

St Philip's Catholic Primary School

Half Moon Lane, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK2 5LB

Inspection dates 3-4 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because teaching is not consistently good enough across school to ensure that pupils' progress speeds up. Not enough pupils make progress which is better than expected.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014 was below the national average and over time not enough pupils have reached the higher levels in writing and mathematics.
- In some classes teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough.
- Marking does not always tell pupils how to make their work better and pupils do not always respond to the advice and marking given.
- Pupils are not always set work which is hard enough to make sure they make the best possible progress.
- Targets in plans for improving the school's effectiveness are not sharp enough to enable leaders to check if actions are having enough impact.
- Data systems have not been used well enough to check regularly on how well pupils are doing in order to speed up progress.
- Middle leaders are not yet fully effective in ensuring that teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility are consistently good.
- The early years provision requires improvement because it does not result in enough children making better than expected progress from their starting points.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has taken steps to tackle areas of weakness and there are clear signs of improvement emerging.
- Staff morale is high and there is a shared determination to improve the school.
- The school is welcoming and relationships between pupils and adults are very positive. Behaviour is good; pupils say that they feel safe and parents agree.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 improved in 2014, particularly for pupils achieving the higher levels in reading and mathematics.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and are eager to learn; as a result, attendance is at least in line with national average and punctuality has improved.
- The governing body is improving. Governors have benefited from a recent review and additional training so they are able to challenge and support leaders in what they are doing to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. They also looked at pupils' work.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from four different year groups reading, and talked with them and other groups of pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, and representatives of the governing body, the local authority adviser and the diocesan director of schools.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure pupils are kept safe.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and took account of the 62 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took account of the 18 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Vanessa MacDonald, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Philip Choi

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Philip's Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion that speaks English as an additional language is much smaller than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding that the school receives for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2014. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher started in September 2014. A new structure of leadership has been implemented with the establishment of leaders with responsibility for each key stage, including early years. These leaders were appointed in November 2014.
- The governing body has been reconstituted and there are a number of new governors.
- The early years is comprised of a full-time Reception class.

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 to raise pupils' achievement throughout the school by ensuring that:
 - the expectation of what pupils can achieve is always high enough
 - the work set is always at the right level and is not too easy so pupils, including the most able, make the best possible progress
 - marking always shows pupils how to make their work better
 - pupils consistently respond to the advice and guidance given in marking.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - ensuring that the targets for improving the school's effectiveness are clear and measurable
 - improving the effectiveness of middle leaders in making checks on and improving the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility
 - making good use of the school's data systems to regularly check on teaching and learning so that it brings about rapid and sustained improvement for all groups.
- Improve the provision in the early years by ensuring that opportunities for children to learn, particularly outdoors, are carefully planned to develop their reading, writing and number skills.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The new headteacher has an accurate understanding of the key priorities for improvement and has a strong and resolute determination to ensure that the school improves quickly. She has swiftly implemented actions to improve the quality of teaching and to improve systems and procedures, though the full impact of these has yet to be seen.
- Middle leaders, many of whom are new to role, are not as effective as they could be in making checks on the quality of teaching or pupils' achievement in their areas of responsibility to ensure that they are improving rapidly.
- Systems and checks on how well pupils are doing are more regular and rigorous than they were previously and staff now have regular meetings to discuss how well pupils are doing. However, the school's data systems are not being used regularly or well enough by all staff and leaders to ensure that improvements in the quality of teaching and learning are leading to rapid improvement in the achievement of all groups of pupils.
- School leaders, including governors, have established plans for improvement. However, these plans do not always have clear enough targets for success which are easily measured.
- There are systems in place for managing teachers' performance. The current year's targets for teachers are closely linked to the main priorities for the school and to national Teachers Standards. However, the impact of this is not fully evident in ensuring that there is consistently good teaching and pupil achievement. Teachers are benefiting from professional development and opportunities to observe best practice in other settings, and as a result, teaching is improving.
- The pupil premium is used appropriately to narrow gaps in attainment between disadvantaged and other pupils. There have been improvements in the level of support provided for these pupils to ensure that the gap continues to narrow. This exemplifies the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and in eliminating any type of discrimination.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils and is developing its topic-based approach. There is a range of visits and visitors to enhance pupils' experiences further, which pupils enjoy. Visits from organisations such as the diversity service to teach pupils about, for instance, Chinese New Year, the 'Life Education Bus' to support pupils' personal, social and health education and opportunities to learn a musical instrument contribute to the good development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills.
- Pupils learn to respect and appreciate different religions and cultures and they treat one another with respect. They are involved in raising money for different charities, most recently for children in Sierra Leone. The school has a defined set of values called 'Statements to Live By'. These are shared in assemblies and lessons and support children's understanding of and preparation for life in modern Britain.
- The school works well in partnership with parents and the school seeks parents' views on different aspects of school life. Parents who responded to Parent View and those who spoke to an inspector were supportive of the school. This shows the school works effectively to foster good relations.
- The primary school sports funding is used effectively. There is a range of different lunchtime and after-school clubs which the pupils can take part in. These are popular and encourage pupils to be healthy. Specialist coaches also support training for staff which is improving their confidence in teaching aspects of physical education.
- The local authority adviser and diocesan representative regularly visit school and provide effective guidance and support. They have helped the new headteacher tackle key priorities which are beginning to secure improvements in teaching and leadership and management.
- The school meets statutory safeguarding requirements and arrangements are effective in keeping pupils safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors recognised the need to be more involved in leading and managing the school. Consequently, they have recently undergone a review and reorganisation of the governing body. Governors have clear roles and responsibilities and are well aware of the school's areas for development. They have also identified how they can improve their effectiveness and are working in partnership with the local authority and diocese to develop this. Governors have established a plan for improvement though this does not have targets which are easily measurable. They have identified and attended training to enable them to more effectively hold the school to account and support school leaders in making improvements. They have had training on published data about the school's performance and are asking challenging questions about what is being done to improve pupils' progress. Governors have not, however, had enough information about pupils' achievement to check how well different groups of

