

St Matthew's CofE Primary School

Chadderton Hall Road , Chadderton, Oldham, Lancashire, OL9 9BN

Inspection dates 2–3 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- By the time they leave in Year 6, not enough pupils have made good or better progress between Years 3 and 6, especially in reading, and mathematics for them to achieve higher standards.
- There is not enough good or better teaching to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress in all classes.
- Teachers do not always give pupils work that will get the best out of them and some teachers in Years 3 to 6 do not have high enough expectations of what more-able pupils can do.
- In some classes, pupils do not have enough time in the lesson to work by themselves and practise their skills.
- Marking does not always provide clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.
- Not all leaders check the quality of teaching rigorously enough in order to bring about improvements and some subject leaders do not have the necessary skills to do this.
- Not enough use is made of the school's information on pupils' progress to set challenging targets.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are courteous and polite to adults and to each other. The school provides a caring environment and pupils feel safe and parents agree that their children feel safe.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support and challenge pupils' learning in lessons.
- School leaders and governors have taken good action to improve the school. Pupils' progress is beginning to speed up in Years 3 to 6, especially in writing.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception classes. They continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of good teaching.
- The headteacher, supported by governors, has successfully led the amalgamation of St. Matthew's with a nearby school, despite significant staffing difficulties. She has secured the determination of all staff to drive through the needed improvements to raise standards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons, including a joint lesson observation with the headteacher and two joint observations with the deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils from Year 4 and Year 6, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, members of the governing body, two representatives from the local authority and English and mathematics subject leaders.
- Inspectors listened to Year 1 and Year 6 pupils read.
- The inspectors took account of 62 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as having informal discussions with parents at the start of the day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and analysed a range of documents and policies, including the school's view of its own performance, school improvement priorities, information about pupils' progress, attendance records, safeguarding documents, performance management documents and a sample of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Mark Randall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Christine Millett	Additional Inspector
Peter McKay	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Matthew's is a larger than average-sized primary school, which has increased in size by 240 pupils since the previous inspection. In September 2012, the local authority amalgamated the nearby Chadderton Hall Junior School and St. Matthew's CofE Infant School through the closure of Chadderton Hall and the expansion of St. Matthew's. The school is on two sites.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or a statement is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order for all pupils to make at least good progress and hence raise standards in Years 3 to 6, particularly in reading and mathematics, by:
 - providing pupils with work that is at the right level and building on pupils' previous learning
 - ensuring that lessons are well planned so that pupils have enough time to demonstrate their learning and practise their skills, especially in reading and mathematics
 - raising teachers' expectations of what the most-able pupils can achieve in all subjects but especially in reading
 - ensuring that the quality of written feedback telling pupils how to improve their work matches the good quality of oral feedback pupils are given in lessons.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels to improve pupils' achievement by:
 - establishing more rigorous procedures to check the quality of teaching and how well teaching is helping pupils and groups of pupils to learn
 - making more effective use of information about pupils' progress to bring about improvement by setting challenging targets for individuals and groups
 - developing the roles and skills of subject leaders so that they can gain an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility and contribute fully to school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement is not good because not enough pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics from Year 3 to Year 6. Consequently in 2013, standards at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics were broadly average, which is not high enough considering their starting points in Year 3.
- Progress in Years 3 to 6 has not been rapid enough over time. However, evidence from lesson observations, work in pupils' books and the school's own information on pupils' progress show that, following amalgamation, progress is beginning to improve because leaders are providing stability and supporting teachers in improving their practice.
- Standards in reading are lower than in writing. Older pupils read avidly with fluency and expression; however they are not given sufficient time to apply their skills of inference and deduction by reading extended and more challenging texts.
- The rate of pupils' progress in mathematics is good in some classes but slows in others when they are not given work that helps them to do their best. They do not have enough opportunities to use their number skills to help them to solve problems independently.
- The most-able pupils are not always challenged to think for themselves and apply the skills they are learning soon enough. Consequently, not enough pupils attain the higher levels by the end of Year 6, especially in reading, and too few make better than expected progress.
- Since the amalgamation of the two schools, leaders have successfully concentrated their efforts on improving older pupils' writing, and this has accelerated the rate of their progress. This resulted in higher standards in writing than reading and mathematics in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2013.
- In 2013, the pupils in Year 6 who were entitled to additional support through pupil premium funding made less progress than that of other pupils in writing and mathematics. These pupils were a term behind their classmates in reading and over a year behind in writing and mathematics with these gaps being wider than those found nationally. The school has implemented a range of strategies to raise the achievement of these pupils and is now tracking their progress more rigorously. It is too early to see the impact of these strategies.
- Current school data shows that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar to, and sometimes better progress, than other pupils overall. This is because of the good quality support they receive from teaching assistants in lessons. This demonstrates the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities.
- Children enter school with skills and abilities typical for their age. They make good progress by the end of Reception as a result of good teaching, careful assessment and well planned activities both indoors and outdoors. They continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2 so that standards are above average at the end of the key stage.
- Younger pupils read regularly and use their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics) to read difficult words. In 2013, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the national Year 1 phonics test was higher than the national average.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good and is not helping pupils to make good progress through the school. Teaching over time in Years 3 to 6 has not enabled pupils to achieve well.
- Teachers do not always provide pupils with work that helps them to do their best. Teachers' introductions and activities are often pitched too low and too many pupils find the work easy. In a number of lessons observed, pupils were given the same tasks and did not learn well enough, especially the more able. Evidence from pupils' work also shows that pupils in some classes repeat work they have covered in previous years.

