

# Milnrow Parish Church of England Primary School

St James Street, Milnrow, Rochdale, OL16 3JT

**Inspection dates** 6–7 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Very clear leadership from the headteacher, with good support from the governing body, has produced an enthusiastic staff team who work together very well in this improving school.
- Good leadership and management at all levels have improved the quality and consistency of teaching and pupils' achievement, so both are good.
- Behaviour has improved and is now consistently good in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils enjoy school and they have good relationships with each other and with staff. They feel safe and happy here. This is reflected in their above average attendance figures.
- Progress and the standards that pupils reach are particularly good in mathematics.
- Boys and girls from different backgrounds all make similarly good progress.
- Progress in reading is improving rapidly because of the much better start pupils make in the early classes in developing their basic skills.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, so not enough is outstanding to make pupils' achievement outstanding. Aspects that are strengths of many lessons are occasionally weaknesses in others.
- Progress in writing, while good, is not as consistent as in mathematics and reading.
- Weaknesses remain in pupils' use of grammar and punctuation, and in their writing in subjects other than English.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed substantial parts of 14 lessons, two of these as joint observations with the headteacher. Several shorter visits were also made to classes, for example, to observe the teaching of reading.
- The views of 22 parents who responded to the online survey (Parent View) were taken into account, as were the results of the school’s own recent questionnaires to gauge parental opinion. An inspector also spoke informally with a number of parents in the school playground.
- Questionnaires from 25 members of staff were checked.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff, groups of pupils, six members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority. Several pupils were heard to read.
- The team analysed a range of documents, particularly those relating to keeping pupils safe and examined data about the progress of pupils across the school.
- Samples of pupils’ work were examined.
- Inspectors also observed pupils in assemblies, at break-times and around the school.

## Inspection team

Steven Hill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Zahid Aziz

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average sized primary school, but numbers have risen in the last year.
- Most pupils are White British, with a below average proportion coming from a variety of different minority ethnic groups. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are entitled to support from the pupil premium is a little above average. The pupil premium is extra funding provided to schools to support the education of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families, and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion who are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Since the last inspection, there have been considerable changes to staffing, including the appointment of a new headteacher in April 2012.
- There is a privately run breakfast and after-school club that operates from the school premises. This is inspected and reported upon separately.
- 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?

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write at length in subjects other than English, and maintaining the same high expectations of quality in those other subjects that are clear in their English books
  - reiterating and reinforcing the improvements made through the recent focus on pupils' skills in grammar, sentence construction, and punctuation.
- Increase the amount of teaching that is outstanding by ensuring that teachers consistently:
  - ensure a good pace to learning is maintained throughout lessons
  - check the progress of all groups and individuals
  - ensure that work is always at the right level for all groups of pupils
  - mark all written work to the same excellent standard that is evident in some of the pupils' books.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills that vary considerably between individuals and from year to year but which, overall, are lower than those typically expected for their age. They make good progress and go into Year 1 with standards that are generally in line with national averages, and last year was above average.
- In the last year, progress has improved at Key Stages 1 and 2 to be consistently good. There is no significant difference between the progress of boys and girls or between pupils of different backgrounds. Standards rose last year at the end of each key stage.
- Progress was particularly good in mathematics, which has been the strongest subject in the school for some time. Progress was also good across the school last year in reading and writing, but was not as consistent in writing as in other subjects. Nevertheless, a focus on improving grammar, punctuation and spelling last year meant that pupils in Year 6 scored significantly above average in the national tests.
- The quality and quantity of pupils' writing in different subjects is often not as good as it is in their English books.
- Reading is improving because pupils have a better start in early reading skills because of improvements in the teaching of phonics (how the letters in words represent different sounds). Scores in the national phonics screening check increased to be well-above average. By Year 6, pupils are enthusiastic and fluent readers, with clear preferences about the books they enjoy.
- Pupils who are entitled to the pupil premium make the same good progress overall as their classmates, and attain similar standards, although this varies from year to year and between subjects. Such pupils who finished Year 6 in July 2013, for example, were about a term behind the other pupils in reading and mathematics, but were a term ahead of them in writing. These gaps were much lower than those in the previous year, and lower than those found nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They receive work that is tailored to their particular needs, and are given extra support from skilled adults. Those who have behavioural difficulties improve their behaviour over time and go on to achieve more as a consequence.
- Pupils of high ability do well, and they are often given harder work and challenged to reach high levels. This was shown by a number of pupils reaching the high Level 6 in national tests in Year 6 this year for the first time.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. This is confirmed by the school's own monitoring of lessons, by work in pupils' books, and by the good progress that pupils made in each year group over the course of the last school year. During the inspection, teaching observed was consistently good with some that was outstanding.
- Teachers prepare interesting work for pupils and have good relationships with them. Lessons are managed well and routines well established, so pupils know what is expected of them, and arrive ready to learn. A positive working atmosphere and a sense of enjoyment of learning characterise lessons.
- Teachers make good use of the much-improved assessment information about pupils' attainment to provide work at the right level for each pupil, so that it is challenging but manageable. Pupils in Year 6 emphasised that teachers were very good at giving them work at a suitable level of difficulty. Occasionally however, the tasks that teachers prepare can be a little too easy or too hard for a few pupils, whose progress can then slow for a time.
- Excellent use is often made of skilled extra adults to provide different experiences for pupils of different abilities, so that they get extra help if they need it, and are challenged to do their best. A strength of many lessons is the way in which all adults keep a check on how everyone is

doing, intervening to correct misconceptions, or to challenge pupils to refine their work. Occasionally, this is not done frequently enough in the lesson, so that progress slows for a few pupils, until adults notice their problems and respond to address them.