pupils are doing. They now have a good knowledge of how the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and for primary school sports is being used for the benefit of pupils. Governors receive information and reports about the quality of teaching and know how this relates to teacher performance. They have been involved in making important decisions about how to develop leadership capacity and improve the quality of teaching, including rewarding effective performance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, well mannered and welcoming. They are keen to share their work and ideas with one another and adults.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are a strength of the school and pupils say that their teachers help to keep them safe and to help them learn. Pupils understand the behaviour systems and say that there are very few times when behaviour is not good. They are confident that any incidents will be dealt with quickly and say that there is a 'zero tolerance' approach.
- In lessons pupils listen carefully and respond well to teachers' directions. They work well together and usually enjoy the activities they are given to do. On occasion pupils become restless when they are not as engaged in what they are doing and the work is either too easy or too hard.
- The introduction of sports clubs at lunchtime for older pupils has had a positive impact on both behaviour and pupils' health and well-being. Older pupils have recently been trained as play leaders and are beginning to support lunchtime play activities.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that there is no bullying in school and they have a good understanding of the different forms bullying can take. Pupils commented on the recent anti-bullying week and how this has improved their understanding of bullying.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe on the internet and younger pupils understand the dangers of talking to strangers. The recent e-safety course for parents was well attended and parents felt that it had been very informative.
- Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. There are very few pupils who are regularly absent and this is carefully followed up. Punctuality has improved because of actions taken by the school and there are very few pupils who arrive late to school.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because over time it has not been good enough to ensure that pupils make good or better progress from their different starting points.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve is not always high enough and as a result, pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Sometimes the work which is planned for pupils is not at the right level for them and is sometimes too easy, especially for the most able. Where teaching has the most impact on pupils' learning, activities are set which challenge all pupils. This was evident in mathematics in Year 5 where pupils showed a good understanding of different mathematical techniques to solve the area of complex shapes successfully.
- The quality of marking has improved and in the majority of classes marking in writing is of a good quality and provides pupils with good guidance on how to improve. However, this is not consistent across all classes or subjects. Pupils do not consistently respond to the guidance they have been given and this means that the impact on their achievement is not as good as it could be.
- As a result of more regular and effective monitoring and subsequent actions taken by the headteacher, there are improvements in the quality of teaching this year and there are examples of good teaching across the school. This is resulting in pupils making better progress.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) has improved overall as a result of a systematic way of teaching across early years, Year 1 and Year 2. Pupils are taught in groups which match their level of learning and teaching assistants are well deployed to support small groups. Consequently, the school's tracking information shows that pupils are beginning to make better progress.
- Pupils in Year 1 were confidently writing about their talents, having used the book '*Cleversticks*' linked to their work on Chinese New Year, as a basis for this. They showed that they could use their knowledge of phonics to write and read words and sentences successfully.