- In some classes, lengthy introductions result in pupils not having enough time to practise and develop their skills independently or work things out for themselves. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils of all abilities were required to sit and listen to the teacher explaining the features of written instructions and how to use basic punctuation. Many of these pupils could have started writing sooner; if so, they would have made better progress.
- Although teachers mark work regularly, they do not always provide clear enough guidance for pupils to follow to reach the next steps in their learning. Pupils are not given the opportunity to respond to their teachers' marking and improve their work.
- Throughout the school, teachers establish good relationships with their pupils and many provide interesting activities that capture pupils' imagination so that they work enthusiastically at their tasks.
- In the best lessons, teachers move around the classroom and use their good subject knowledge to question and challenge pupils' thinking. Furthermore, pupils are given time to be able to work things out for themselves. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, when pupils were investigating the number of diagonals found in different shapes. The teacher moved round the classroom asking questions to challenge pupils to identify and describe the types and properties of triangles they could find. Consequently, these pupils made good progress.
- Teachers plan well to ensure that teaching assistants are used to good effect. In many classes teaching assistants and other adults support and challenge pupils well, especially disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, through careful questioning and good explanations. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, these pupils were able to divide decimals as a result of the effective support given to them by the teaching assistant.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Older pupils show very positive attitudes to learning. They behave very well in lessons, listen attentively and get on with their work straight away. However, younger pupils can, occasionally, lose concentration and become restless when they have to sit and listen to their teachers for too long before getting on with their work.
- Behaviour around school and at playtimes is good. Pupils play happily together with 'play buddies' ensuring that all pupils have someone to play with. Pupils are well supervised at these times.
- Pupils are extremely polite and courteous both to adults and each other. They work together well in lessons and are keen to help each other to do their best.
- Pupils say that they feel safe because they are well cared for by their teachers. They have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and all agree that the rare incidents of bullying are dealt with very quickly. School records confirm this.
- Almost all of the parents who completed the online questionnaire (Parent View) agree that their child feels safe in school and that behaviour is good.
- Pupils attend school regularly and attendance is average. Almost all pupils arrive to lessons on time and are eager to learn demonstrating that they like school and feel happy there.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The leadership and management of the school require improvement because, although leaders check the quality of teaching, it is not with sufficient rigour to bring about consistently good teaching and progress across the school. The checking on the quality of teaching does not focus strongly enough on how well teaching is helping pupils to learn.
- Subject leaders' skills are underdeveloped. Some are new to their roles and do not yet have a clear view of strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. Consequently, they are not contributing fully to improvements in their subjects.
- Leaders gather information about pupils' progress regularly and are now beginning to analyse it

effectively to enable them to gain an accurate view of how much progress different groups of pupils are making. However, they have not yet used this information to set challenging targets for individual pupils or groups to raise achievement.

- However, there is evidence that the actions of school leaders are beginning to have a positive impact in improving teaching and achievement. For instance, in Years 3 to 6, the school's strong focus on improving writing over the past year has successfully resulted in the quality of pupils' writing improving, and in Years 1 and 2, pupils' good achievement has been maintained and improved during the changes caused by amalgamation.
- The headteacher has a clear view of how successful the school can be. Following the amalgamation she has been successful in uniting staff from both schools despite some staffing difficulties. She has used the different strengths of each school to best advantage, and set in motion good plans to improve pupils' achievement starting with writing. Her commitment to further improvement is now shared by all.
- Safeguarding procedures, including those related to child protection, are extremely thorough and ensure that all pupils are kept safe.
- The curriculum is balanced and exciting and promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. A range of visits are used successfully to make pupils keen to learn, for example, a visit to the theatre to watch 'The Lion King' very effectively captured pupils' interests as they began their work on Africa. Partnerships with local schools provide pupils with opportunities to be involved in a range of sporting activities such as cross country.
- The school has made good plans to use the new primary school sport funding to appoint a sports development leader who will work alongside teachers to develop their skills and expertise in teaching physical education. Pupils will therefore be taught a wider range of sports to better promote healthy lifestyles.
- The local authority was supportive to the headteacher and governors during the amalgamation.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have successfully managed the amalgamation of the two governing bodies of St. Matthew's Church of England School and Chadderton Hall School, and have brought two different schools together. Although at an early stage of establishing a strong relationship with all the staff in the new school, they know the school's strengths and weaknesses well, through detailed reports from the headteacher. They check on how well pupils perform including those for whom the pupil premium provides support. They know about the quality of teaching and how this is linked to teachers' pay. They decide whether teachers should be rewarded with salary increases and set targets for the headteacher's performance.

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

Unique reference number	105709
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	424593

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sybil Lamb
Headteacher	Patricia Shepherd
Date of previous school inspection	14 December 2007
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