

# Bolton Parish Church CofE Primary School

Kestor Street, Bolton, Lancashire, BL2 2AN

**Inspection dates** 31 January–1 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- While there are signs of recent improvement, teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, over time has not been consistently good enough to ensure all pupils do as well as they can.
- Activities set to challenge pupils do not always allow them to use the skills they have learned in different situations.
- Some lessons are overly instructed by teachers and, therefore, pupils have too few opportunities to work out the answers for themselves.
- Marking does not always tell pupils clearly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils are not fully involved in checking their work against agreed criteria to ensure successful learning.
- Leaders do not always evaluate the learning when they observe lessons.
- Some leaders are new to their roles. While they understand the need to boost pupils' progress in Key Stage 2, not all subject leaders have a good understanding of achievement in their subjects.
- Senior leaders and governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but due to disruptions in staffing, the pace of improvement, until recently, has been slow.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This good progress is built on as they progress through Key Stage 1.
- The school is a warm, welcoming and harmonious community where all are valued equally.
- Pupils behave well and are considerate and polite to others. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Classroom assistants are well trained and work effectively with teachers to support pupils' learning.
- Staff carefully check and track pupils' progress, including that of the different groups of pupils.
- The recent initiatives put in place by senior staff are beginning to accelerate progress for many pupils, particularly in writing.
- The school has successfully tackled the previously below average attendance so that it is now above average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers. Two of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with members of the governing body, parents, staff, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, records of meetings of the governing body, assessment information and curriculum planning. Work in pupils' books and displays around the school were examined. The inspectors listened to groups of pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke with parents during the course of the inspection. There were no responses available to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

## Inspection team

Yvonne Mills-Clare, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jeremy Barnes

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Bolton Parish CofE is an average sized primary school.
- An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils whose parents are in the armed forces and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average, although the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Pupils from White British backgrounds form the largest single group in school, with just under half of pupils from minority ethnic groups, the majority of whom are of Pakistani heritage.
- An above average proportion of pupils speaks English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Over the past two years there have been difficulties due to staff changes and absences which are now resolved.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, is consistently good or better in order to raise standards and accelerate progress, by:
  - making sure that activities given to pupils to challenge them to do their best are focused on using the skills they have learned, in different ways
  - improving teachers' marking so that it consistently informs pupils of how well they have done, how they can improve and gives them time to respond
  - involving pupils more fully in their own and others' learning through opportunities to check the quality of the work they have completed against agreed criteria
  - not overly instructing pupils and allowing them more freedom to work the answers out for themselves.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders by:
  - developing the role of middle and subject leaders through training and support so that they are equipped to play a much fuller role in helping the school to improve
  - sharply focusing on how well pupils learn when judging the quality of lessons.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge which are below those typically expected for their age. Good teaching and support, combined with rich learning opportunities, well-organised resources and a good balance of adult-led activities and those that children are able to choose for themselves, help them to rapidly improve their language acquisition and skills. As a result, all children make good progress through the Nursery and Reception Years and enter Year 1 with the majority having reached, and some exceeded, expected levels for their age.
- By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are broadly average and beginning to show improvement, particularly in writing.
- Overall, throughout the school, pupils make expected progress from their starting points. Although they make good progress in some classes and year groups, especially lower down the school, it is not a consistent picture, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- The picture has begun to change across Key Stage 2 this year, with more pupils making better progress. School assessments in December show that more pupils have already made the progress they should and an increasing number are set to do even better.
- An emphasis by the school on promoting reading, together with a whole-school approach to the planning of writing and regular writing opportunities, including in other areas of the curriculum, has seen writing across the school emerge as a strength.
- There are no significant differences between the achievement of different groups of pupils. Well-trained and capable teaching assistants ensure that pupils are well supported, so that those for whom English is an additional language, those known to be eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs work confidently and also make expected progress. Those who are supported by the pupil premium attain broadly the same standards as those who are not eligible.
- Most pupils in Year 2 are reading at those levels at least expected for their age. Using their knowledge of phonics (the teaching of letters and the sounds they make) well, they sound out unfamiliar words and read fluently. By Year 6, pupils read with confidence and expression. They have many opportunities to read, with some older pupils helping the younger ones during set times in the day.
- The recently reorganised curriculum allows teachers to teach their topics in blocks of time. This enables pupils to embark on practical activities that they have the time to finish. This new approach offers pupils far more opportunity to consolidate the basic skills of writing and mathematics by using them across the different subjects.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Several teachers are new to the school or their classes. Although there is evidence that they are beginning to raise pupils' achievement and that more teaching is good, this has been fairly recent and so many pupils are still 'catching up' on their learning.
- Teachers generally match the tasks to pupils' abilities well, but sometimes activities set for pupils to challenge them are 'more of the same', rather than opportunities to use the skills they have learned, in different ways.
- Teachers diligently mark pupils' work, but not all marking clearly indicates how well pupils are doing or what they need to do to improve their work. Opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments are inconsistent.
- Workbooks show what teachers expect pupils to learn. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to judge their own work or that of their classmates against agreed features, in order to ensure they are successful.

