

Middleton Parish Church School

Springfield Road, Middleton, Manchester, Lancashire, M24 5DL

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress across the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those eligible for support from pupil premium funding.
- Teaching is good. Teachers know pupils well and have high expectations. The teaching of writing has improved since the last inspection and this has raised achievement.
- Better systems have been introduced to monitor pupils' progress and these have helped to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- Pupils receive good support and help when they need it.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They get on well with their teachers and with each other and feel safe in school.
- School leaders, including governors, have a clear idea of how well the school is doing and where it needs to improve. They have secured improvements to teaching and achievement.
- Parents are very supportive of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in reading is not as strong as in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always ensure that all pupils are consistently challenged to reach the highest levels and make the best possible progress, especially the most-able pupils.
- Teachers do not always ask challenging questions that lead to pupils having a deeper understanding of their work.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff do not always plan enough focus and structure to learning activities, and do not share their observations enough to identify the next steps in children's learning.
- There are too few opportunities for teachers to share best practice within the school, or to observe outstanding teaching in other schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons or part lessons, including one joint observation with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders and managers and with four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also met a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors held discussions with two groups of pupils and spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils were completing in lessons and in their books over time. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents. These included recorded data concerning pupils' current achievement, the quality of teaching and the school development plan. Inspectors also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. Minutes of governing body meetings and the school adviser's reports were also considered.
- Inspectors considered 30 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and 31 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Only four Year 6 pupils were present during the inspection as the rest were taking part in a residential outdoor activities visit.

Inspection team

Robert Birtwell, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector
Jennifer Firth	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is expanding from one-form entry to two-form entry.
- Pupils are taught in nine single-year-group classes from Reception to Year 6.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and children from service families) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is approximately average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement so that an even greater proportion of pupils makes more than the expected rate of progress by:
 - ensuring that work is always closely matched to all pupils' needs, particularly the most-able pupils, so that they are consistently challenged to reach the highest levels and make the best possible progress
 - improving pupils' attainment and progress in reading so that they at least match those in writing and mathematics.
- Improve teaching and learning across the school by:
 - making sure that teachers always ask challenging questions that deepen pupils' understanding
 - sharing existing best practice more widely across the school and providing more opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding teaching in other schools.
- Improve teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring that there is always a clear focus and structure to learning opportunities in all activities
 - making sure that staff share observations more effectively to identify the next steps in children's learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are generally below those expected for their age. They make good progress overall and are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1 with standards that are much closer to the national average.
- Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 2, they attain broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2. Achievement in English and mathematics has been rising for the past two years and is now above average. In 2013, all Year 6 pupils made at least the expected rates of progress in writing and mathematics. The proportion who made more-than-expected progress was above average in writing and average in mathematics. In reading, pupils' achievement and progress were just below average.
- The school's tracking information shows that pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school, whatever their starting points. This includes pupils who are eligible for support through pupil premium funding and those who are disabled or have special educational needs. This is supported by inspection evidence from lesson observations and work in pupils' books.
- Although pupils make good progress, the proportion who make better-than-expected progress could be greater, especially for the most-able pupils.
- Reading is taught effectively. Pupils have regular opportunities to read and teachers and teaching assistants make sure that pupils have a good knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics check was above average in 2013. Although pupils do well in reading, their progress is not as strong as in writing and mathematics.
- Since its last inspection, the school has focused on improving pupils' writing skills. Pupils have opportunities to write in a range of styles in different subjects and better teaching has raised attainment and improved progress.
- Pupils' basic skills in mathematics are secure and they apply and use these skills effectively. As a result they make good progress in mathematics across the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Their needs are accurately identified and they receive effective support either individually in lessons or in small groups. As a result their achievement matches that of other pupils.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make the same good progress as other pupils. Test results at the end of 2012 showed that the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was approximately two terms behind that of other pupils in English and mathematics. However, their achievement strengthened in 2013 and this gap is closing. This shows the school's successful commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good across the school. Pupils made good progress in the vast majority of lessons seen during the inspection, and work in pupils' books confirms that teaching has been good over time.
- There are good relationships between teachers and pupils. Teachers know pupils well and have high expectations. They use praise effectively to motivate and engage pupils. As a result pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well.
- In the best lessons, where pupils make the most rapid progress, work is carefully matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils and there is a good pace and challenge to learning. Teachers ask questions to check pupils' understanding and to challenge them to deepen their understanding.
- For example, in an English lesson, pupils were planning a piece of writing using a historical

setting. The teacher ensured that all pupils were challenged via skilful questioning and all groups had clear learning objectives. The pupils were excited by the task and responded very well. As a result they all made at least good progress.

