

St Alban's Church of England Aided Primary School

URN: 116362 | Inspected: 13 January 2026

Safeguarding

standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

Achievement

Expected standard

Overall, pupils learn well and are mostly ready for the next stage of learning. Children in early years make a secure start to their learning. This helps them to have many of the key skills they will need to help them as they go into Year 1. Pupils learn their phonics sounds well. This sets them up well to become fluent readers. Writing achievement could be strengthened further with a more rigorous approach to pupils learning their early writing skills. Results in national assessments throughout key stage 2 demonstrate that the pupils broadly meet national averages by the time they leave. Pupils with a disadvantage typically achieve as well as their relevant group nationally.

Vulnerable pupils achieve well because of strong relationships and well-targeted support. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities take part fully in lessons and often show interest and confidence, especially in the wider curriculum.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have improved the content of the whole curriculum. Overall, the curriculum is well sequenced and meets the needs of the pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, at the school. It is typically taught effectively by teachers with secure subject knowledge. Pupils want to learn, and they appreciate teachers' efforts to make the learning interesting. In some subjects, such as history, the exact knowledge that teachers need to teach is very clear. However, in a few other subjects the key knowledge pupils need to learn is not taught with as much rigour and precision. Teachers are skilled, particularly in mathematics and reading lessons, at checking pupils' learning. This means they can address errors quickly, and pupils learn more effectively. Leaders continue to prioritise early reading. Staff give extra help to those who need it, for example through small-group sessions and daily reading. Leaders are also working on further improving the writing curriculum. Pupils' early writing skills, such as correct pencil grip and handwriting, are mostly taught accurately. However, occasionally pupils' pencil grips or writing postures are not routinely corrected and staff do not always model correct letter formation. This leads to slower progress, which can hamper pupils' writing stamina in older years.

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Early years

Expected standard

Leaders ensure that the curriculum in Reception is designed in response to the school's knowledge of the children and the school's context. As a result, there is a focus to address some children's limited access to outdoor space and weaker oracy skills. Staff in the Reception class work well with parents and carers, as well as external agencies when necessary, to support children effectively. Staff interactions with children are invariably positive and caring. These typically move learning on, but on occasions interactions with children, whether individually, in groups or as a class, do not extend children's thinking or deepen learning as effectively as they could. Leaders ensure that children's early foundational knowledge and positive attitudes to learning are suitably developed. As a result, most children leave the early years ready for Year 1. In Reception, children learn the early reading of sounds well and develop a genuine interest in stories. Sometimes, however, staff do not always ensure that letters are formed precisely and consistently for children to copy and learn from. Furthermore, some of the writing tasks and resources provided for children to complete do not encourage high-quality early writing as effectively as they could.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Staff know pupils well and have a clear focus on supporting those who are most vulnerable. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well organised and built on high expectations. Useful resources, such as visual prompts and wobble cushions, help pupils manage daily routines and take part in learning with more confidence. Classrooms are thoughtfully set up to meet individual needs. Staff regularly review what is working so their practice continues to improve. Leaders ensure that training is coordinated well so staff understand how to support pupils effectively. Assessment is used carefully to spot gaps and identify the right support for these pupils. Leaders use external experts' support well. This shows leaders' commitment to precision and effective coordination. Support arrangements are clear and measurable. Parents are grateful for the school's communication and involvement in reviewing the

next steps

. Leaders also understand the barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils and pupils from service families. Targeted support, including pastoral support, sensory circuits and wider therapies, helps pupils with wider barriers to learning settle and make progress.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have significant ambition for continued improvement of the school. All stakeholders recognise the positive impact of recent developments, particularly in meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged and

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vulnerable learners. Leaders have a crystal-clear understanding of the school's key strengths and areas that need to develop further. Leaders ensure that these priorities closely relate to staff training and development. The confidence of the school's middle leaders is developing significantly. This is helping them to identify strengths and

next steps

in their area of responsibility. However, as many leaders are relatively new to their roles, there is a need to embed this further to ensure that

next steps

are implemented and achieved. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They have guided the school through some leadership turbulence, providing vital support and challenge for the new senior leaders on their continued journey of school improvement. Governors engage purposefully in school life through visits and curriculum events. They use these to help monitor the quality of the school's provision. Their oversight of safeguarding, attendance and provision for vulnerable pupils is effective. Governors also take their duty to consider staff workload and wellbeing seriously. Consequently, staff are overwhelmingly positive and say they are proud to work at the school. They are grateful that leaders consider their opinions. Parents and carers are highly complimentary about the school and its leadership. As a result, the school community is supportive of the school's continued drive to make decisions in the best interests of pupils.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

