are given meaningful opportunities to develop leadership skills through roles such as prefects, reading buddies and librarians. They undertake these roles with pride. Events such as a recent aspirations day help to further inspire pupils. By introducing them to a wide range of diverse professions and career possibilities, pupils develop broad horizons and high aspirations for themselves.

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

The school and trust have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious and engaging for all pupils. From the early years to Year 6, the school has mapped out the important information that pupils will learn, paying close attention to the fact that all pupils learn in mixed-age classes.

Staff receive frequent, high-quality training. They are confident in delivering the curriculum. Staff explain new ideas clearly and have a detailed understanding of each pupil. However, on occasion, the school's methods for checking pupils' learning are not effective. This can leave pupils with gaps in their understanding, making it harder for them to build on their prior knowledge and fully meet the school's high expectations.

The school prioritises reading. It is rich in books that are of high quality and ignite pupils' interests. Older pupils enthusiastically discussed their favourite books with inspectors and recounted a recent visit from an author. Staff deliver a well-organised phonics programme with confidence. They act swiftly to help any pupils who find reading more difficult. These pupils receive effective support to keep up and catch up with their peers. Most pupils become fluent, accurate readers.

From the start of the early years, staff are adept at teaching important skills such as following routines, being aware of others and taking turns. The relentless focus on building positive learning habits means that pupils are highly motivated to come to school. The school has extremely strong relationships with families. The school's work to prioritise pupils' rates of attendance has resulted in vast improvements over time.

The additional needs of pupils with SEND are identified early. Staff are skilled at adapting their delivery of the curriculum to meet the individual needs of pupils. This means that pupils get the help and support they need to learn the curriculum well. Furthermore, they are fully involved in all aspects of school life.

The school expertly promotes the personal development of all pupils. For example, pupils learn about respectful relationships and the cultural influences that shape modern Britain. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and participate in a range of sports competitions. They attend clubs such as gardening and athletics and engage in joint activities with a neighbouring village school. As a result, pupils develop independence and resilience. They are exceedingly well prepared for life beyond the classroom.

Trust leaders and governors are extremely knowledgeable and committed to the school. They understand and fulfil their statutory duties well. They hold the school to account for the quality of education it provides. Staff value the support they receive for their well-being and workload. They are proud to work at the school. They share the school's ambition to give pupils the best possible education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the assessment strategies that the school uses do not consistently identify and address misconceptions. When misunderstandings are not corrected, pupils develop insecure knowledge, making it harder to build on what they already know. The school should ensure that pupils' misconceptions are addressed effectively across all subjects and year groups.

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 to be 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 January 2020.

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	144474
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10348362
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John McClelland
CEO of the trust	Peter Ashworth
Headteacher	Pauline Nightingale
Website	www.stmarysnewchurch.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Newchurch-in-Pendle St Mary's Church of England Primary School joined the Cidari Multi-Academy Trust in May 2017.
- This Church of England school is in the Diocese of Blackburn. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character was in May 2018. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in the 2025/26 academic year.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and staff. They also met with members of the trust and the local governing board.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors observed some pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a member of staff.
- 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 inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their experiences of school.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Ruth Moran, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gareth Counce

Ofsted Inspector

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