- Effective questioning by the teacher and good links made between different aspects of learning helped pupils in Year 6 to improve their writing of sentences so that they included interesting vocabulary, different ways of starting a sentence and a wide range of punctuation.
- Teaching assistants are generally well deployed and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning by providing support for small groups.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement. The progress made by pupils across the school is inconsistent. Attainment in Key Stage 1 in 2014 rose, particularly in the proportions reaching the higher levels in reading and mathematics. However, the attainment of pupils in Year 6 has declined over the last two years in reading, writing and mathematics, most significantly in 2014 when this was well below national averages. In 2014, there had been some disruption to staffing in the Year 6 class which contributed to the fall in standards.
- Over time, not enough pupils are making progress which is better than that expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has begun to address this and the headteacher ensures that information on all pupils is checked more regularly. Class teachers have a good awareness of which pupils need additional support in order for them to make good progress.
- There are clear signs to show that pupils' progress this year is improving and attainment is likely to be much closer to that found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6. However, good progress is still not consistent across all classes and current achievement requires improvement.
- The outcomes for the phonics screening check in Year 1 were below the national average in 2014. As a result of changes to the way in which this is taught and improvements in the checks made on how well pupils are doing, this is showing signs of improvement. Inspection evidence shows that the proportions passing the phonic check this year are likely to be closer to the national average.
- Pupils enjoy reading and read regularly at home. Younger pupils are using their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to read unfamiliar words. A review of the way in which guided reading is taught is leading to improvements in developing pupils' reading skills across school.
- In mathematics the proportion of pupils making expected and more than expected progress in Year 6 in 2014 improved on the previous year. There had been a focus on how mathematics strategies were taught and an increase in the opportunities to practise their skills to solve problems. However, the school recognises that progress is not good enough in all classes.
- In 2014 at the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils were about two terms ahead of their classmates in reading and writing and three terms ahead in mathematics. Compared with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils in the school were about a term and half behind in writing and mathematics and closer to three terms behind in reading. All these pupils made the progress expected of them in writing and mathematics and half did so in reading. However, none of the disadvantaged pupils made more than expected progress. Inspection evidence shows that the increasingly well-focused support for these pupils is ensuring that their progress is improving and gaps are continuing to be narrowed.
- The most able pupils make progress over time which is similar to that of their peers and requires improvement. Tasks are not always challenging enough to ensure that these pupils make the best possible progress. However, more pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach the higher levels.
- Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs are given support to help them with their learning. However, their progress is similar to their peers and requires improvement.
- The very small proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language make the same progress as other pupils.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Most children start in the Reception class with skills and knowledge which are typical for their age though a proportion start with skills below this. By the time they leave the Reception class many have made the progress that is expected of them and have reached a good level of development and are ready to start in Year 1. However, too few make more than expected progress.
- Teaching requires improvement because although children are beginning to develop their early reading, writing and number skills, staff do not always ensure that children, including those who are most able, are challenged to do as well as they can.

- Children enjoy the opportunity to be outdoors and one group spoke enthusiastically about the treasure maps they had drawn and where they had searched for and found the treasure. However, the opportunities for children to extend their reading, writing and number skills outdoors are not always planned for or used well enough.
- Children's behaviour and safety are good. Children mix and play well together and are attentive to adults' direction. They show that they are able to tidy up well and organise the different resources available to them. They are able to use equipment safely, such as scissors to cut out their Chinese dragons. Occasionally, however, children's interest wavers when activities are not closely matched enough to their needs.
- Staff have worked hard to improve the learning environment for the children and good use is made of the space to provide for the different areas of learning. There are plans in place to improve the outdoor environment. Staff have warm and friendly relationships with the children and ensure that they are kept safe.
- The teaching of phonics has improved and is now carefully planned. Children are taught letters and sounds in different groups appropriate to their level of readiness to learn. As a result, children show that they are able to use their knowledge of the different letters and sounds they make to read and write different words. In one session children were very motivated by the inventive way the new sound 'ow' was introduced and enjoyed 'bowing' to the queen who was wearing her 'crown'.
- The early years leader has benefited from recent professional development and there are signs of improvement in the provision and in the way in which assessments are used to plan for children's 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

Unique reference number	106126
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	456157

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	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marian Slee
Headteacher	Carole Hogan
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2012
Telephone number	0161 4830977
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	admin@st-philips.stockport.sch.uk

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