

Our Lady and St Paul's Roman Catholic Primary School, Heywood

Sutherland Road, Darnhill, Heywood, Lancashire, OL10 3PD

Inspection dates 12–13 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

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to enable pupils to make good progress.
- Attainment in writing, especially that of boys, lags behind reading and mathematics and is below average.
- Some work pupils are asked to do is not closely matched to their needs. Questioning is not always used well enough to find out what pupils understand.
- Not all teachers make sure pupils take full notice of the written marking comments they make to help pupils improve their own work.
- Provision for children in the early years is not fully effective and requires improvement.
- The provision made in the early years and in the rest of the school for children to understand the sounds letters make (phonics) is not effective.
- The proportion of pupils meeting national expectations in the phonic screening test in Year 1 is below average.
- Senior leaders do not give enough attention to checking on pupils' progress during observations of teaching. As such, the impact of leaders on raising achievement and improving teaching is not strong enough.
- Middle leaders and managers are not yet fully effective in ensuring good quality teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting headteacher has identified and put in place the right initiatives to improve the school.
- Governors are now more effective in monitoring the work of the school.
- Pupils enjoy school, say they feel safe and behave well. This because there are very good relationships between pupils and teachers.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in all years including one observation carried out jointly with the acting headteacher. The inspectors also observed group work and listened to pupils reading. They observed pupils as they arrived for school and at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors carried out a review of pupils' work.
- Discussions were held with the acting headteacher, staff, and members of the governing body and with a representative from the local authority.
- A wide range of documentation was reviewed including systems for tracking pupils' progress, safeguarding arrangements, policies, a record of the school's lesson observations and pupils' work in their books.
- Pupils' views of the school were gathered through informal discussions with individual pupils in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. Discussions were also held with representative groups of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 and with parents.
- Inspectors considered 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also reviewed the outcomes from the staff questionnaire and from the school's own parents' questionnaire.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Yates, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Loughlin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than most primary schools.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported through the pupil premium, is just above the national average. The pupil premium 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 standard which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The Nursery class provides part time early years education and the Reception class provides full time early years education.
- On-going building work was taking place at the school during the inspection.
- There has been disruption to the senior leadership team since the previous inspection. The current headteacher is on sick leave. The governors have recently appointed an acting deputy headteacher to support the work done by the acting headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring:
 - phonic skills are taught successfully
 - pupils' work always matches closely their individual needs
 - questioning is used well to extend pupils' learning
 - more steps are taken to make sure pupils take full notice of marking comments to help them improve their work
 - pupils, especially boys, have good opportunities to improve their writing skills.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management in order to raise the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that :
 - observations of teaching and learning carried out by senior staff focus more closely on pupils' progress and how it might be improved
 - middle leaders are more effective in improving teaching and learning in their subjects
 - teaching assistants receive training and help to improve their skills in supporting the teaching of phonics
 - teachers have more opportunities to share good practice.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement; not enough has been done to ensure that good quality teaching and pupils' good progress have been built upon and extended since the previous inspection.
- A rigorous procedure for checking the quality of teaching has been implemented by the acting head teacher. Teachers are given targets for improvement related to the school's overall improvement plan and their teaching performance. However, leaders do not always check closely on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.
- Good practice in teaching as identified by monitoring is not always shared well across the school.
- The acting headteacher with the support of staff and governors shows a strong determination to secure the best for pupils following instability in leadership. As a result, the school has a good capacity to improve. This can be seen especially in the increased challenge provided for pupils in writing.
- The acting headteacher has appointed a new middle management team. Although middle leaders are not fully effective they are improving, as they conduct regular checks on what is happening in their areas of responsibility. However, it is too early to see the full impact of their actions on pupils' progress.
- The curriculum provides suitable opportunities to promote equality and understanding of diversity. The re-organised curriculum arrangements allow pupils a good range of opportunities to use their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects, but arrangements for the teaching of phonics are less successful. More still needs to be done to improve boys' writing skills.
- The school is successful in ensuring that discrimination of any sort is not tolerated and demonstrates a firm commitment to equality of opportunity. Good relations are fostered well throughout the school. However, there is some difference in the progress of different groups of pupils; some pupils do not achieve as well as others.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and appropriate action has been taken in making sure that the building alterations are carried out with pupils' safety uppermost.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully. Many opportunities are taken to teach pupils how to value and respect one another and this is reflected in their good behaviour. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. For example, they vote to elect school council members and are given good opportunities to discuss issues regarding improving the local area and the part they might play.
- Extra funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well to provide extra support. Its impact has been effective in closing the gaps in attainment between them and other pupils by the time they leave the school.
- The sports coach, employed with additional sports funding from the government, works alongside teachers effectively to teach physical education and after school sports sessions. This has resulted in an increase in the number of pupils taking part in sports activities.
- The local authority took immediate action to support the school because of disruptions in senior leadership and has linked it with a successful school in order to help it to improve. The benefits of this support are starting to show.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have become increasingly involved in not only supporting the school but also in providing a good level of challenge. For example, the recently established monitoring committee reviews data and is well aware of what needs to be done to improve pupils' progress. Governors question the acting headteacher about the outcomes of the actions being taken to improve. They check the additional funds for the pupil premium used to pay for extra support are spent wisely and make the planned difference to the progress made by disadvantaged pupils. Governors are kept informed of the quality of teaching in the school. Governors ensure the systems to check on the performance of teachers are thorough. They reward good teaching by sanctioning pay increases and are fully aware of what steps they could take to tackle any identified underperformance by teachers. They ensure that the primary sports funding is used effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and are a delight to talk to. However, there are times when

work is too hard or too easy and as a result their attention wanes.

