

Leyland St James' Church of England Aided Primary School

Slater Lane, Leyland, Preston, Lancashire, PR26 7SH

Inspection dates 1–2 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is a warm, welcoming and highly inclusive school where pupils are valued as individuals. It is a happy community where pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above average attendance.
- From starting points below those typical for their age, pupils make good progress so that when they leave Year 6, they reach at least expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children get off to a flying start in the early years. The excellent outdoor area is used to provide exciting activities matched to their needs and abilities.
- Teaching over time is typically good and is sometimes outstanding. Work is engaging and motivating and pupils learn without fear of failure.
- Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs are exceptionally well provided for with very special support which helps them learn.
- The support provided by highly skilled and dedicated teaching assistants makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well and are always polite and considerate. Their safety and care is of the highest importance. Pupils are very proud of their school and are eager to learn.
- The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, is highly ambitious for the school and keen to ensure that every child does as well as they possibly can.
- Governors are extremely knowledgeable about the school, providing strong support and challenge to drive improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching does not yet result in outstanding achievement for pupils.
- Pupils are not always given work which challenges them enough, especially the most able.
- Pupils are not always given the opportunity to respond to teachers' marking in order to improve their work.
- The leadership and management skills of middle leaders are not yet developed sufficiently well to have enough impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupil achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons, including one observation carried out jointly with the headteacher. The inspection team observed a number of small groups of pupils working with teaching assistants and inclusion arrangements set up jointly with the local authority's admission team.
- Inspectors heard pupils reading, looked at pupils' workbooks and observed pupils at lunchtime and during break times.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also spoke to some parents as they brought their children to school.
- The inspectors took account of 15 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own survey of parents' views and seven questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's most recent data on pupils' progress and attainment across the school, the school's own view of its effectiveness and its plans for improvement, minutes of the governing body and information related to checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Inspectors checked the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and looked at records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Gillian Burrow, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christine Potter

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a slightly smaller than average-sized primary school.
- It is a Church of England Voluntary Aided school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, who are eligible for the pupil premium, is below average (pupil premium is additional funding for pupils 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.
- There is a privately funded nursery setting situated within the school building which shares the early years outdoor area with the school. The nursery is subject to a separate inspection and the last report is on the Ofsted website. Before- and after-school clubs are also organised by a private provider.
- St James' is a Forest School.
- Since the previous inspection the headteacher has been seconded, full time for two terms and part time for the summer term to support another school in the local authority's admissions team and an arrangement has been made with the local authority to set up short-term inclusion support within St James' for a small number of pupils from other schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding in order to further raise achievement, by making sure that:
 - all pupils, particularly the most able, are challenged to reach the highest standards they are capable of
 - pupils consistently have the opportunity to respond to the advice given through the marking of their work so that they are able to learn from their mistakes
 - the outstanding practice which already exists in the school is shared more fully
 - middle leaders have fully developed skills to help further improve teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is passionate about the school and committed to ensuring that every child is nurtured and supported to achieve their very best. She is supported well by ambitious senior leaders who share her vision and commitment. Staff feel valued and are keen to develop their skills further and do the very best for the pupils.
- Actions since the last inspection have helped drive improvements in teaching and achievement and leaders know what they need to do next to improve the school further.
- Although there are good systems in place and senior leaders check on the quality of teaching, not enough teaching is yet outstanding to ensure that progress is consistently strong over time. Training is linked well to need, but staff do not have enough opportunities to observe the outstanding practice that exists in this school and other local schools.
- Pupils' progress is carefully tracked. Regular, closely monitored assessments of pupils' progress ensure that staff quickly pick up on pupils who are not doing as well as they should. Special help is put in place to support these pupils and the school is quick to take advice and support from other professionals.
- Senior leaders monitor the school's performance regularly. The role of middle leaders needs to be developed further by providing opportunities for them to monitor provision and pupil progress in their subjects, so that their work has a greater impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- The curriculum is rich and varied and provides a wide range of experiences, both within and outside school hours. These experiences contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's focus on 'values' very successfully promotes attributes of kindness, respect and manners. In a worship observed, 'The Rainbow Fish' story was used well to talk about friendship and what this means. The school is a Forest School and provides pupils with a wealth of opportunities for adventurous learning. Pupils leave St James' school as well-adjusted, happy and caring individuals who have been prepared well for the next stage in their education.
- Sport funding provided by the government is used to good effect. Staff benefit from coaching aimed at developing their expertise in a variety of sporting activities. Pupils have opportunities to take part in a broader range of sport, competition and clubs such as vigor boarding, tag rugby and multi skills. This helps improve pupils' physical well-being, helps them understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and ensures that pupils reach the performance levels they are capable of.
- The majority of parents are highly supportive of the school and particularly appreciate how their child is cared for as an individual. They say how welcome they feel in school.
- The local authority provides effective support for this good and improving school. They have made good use of the headteacher's expertise in inclusion to support pupils from other schools in short blocks of time at St James'. The headteacher's skills have also been used in supporting another school since the last inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**