- Where teaching is less strong, teachers ask questions that test and reinforce pupils' knowledge rather than challenging them to deepen their understanding, and work is less well matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils. The most-able pupils in particular are not always given work which is challenging enough to enable them to reach the highest levels and make the best possible progress. In these lessons, the pace of pupils' learning is slower.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. However, in some activities, there is lack of focus and structure to learning and staff do not share observations and identify the next steps in children's learning enough. This means that work does not always meet the needs of individual children closely enough and opportunities are missed to extend and promote children's learning.
- Pupils' books show a good quantity of work covering all subjects. Teachers encourage pupils to take pride in their work and ensure that it is well presented. Teachers mark work well and there is a good balance of praise and suggestions for improvement. As a result pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. They use a range of methods to provide extra help and support for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs and those who are eligible for pupil premium funding. This includes extra support within classes and individual or small group teaching outside the classroom. This ensures that any gap in achievement between these groups and other pupils is closing.
- While there is very good practice within the school, there are too few opportunities for teachers to share this best practice or to observe outstanding teaching in other schools.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school. They enjoy their work and cooperate well with each other and with adults. Pupils work hard and want to do well. Attendance has been improving and is now above average.
- Pupils feel safe in school and well cared for. They have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when using the internet. They understand the different forms bullying can take, including name-calling and cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is very rare in school, but that the school sorts it out quickly if it occurs.
- School behaviour logs show that instances of poor behaviour are rare and are dealt with effectively. The school can demonstrate improvements for the few pupils who have shown challenging behaviour at times.
- Pupils take on responsibility in areas such as the school and eco council or as buddies for younger pupils. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Almost all parents who completed the Parent View survey thought that their children were safe and well looked after in school, and that behaviour was good. Inspection evidence confirms this.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders and managers, including governors, know how well the school is performing and are committed to making it better still. They have ensured that the key issues identified at the previous inspection have been addressed, and have accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for improvement. As a result there have been improvements in the quality of teaching and achievement. There is a positive atmosphere throughout the school.
- Better tracking systems now check pupils' progress more regularly and accurately. Any underachievement is tackled by providing extra help if pupils need it, and any gaps in

performance between different groups of pupils are closing. This ensures that the school promotes equal opportunities for all pupils effectively.

- Information on pupils' progress is considered when judging teachers' performance. It is also taken into account when making decisions about any proposed increases to teachers' pay.
- There are effective systems to check on the quality of teaching. These identify where further support or training are needed. Coaching and mentoring have improved the quality of teaching, especially in writing, and this has led to a rise in pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides a range of learning opportunities for all pupils. It is enhanced by a range of activities, trips and visits, and there are strong links to the local church. For example, almost all Year 6 pupils were out of school during the inspection on a residential visit to an outdoor activity centre. The curriculum promotes positive behaviour and contributes to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is using the new primary school sport funding to improve the quality of physical education in the school by bringing in specialist teachers from the local sports partnership to teach lessons, train staff and improve participation in extra-curricular sport.
- The school is in the second year of a major expansion in numbers, and there are good plans in place to ensure that this proceeds smoothly and successfully.
- The local authority has provided effective support in reviewing the performance of the school and the headteacher, and has contributed to identifying and delivering training for staff and governors.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the school has improved since the last inspection. Governors are now better informed about pupils' achievement and the quality and leadership of teaching and learning and have a good overview of performance data. They understand how well the school is working and where it needs to improve. They hold the school to account more effectively now by asking challenging questions and by setting ambitious performance targets for the headteacher. They ensure that information about pupils' progress is taken into account when making decisions about teachers' pay. They know how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact it is having on raising achievement. They ensure that the finances are well managed and that the school meets its statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding.

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	105821
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	426095

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	263
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Feist
Headteacher	Jacqui Potts
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2011
Telephone number	0161 6430753
Fax number	0161 6430753
Email address	office@middletonparishce.rochdale.sch.uk

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