- Most lessons have good pace so that a lot of ground is covered in the time available. Occasionally, however, the pace of lessons can slow for some pupils, particularly when pupils change activities and take time to settle to the new task.
- Teachers successfully use a variety of strategies to involve all pupils and to maintain their interest. For example, pupils are given good opportunities to discuss ideas together, which help them to organise their thinking, develop their collaborative skills, and improve their speaking and listening skills.
- Pupils' work is marked systematically and pupils are clearly told what they have done well, what could have been better, and frequently given pointers to help them with future work. In the best marking, pupils are given extra examples to stretch their understanding or to practise things they have found difficult. In some books, pupils are given follow-up questions, but these are sometimes too general for pupils to reply to in a meaningful way.
- Teachers generally have high expectations of both pupils' work and behaviour and pupils respond well to these. Although teachers insist on high quality work in pupils' writing in their English books, they are not as rigorous when pupils write in other subjects. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write at length other than in English lessons.

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

- Pupils are enthusiastic learners and take a pride in their accomplishments. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average attendance. They try hard and concentrate well in class, listening attentively to their teachers or to each other. They work well in collaboration with each other and get on conscientiously if they are required to work independently.
- Pupils have a good understanding of their own learning. Older pupils know the level they have reached, how much progress they have made, and their target levels for the end of the year. They work hard and are keen to do their best.
- Behaviour is good; a view supported by most parents as well as by pupils. In conversation, a group of pupils in Year 6 said how much behaviour has improved since the headteacher introduced clear systems of sanctions and rewards. While acknowledging that there is still occasional misbehaviour, they said that adults deal with it quickly when it occurs.
- Pupils have been taught about different kinds of bullying and say that instances are infrequent. They understand what to do if there are problems and say that the few instances they can recall, such as name-calling or teasing, were quickly dealt with by staff and have not been repeated.
- Pupils are polite, cheerful and friendly. Relationships are positive between boys and girls regardless of background, and with adults. Pupils greatly value the support they get from adults and their classmates. They explained that they have rights which have to be balanced against responsibilities, and they take their own responsibilities seriously. Older pupils enjoy the help they are able to give to younger children in particular.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and have learned how to help to keep themselves safe. They have learned about a variety of aspects of this and Year 6 remembered many elements of what they had learned on a safety course with Crucial Crew. They are very confident that staff will look after them.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The very clear leadership of the headteacher has established a shared ambition and sense of direction for the school despite many changes in staff. A focus by all on improving teaching and hence pupils' achievement has been very successful.

- Regular monitoring of lessons, of planning and of pupils' books has enabled advice to teachers to help them improve their practice, and the results are clearly shown in the better quality of teaching in school.
- Teachers are held to account for their performance and for the achievement of pupils. Data is used well for this, a major improvement since the last inspection. Teachers successfully use data to ensure pupils are given work at the right level, to identify any who are not making the progress they should, and to intervene to help such pupils to catch up.
- Teachers' performance is managed well. They are given clear targets to reach and supported in this with good opportunities for further training. There are new, clear systems in place to ensure that high quality performance is suitably rewarded with progression along the pay scale and any issues of underperformance are addressed effectively.
- Leaders at all levels, including subject leaders and those responsible for particular age groups, have good systems to share information and work together very successfully to improve practice and raise pupils' standards. The regular opportunities to work alongside each other in the classroom have been very effective in sharing and spreading good practice.
- A focus on improving the teaching of reading, and phonics in particular, has raised standards in this subject. A similar focus on improving pupils' skills in grammar and punctuation was very effective for last year's Year 6 pupils in particular, but there are still inconsistencies in these areas across the age groups. The school is addressing these.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good and is well managed. It is reflected in the good progress that these pupils make. However, the school is still developing systems to be able to measure accurately the effectiveness of the different intervention programmes.
- The school has a wide-ranging curriculum that makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The provision to help pupils understand the range of cultures beyond the immediate locality has improved, particularly in studying other religions. A new thematic approach to different subjects is enthusing pupils, but not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length in subjects other than English.
- The school has spent pupil premium funding well with a judicious mix of extra academic and social support targeted at the specific needs of eligible individuals and groups. This includes helping the most-able pupils to attain high standards. The success of this spending is illustrated in the good progress that this group of pupils make, and in how much the gap between their achievement and that of their classmates closed last year. It also reflects the school's commitment to ensuring every pupil is given an equal opportunity to reach their potential.
- The new funding for physical education and sport is being used well. Much has been spent on specialist teaching and coaching, but there is an emphasis on using these sessions as training for school staff, as well as providing exciting opportunities for pupils. This means that the improvements will be sustainable in the long term.
- The local authority provided good, intensive support to the school after the last inspection to support senior staff in implementing changes. As the school has become more effective, and the new leadership team more established, this support has been reduced appropriately to that of a quality assurance role.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have good systems to understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement, including the performance of teachers, and how this links to their pay. They use data well to understand pupils' achievement. They are ambitious for the school and have supported the new headteacher robustly in making changes to improve teaching and the progress pupils make. They provide a good balance of support and challenge in holding the school to account. Procedures have been improved since the last inspection and all safeguarding requirements are met. Governors have worked extremely well with the headteacher to obtain extra funding from various sources, particularly the Diocese, and they make sure funding is spent effectively. This is clearly reflected in the major improvements to the physical environment, to computer equipment, and in the large number of skilled support staff who make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

## 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>	105823
<b>Local authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	426096

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	191
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Harrison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lindsey Kirkham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 643973
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	office@milnrowparishce.rochdale.sch.uk



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