Governors know the school well because of their regular involvement in school life and the detailed information they receive. They know exactly what the school needs to do next to improve further and make a valuable contribution to school improvement. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's performance data and send letters to members of staff when progress has been especially good. They understand the new arrangements for pay progression and governor minutes show that they ask challenging questions about what the school is doing to improve teaching and achievement. They make sure that the pupil premium is spent carefully to meet the needs of eligible pupils and are fully committed to making sure that everyone is treated equally and there is no discrimination. They ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and have a clear understanding of the school's finances.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well at all times of the school day and are very kind and considerate towards adults and towards one another. They hold doors open for each other and for adults and are extremely respectful. St James' is a happy community where pupils enjoy coming to school. They fully understand the importance of regular attendance and the difference this makes to how well they learn.

- Pupils love to learn and want to do well. They are enthusiastic and work hard in lessons. When they work together in groups, they take turns and help each other so that everyone is included.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They demonstrate respect for property and resources by the way they take care of their classrooms and the immaculate outdoor areas.
- The school lives out its values which are at the heart of everything that goes on. Assemblies reinforce these messages well and as a result, pupils are very considerate of each other's needs. Older pupils enjoy serving snacks to younger ones and take great care of them around school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school. All parents who responded to the online questionnaire agree that their children are happy, feel safe and that the school looks after them well.
- Pupils were eager to say how well adults look after them and care for them in school, saying 'everyone counts and is treated exactly the same, teachers look after people who have problems.'
- In assemblies and personal, social and health education, pupils learn how to stay safe, including road safety and when they are using the Internet. They have a clear understanding of different types of bullying and what action to take if they are being bullied. Pupils are very clear that they have no concerns about bullying and that adults help them to sort out any problems quickly if they 'fall out'.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good across the school and some is outstanding. This was confirmed by teaching observed during the inspection, the work in pupils' books and the school's own records of the quality of teaching. This enables pupils in all year groups to learn well.
- Pupils enjoy their time at school and are keen to learn and do well, because teachers plan activities that are interesting. Adults praise and encourage pupils to develop their confidence in working independently and pupils are keen to support each other.
- Skilled teaching assistants make an important contribution in lessons and when working with individuals and small groups. Their highly effective support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and any pupils supported by the pupil premium who need extra help, enables these pupils to achieve their very best.
- Questioning is used consistently well by teachers and skilled teaching assistants. This checks pupils' understanding, clarifies any misconceptions and makes them think for themselves. In a Year 5 lesson, the sharpness of the teacher's questioning really made pupils think and deepened their understanding of how different surfaces affect the amount of friction created.
- 'Steps to Success' help pupils know exactly what they are expected to learn and these are used consistently throughout the school. However, pupils' work does not always challenge them to reach the highest standard they are capable of, particularly for the most-able pupils. For example, in mathematics pupils are sometimes asked to complete too many questions about something they know how to do, when they could have moved on to a more difficult task.
- In lessons where pupils made the best progress, they were totally captivated from the word go and there were very good opportunities to build on what they had learned in the past. For example, in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were writing their own personification poems about the sea, they talked about alternatives to using similes and metaphors, which they already knew about. As a result, high quality ideas about the sea, such as, 'she welcomes everyone in with open arms,' were shared and discussed.
- Teachers give helpful advice when they are marking pupils' work. However, there is not always the opportunity for pupils to respond to the advice given so that they learn from their mistakes and improvements are not made in the current or next piece of work.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children are prepared very well in Reception class for their start in Year 1. They continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and standards have improved since the last inspection, particularly in writing. Pupils' knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is good and attainment in the screening check at the end of Year 1 was above the national average in 2014.
- As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good and sometimes better progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their individual starting points, so that by the time they leave Year 6, they reach levels that are at least broadly average and sometimes above average. For example, in

