

Burnley St Stephen's CofE Voluntary Aided Primary School

Woodgrove Road, Burnley, Lancashire, BB11 3EJ

Inspection dates

17–18 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Pupils make average progress but not enough make good progress, particularly in writing.
- Teaching requires improvement because it does not always challenge pupils particularly the most able.
- Teachers do not always give pupils precise guidance on how to improve their work.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing skills across a range of subjects.
- Plans put in place to improve the school are not detailed enough to help leaders to measure how well the school is doing.
- The school's tracking system does not allow leaders to follow the progress of groups of pupils closely enough.
- Senior and middle leaders do not check the impact of their actions regularly enough. As a result, teaching and pupils' progress are not improving quickly enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The progress pupils make in reading is good and most reach the expected standard for their age.
- The quality of some teaching is good.
- The behaviour of pupils is good and they feel safe. They enjoy school and have very good relationships with adults in the school.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders, including governors, are passionate about their school and recognise the need for changes to be made.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 15 lessons, including one observation carried out jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors also observed assembly and listened to pupils reading. They looked at examples of pupils' work and observed pupils at lunchtime and break times.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff, members of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority. They also spoke with some parents as they brought their children into school.
- The inspectors took account of the school's own survey of parents and pupils and 21 questionnaires returned by staff. There were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to produce a report.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' current progress across the school, the school's view of its own effectiveness, and how the school checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspectors checked the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and looked at records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Emma Jackson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Chris Maloney

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Stephen's is a slightly smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below the national average.
- The proportion of children supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average. This is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Almost exclusively the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes to the teaching staff. A reorganisation of the senior leadership team has recently taken place.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better across the school in order to ensure that pupils make good progress, especially the most able, and in writing, by:
 - teachers consistently planning work that is suitably challenging for pupils of all abilities, particularly the most able
 - teachers using knowledge of how well pupils are learning in order to move pupils on to harder work more quickly so no learning time is wasted
 - ensuring teachers give precise guidance on how pupils can improve their work and given more opportunity to do so
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their writing skills across all subjects.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - ensuring the outcomes of actions to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are clearly measurable
 - ensuring sufficient opportunities for senior and middle leaders to check on the success of actions to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress
 - ensuring the systems used by the school to track the progress pupils make provide clear evidence on how well different groups of pupils are learning so that decisive action can be taken swiftly to bring about improvement
 - ensuring that teachers are held more accountable for all pupils making good rather than expected progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Most children enter school with skills and knowledge below those typically expected for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, while they make reasonable progress, too few of them make good progress and as a result, they enter Year 1 with skills that are still below those expected for their age.
- The progress of pupils is uneven across the school. In Key Stage 1 pupils generally make good progress in reading and mathematics, but in writing too few pupils make good progress. In Key Stage 2, progress in reading continues to be good but pupils do not make the progress they should in writing. In some year groups, pupils do not make the good progress of which they are capable.
- Attainment in reading and mathematics is better than in writing. As a result of some good teaching, particularly in Years 5 and 6, pupils make good progress in these subjects. However, the challenge for the most able pupils is not always high enough to allow them to make the rapid progress that they should.
- While attainment at the end of Year 6 in mathematics and reading is broadly average, attainment in writing is below average.
- There are inconsistencies in the rate of pupils' progress in different subjects and across different year groups. This is because the quality of teaching is inconsistent and the school is not always aware of how well all groups of pupils are doing.
- At the end of Year 6, the attainment of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is lower than their non-eligible peers in reading, writing and mathematics. There is a variable pattern in other year groups, as a result of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Although gaps are wider in some year groups than in others, by the end of Year 6, these pupils are only half a term behind their peers, indicating that gaps between their achievement and others in the school are closing.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is inconsistent. However, the school has a number of successful support strategies in place that help improve the achievement of these pupils.
- Standards in reading are improving. The proportion of pupils likely to achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds that letters make) check is rising. This is as a result of successful actions taken to improve the teaching of phonics.
- While the school is successful in promoting equality of opportunity in some year groups, the inconsistent picture of progress means that this requires improvement overall.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, the quality of teaching is too variable and as a result, not enough pupils make good progress, especially in writing.
- Some teaching is good, but this is inconsistent across year groups and across subjects. It does not always demand enough of the most able pupils who sometimes find work too easy. Consequently, progress is uneven and across the school teaching requires improvement.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly; however, they do not always provide sufficient advice on how pupils could improve their work and give them time to do so. Also, not all teachers insist on work being well presented.
- Good relationships are evident across the school. Pupils enjoy school and say that many lessons are interesting. Classrooms are well organised and prompts are available to help pupils with their work.
- Overall, teaching assistants and teachers work well together as a team. However, on occasion, teaching assistants are not always used effectively to help pupils at the start of a lesson.
- Teachers do not always check pupils' progress in lessons often enough to ensure that they are