- Instructions and modelling by teachers is usually effective, but occasionally pupils are over-directed. In these cases, pupils lack the time and opportunity to draw on the knowledge they have, to work out the answers for themselves.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Pupils are confident that they will receive help and support whenever it is needed. This ensures that pupils enjoy learning and have positive attitudes to their work and want to do well.
- Teachers provide good role models for pupils, this, in turn, effectively contributing to pupils' spiritual, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- The school cares very well for its pupils, making effective provision for those who need additional support. This support goes beyond lessons, pupils often sitting companionably with teaching assistants over break or lunch times, chatting or making things.
- When provided with practical activities, pupils respond well. For example, in a Year 2 class, pupils were excited to be making vehicles that moved. They enthusiastically set about the activity, using the designs they had made the day before and using the many resources to hand.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils generally enjoy their lessons and behave well. Only when lessons are less exciting, do some pupils tend to lose interest.
- Pupils are delightful. They are warm, open and friendly and were happy and confident to talk to inspectors about their school. They enjoy the many opportunities provided, the varied visits and visitors and the different clubs they can attend.
- There are opportunities for pupils to support each other, discussing and working together in the classroom and also acting as 'reading buddies' to those younger than themselves. These ensure that they develop tolerance and caring for each other. This contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders have worked determinedly and effectively to bring about improvements in attendance. Attendance is now above average, which is a noteworthy achievement, because at the last inspection it was below average. This is confirmation of pupils' enjoyment of school.
- All pupils say they feel safe in school. They are confident that adults are there to help them and care for them. Older pupils particularly are aware of the different types of bullying and all pupils say that bullying rarely happens. The school is a happy community and meets its mission statement in full 'One school for one world'. Parents agree that their children are safe and enjoy coming to school.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- The headteacher and governors, together with other leaders have a clear plan of what they need to do to move the school forward. They have demonstrated the capacity to bring about some improvements, for example, in writing, in attendance and in improving the quality of teaching and learning through training and performance management. However, given the changes in staffing over the last two years, there is still some work to be done in ensuring teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, is consistently good or better and improvements have been slow until this academic year.
- Leaders undertake a range of monitoring activities, however, some leaders are new to their roles and so have not yet fully developed an understanding of achievement in their subjects in order to be fully involved in moving the school forward.
- Regular meetings between senior leaders and staff ensure teachers are held increasingly responsible for the progress their pupils make. The progress made by individuals is then reviewed to ensure any underachievement is swiftly addressed.
- Professional development opportunities, based on performance management outcomes, together with regular classroom monitoring has been a crucial feature in improving the practice of

teachers. However, observations do not always have a sharp enough focus on how well pupils are learning, rather than on how well teachers teach the lessons.

- The school works well with parents to involve them in their children's learning, providing practical workshops to enable parents to understand how the school teaches basic skills. Too few parents responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View), but parents' views were noted by inspectors, through discussion. All parents were happy with the school and felt the school provided for their children well. The school works collaboratively with external agencies whenever necessary.
- The school's recent adaptation to its curriculum is still in the early stages of development. The new plans are beginning to provide a more practical and skill-based learning and enhance pupils' 'essential life experiences'. For example, the weekly tea party hosted by the headteacher as part of the celebration assembly. There is an increasing range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities available and enjoyed by all age groups. Links with schools in other areas, prayer walls and books with contributions by pupils, opportunities to 'put yourself in others' shoes' in a Second World War display and pupils' work around school, contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The local authority has supported the school well, providing consultant help for teaching and learning and basic skills' development.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are both supportive and challenging. They have a good understanding of how well the school is doing and how it needs to improve. This is because they have links to individual teachers and subjects and have engaged in some first-hand monitoring in the school. They have ensured that the pupil premium funding has been used effectively to provide greater opportunities for pupils, such as training for teaching assistants, additional staffing and large equipment for the playground, to improve opportunities for physical play. Procedures for safeguarding are robust and meet requirements.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105229
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	404976

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	246
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Wallington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jackie Bunyan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 333433
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