2013, pupils did particularly well in mathematics and 2014 unvalidated data show that pupils attained better than pupils nationally in reading.

- Pupils achieve well because from an early stage, effective links are made between speaking and listening, reading and writing and pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure. Lessons focus on the use of interesting vocabulary and punctuation to enliven and improve writing and the school has had a particular focus on problem-solving and calculation in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are identified quickly, carefully monitored and receive well-targeted individual and group support, which enables them to achieve well as they progress through school. This strong support means that by the time they leave Year 6, most of these pupils reach the expected level for their age, demonstrating the school's commitment to ensuring that every pupil has an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The most-able pupils achieve well overall. However, school data and the inspection evidence show that sometimes they do not progress as rapidly as they could. This is because they are not always given work which is hard enough to help them reach higher levels.
- Extra provision for disadvantaged pupils, provided by pupil premium funding, includes an increase in the number of support staff to target learning in literacy and numeracy for identified pupils. Enhanced pastoral and specialist support also helps them emotionally and socially. As a result, these pupils make good progress. The standards they reached in 2013 were about one term behind those of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics, the same as other pupils in the school in reading but two terms behind in mathematics and writing. This gap has closed quickly in 2014.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children start school with skills that are below those typical for their age. They make rapid progress because there is a wide range of exciting things to do, especially in the excellent outdoor area. Skilled staff carefully monitor children's progress and make the most of opportunities to challenge each child in order to extend their learning further. They help children to make the most of exciting learning opportunities, so that by the end of Reception they have made outstanding progress, especially in their understanding of the world, expressive art and design, literacy and mathematics. They leave Reception well equipped to make a good start in Year 1.
- Children settle quickly into the Reception class after just a short time in school, because of the high levels of care and clear routines which are in place to support them.
- Adults make sure they get to know the children quickly. They work closely with staff from a private nursery housed in the school building and use information from other nurseries to respond to the children's needs and interests.
- Parents are fully involved in making their child's start at school as smooth as possible through meetings and opportunities to spend time in school before their child starts.
- The exciting and extremely well-planned outdoor area provides excellent opportunities for children to explore and learn through lively open-ended activities which capture their interest. A group of children were deep in concentration when making cakes in their 'mud kitchen' and adults made the most of every opportunity to ask questions to develop their language and number skills.
- Adults use praise and encouragement exceptionally well to help the children feel confident and secure. As a result they are eager to join in activities and their social skills develop rapidly. For example, after dressing up as characters such as 'Spiderman' and 'Ralph', children took turns to act out what these characters do, while a skilled teaching assistant asked questions to help them make the most of their learning.
- Although children can choose from a wide range of outdoor adventurous opportunities, which they share with the privately run nursery on site, attention to safety and expectations of appropriate behaviour are of the highest standard.
- The leadership and management of the early years are outstanding. Detailed planning and assessments are used exceptionally well to help each child make the most of their learning. In this highly effective Reception class a firm foundation for children's future learning is laid.

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	119476
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	448830

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	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Hammersley
Headteacher	Lilian Taylor-Bell
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2009
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