working at the right level.

- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in literacy and across a range of other subjects.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are keen and eager to learn. They enjoy talking about their learning and were very excited about their bug hunt. Recent changes to the indoor classroom have allowed children to learn and play more effectively. However, in the outdoor area children's learning is not as strong as indoors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite, well mannered and play well together. Pupils' have good relationships with each other and adults in the school.
- Pupils, parents and staff say that behaviour is good. Occasionally, one or two pupils find it difficult to concentrate on their work in lessons, but teachers manage this well so that learning is not affected.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given, for example as members of the school council, representing school teams or fund-raising for a number of charities. They also enjoy taking part in a range of clubs, including the Jaffa club and playing the saxophone. These all help to promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is reinforced well in lessons and assemblies.
- Pupils look after each other very well and play an active role in the community. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils took part in the town's First World War commemorations. One governor describing the school said, 'This school is a family and has very much been so for a long time'.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel very safe because teachers and other adults look after them very well.
- Pupils agree that bullying is rare and the school's behaviour records confirm this. Older pupils understand that there are different forms of bullying and know that they can talk to adults who would always respond to any concerns.
- Pupils' attendance is above average and they say they enjoy coming to school. Leaders work diligently to ensure parents understand the importance of their children attending school regularly.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, which have led to pupils not making good progress in all year groups, especially in writing.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors are passionate about the school. However, they recognise that further improvements are needed to ensure that pupils make better progress than currently.
- Plans for improvement are not robust enough to allow leaders to measure fully accurately how well the school is doing. The way in which the school tracks the progress of groups of pupils lacks some rigour and as a result, does not always clearly identify teaching which requires improvement.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic about the subjects that they lead; however, they are not fully involved in checking on the progress of pupils or taking actions to improve pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching.
- The newly reorganised senior leadership team has put in place a number of actions to allow it to check more closely on pupils' achievement. However, these have not had time to help bring about rapid improvements in pupils' progress.
- Teachers' performance is regularly checked, and some improvements in overall teaching quality are evident. However, targets to enable teachers to strengthen their teaching are not always

linked to achieving good progress for pupils.

- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities and particularly enjoy many visits out of school, including to museums and other places of interest. These activities all enrich the curriculum well.
- Sport is promoted extremely well in the school and the primary sports funding is allocated carefully to ensure that all pupils have a chance to participate in a range of sporting activities. The school has a number of very successful teams.
- The local authority has offered a range of support, which has recently become more effective. This has included an audit, which allowed leaders to identify ways in which they could further strengthen the leadership in school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly committed to the school and in making it the best it can be. Governors have a range of skills and regularly attend training, both of which allow them to carry out their duties at least satisfactorily, including meeting safeguarding and financial statutory requirements. They are increasingly asking challenging questions and hold the school to account for its actions. The governing body is developing its understanding of pupils' performance data and understanding that any increases in salary for teachers must depend on how effective teachers are. Governors understand how the pupil premium is used and that it is making a difference to the achievement of those pupils who are supported by this funding.

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	119486
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	444066

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	189
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	P Lombard
Headteacher	Ian Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2009
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