- Parents and staff agree that behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils get on well together and pupils' conduct around school is very good. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour calmly and have good strategies in place to deal with rare cases of inappropriate behaviour.
- Good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that relationships are firmly based on the school's values and are very positive.
- Attendance has improved and this reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- During the inspection older pupils were very keen to improve their awareness of how to keep safe when riding a bicycle by taking part in a 'bikeability' project.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and are very confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by the school. They recognise dangers when using the internet and know how to avoid these problems.
- Pupils are very aware that they should not speak to any visitors to school unless they are wearing the school's visitors' badge and the importance of not speaking to strangers outside of school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying for their age, including racist name calling or making fun of others. They report that if bullying happens it is sorted out quickly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- School records and evidence gathered during the inspection from direct observations and the work in pupils' books does point to teaching improving, but nevertheless over time it has not been consistently good.
- Teachers do not always plan work that provides a sufficient level of challenge. As a result, at times work is too easy for the most able or too hard for the less able resulting in pupils not making as much progress as they could.
- Phonic skills are not taught effectively. Some teaching assistants have not had sufficient training in supporting pupils in this important aspect of their learning.
- Questioning is not always used successfully to probe pupils' understanding and extend their learning.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and often include comments to guide pupils but these are not always followed up well by pupils in order to help them improve.
- Teachers often plan activities that excite pupils. For example, the exploits of the character, Mr Mole, in one class captivated the attention of younger pupils well leading to them producing writing of a good quality.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement but there are signs of progress. For example, older pupils undertaking a study of Lady Macbeth, from Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*, were highly motivated to use their writing skills well. There are signs of pupils being given more opportunities to use their writing skills creatively in subjects such as history or science. However, activities do not always inspire boys to write and improve their skills.
- The school has improved the teaching of mathematics. There are some good opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their mathematical skills. As a result, the dip in the school's test results in 2013 has been addressed well as shown in the rise in 2014 national test results at the end of Year 6.
- Reading skills other than phonics are taught well and pupils have appropriate opportunities to use their skills. For example, Year 5 pupils talk enthusiastically about what they have found out about Lady Macbeth.
- Where teaching assistants are deployed effectively across the school they make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, especially that of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and high expectations of their behaviour. As a result, pupils enjoy learning.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because, since the previous inspection, pupils have not made consistently good progress across the school. Current pupils, however, are now making better progress

because of actions taken by the acting headteacher and middle leaders. However, there are still inconsistencies in pupils' progress in some year groups especially in writing.

- Since the previous inspection attainment in reading, writing and mathematics have been variable. In 2014, test results were below average in writing but average in reading and mathematics. Inspection evidence points to standards of attainment being in line with those expected this year in all subjects.
- Pupils make steady rather than good progress. For the last three years pupils have not made consistently good progress. In 2014, the proportion making expected progress was above average in mathematics, just below in reading and below in writing. Inspection evidence and the school's most recent data show that pupils are making steady progress with an increasing number making good progress.
- Younger pupils do not make good progress in learning letters and sounds. By the end of Year 1, the proportion reaching the standard expected for their age in the national screening for phonics is below average.
- Pupils are making better progress this year in reading and the school is taking effective action to make sure that improvements made are consolidated further. However, not all pupils use phonics well enough to tackle new words.
- Pupils' progress in developing their writing skills is improving and they have a reasonable understanding of how to write in different styles. However, while some of the writing content is of a good quality, some pupils, especially the boys, have limited spelling skills and their lack of a secure use of correct punctuation impacts adversely on the overall quality of their writing.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in mathematics has improved with pupils becoming more confident in using and applying their numeracy skills in problem solving activities.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same progress as other pupils in the school.
- The most able pupils do not always make good progress. They do not benefit from activities which provide them with a good level of challenge to ensure they achieve well in lessons. However, a greater proportion of pupils are now attaining the higher level 5. In the 2014 national tests in mathematics, pupils did better than those in other primary schools nationally at the higher level in mathematics and almost as well as other pupils nationally in reading.
- The results gained by disadvantaged pupils in English and mathematics in the 2014 national tests indicated that their attainment was just over a year behind other pupils in the school. These results also showed that disadvantaged pupils' attainment was just over a year and a half behind other pupils nationally in English and mathematics. Records of the achievement of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school show they any gaps in achievement between them and their classmates are closing. In 2014, while disadvantaged pupils' progress was slightly less good than that of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, the gap in this measure has closed considerably over time. These data demonstrate the school's success in narrowing the gaps between disadvantaged pupils' achievements and that of other pupils.
- The primary school sports funding is used well. Pupils now enjoy a wider range of sporting opportunities and uptake is high including pupils from Key Stage 1.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. The majority make steady progress from their individual starting points with some pupils making good progress. The proportion reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year in 2014 was below average. As a result, not all children are prepared fully for what they are expected to learn in Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. For example, at times children do not make sufficient progress in developing their phonic skills because their tasks do not match their ability.
- The assessment of children's progress has improved with individual learning journeys showing children's progress. However, staff do not always use this information well to plan activities to challenge children further and to promote their more rapid progress.
- Staff work successfully in ensuring early years provision makes a good contribution to children's physical and emotional health, safety and well-being, as well as to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children behave well, enjoy school and feel safe. They love practical activities. For example, they enjoyed explaining to an inspector how to use the juice squeezer to prepare their fresh orange drinks.
- The school is increasingly successful in its efforts to encourage parents to be more involved in their

children's learning through activities such as 'stay and play.'

- Leadership requires improvement because teaching does not enable children to make good progress. Early years activities are checked to see how well they capture children's interest but are not always monitored to see how much difference they make to 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	105819
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	456154

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev. Fr. Paul Daly
Acting Headteacher	Laura Bolton
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2012
Telephone number	01706 360827
Fax number	01706 620188
Email address	office@ourladystpaulsrc.rochdale.sch.uk

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