At St Alban's Primary School, pupils learn in an environment where they are safe, included and well cared for. Leaders have worked hard to create this supportive culture. The school's values of love, courage and fellowship come through clearly in how pupils behave and in their attitudes to learning. Pupils trust the staff. They learn how to stay safe online and in the community and know who they can talk to for help. Pupils with vulnerabilities or pupils who are disadvantaged get the right help so they can join in with lessons and school life. The school understands pupils' individual needs and supports them well. For example, some pupils might receive 'calm start' sessions or emotional support, which helps the pupils to settle into the school day and learn. Pupils learn reading, writing and mathematics well. They love their 'learning quests' in the wider curriculum and talk excitedly about subjects such as history and geography. They remember a lot of what they have learned. Pupils are polite, welcoming and well-mannered. They behave with a deep sense of right and wrong. As a result, bullying is very rare. When issues do occur, leaders deal with them and restore confidence among pupils and families. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously. They show maturity and act as role models for younger pupils. The school's wider personal development programme enriches pupils' experiences significantly. They are specifically taught how to look after their own mental and physical health very well, develop respectful relationships and understand fundamental British values. Pupils take part in a wide range of clubs, trips, community events and experiences linked to the local area. Disadvantaged pupils benefit considerably from this. Overall, pupils thrive in a warm, ambitious and increasingly successful school. Pupils feel safe, valued and well supported to grow academically, socially and emotionally.

Next steps

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- Leaders should ensure that the writing curriculum is consistently high quality and taught well across all subjects and year groups, including in the early years.
- Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently make effective decisions about what to teach in each subject, including in the early years.
- Leaders at all levels should further develop their leadership skills so they can contribute effectively to improving the quality of provision across the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

The personal development programme is a well-constructed strength of the school. It is dynamic and responsive to the school's local context. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum reflects leaders' commitment to equipping pupils with essential knowledge for modern life, including being safe in their local area and purposeful relationships education. In this, the school understands its role in supporting families. The school acts as a community hub, working closely with external agencies and offering a wide range of home-school events that strengthen family engagement and community cohesion. Staff have received targeted training to support this, which has elevated the status of PSHE as a central part of pupils' learning. Pupils consistently demonstrate the school's values in their behaviour and interactions. They behave with integrity, show respect towards peers and adults and articulate the fundamental British values confidently. Health education is threaded through the curriculum, enabling pupils to articulate clearly how to maintain both physical and emotional wellbeing. The school provides a wide range of effective and empowering pastoral support programmes, which help reduce pupils' barriers to learning. Pupils are effusive in talking about spirituality, particularly in relation to their experiences of nature and considering how they are feeling each day. All pupils benefit from this, and those who need more specific pastoral or therapeutic support articulate the difference the help the school gives them very well. Leaders have a detailed understanding of pupils' disadvantages and vulnerabilities. From this, they coordinate provision systematically so these pupils can participate fully in school life. Additional funding is used strategically to ensure that these pupils are prioritised for enrichment opportunities. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils accessing wider opportunities is high and increasing. As a result, these pupils speak very positively about the increased confidence and sense of belonging these opportunities provide. Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders ensure that attendance is a high priority at the school. Overall attendance has increased year on year since the COVID-19 pandemic and is now close to pre-pandemic levels. Leaders know exactly which pupils are persistently absent and monitor their attendance every week. They use letters, inclusion meetings and supportive strategies, such as pastoral support, soft starts and 'Ready to Learn' sessions, to promote better

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attendance. These approaches have led to real improvements. For example, most pupils receiving more significant pastoral support now have attendance of over 95%. Behaviour across the school is calm and respectful. Leaders have recently developed the behaviour procedures, and staff are enacting the expectations consistently across the school. Pupils are polite, welcoming and show good attitudes to learning. The vast majority of pupils want to learn and maintain the orderly atmosphere of the school. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously and are strong models for younger pupils. Staff develop positive relationships with pupils. These help pupils to learn from mistakes during reflective conversations. Pupils understand the consequences of their actions and can often recognise what will happen before staff explain it. Bullying is exceptionally rare, as are discriminatory comments, and both are taken very seriously by staff when they do occur.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/st-albans-church-of-england-aided-primary-school-havant>