

Rishton Methodist Primary School

George Street, Rishton, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 4JF

Inspection dates 6–7 May 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school from their different starting points.
- Children get a good start to their learning in the early years provision. They are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is good across the school. Staff know pupils well. They set work that engages pupils effectively in their learning and enables them to make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils, and those with a disability or who have special needs are well supported and as a result make good progress. Any gaps in their achievement are closing rapidly.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They say they feel very safe and are well cared for in school.
- School leaders and governors have a clear view of how well the school is performing and where it can do better. They have worked well together to improve the quality of teaching and this continues to raise pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Parents are appreciative and supportive of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Pupils, including the most able, are not always given work that is hard enough to enable them to make the best possible progress and achieve the highest standards.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge to solve practical problems both in mathematics and in other subjects.
- Middle leaders are not yet fully accountable for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning on 15 occasions. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and with four governors. Inspectors also met two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors met two groups of pupils and also spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in lessons and in their books over time. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents concerning pupils' current achievement and progress, development plans and information about teachers' performance. They also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. The minutes of governing body meetings were also considered.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View questionnaire to analyse, but inspectors considered 30 responses by parents to a survey conducted by the school in June 2014. They also considered 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robert Birtwell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Keefe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in seven single year classes from the Reception Year to Year 6. Children attend the early years provision full time.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is around twice the national average. These are pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2014. Three other teachers have joined the school within the last four terms. The deputy headteacher was absent during the inspection.
- The school does not meet 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement, so that more pupils, including the most able, make the best possible progress, by making sure that:
 - expectations of what pupils can achieve are always high enough
 - the work set is always hard enough so that pupils, including the most able, are consistently challenged to make the best possible progress and achieve the highest standards
 - pupils have more opportunity to use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge to solve practical problems in mathematics lessons and in other subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that middle leaders become more involved in and are more accountable for making checks and improving the quality of teaching and learning in their areas.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management, including governance, are good. Leaders' actions have led to improvements in the quality of teaching and a continuing rise in pupils' achievement with a rapid closing of gaps in the performance of different groups of pupils. There is a calm, orderly, happy and productive atmosphere throughout the school.
- The headteacher leads the school very effectively, and has an ambitious vision for its future development. This is shared by staff, governors and parents and is shown by the strong support for the school in the staff and parent questionnaires.
- The school's systems for checking how well pupils are doing are robust and school leaders at all levels make good use of information about pupils' achievement and progress. Consequently, they have a clear view of how well the school is performing and where it could do better.
- School leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. The headteacher has taken firm action to improve the quality of teaching since her arrival and has been well supported by senior staff, governors and the local authority. The school improvement plan correctly focuses on further improving teaching and raising pupils' achievement.
- School leaders closely monitor the quality of teaching and effectively evaluate pupils' performance. Any underachievement is addressed by providing pupils with extra support. As a result, all groups of pupils in the school are making good progress, and gaps in the performance of different groups are closing rapidly. This shows the school's successful commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils.
- School leaders use information about pupils' achievement and progress to check how well teachers are performing and to identify where further support or training is needed. Staff are working increasingly effectively with other local schools to improve practice. This information is also used when making recommendations about teachers' pay.
- The role of middle leaders is developing and they are improving their knowledge and becoming more skilled. However, they do not yet have enough involvement or accountability for checking the quality of teaching and learning in their areas.
- The curriculum is well planned, engages pupils effectively in their learning and promotes good behaviour. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills both in mathematics lessons and in other subjects.
- The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of activities, clubs, trips and visits, including sport, drama, music and culture. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about a residential outdoor activities trip they had recently been on, and others about seeing a 'fantastic' 3-d printer operating.
- The curriculum addresses discrimination effectively, fosters good relations and makes a positive contribution to pupil's good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. There is a set of core values that are well understood by all pupils. Pupils are tolerant and understanding, and show an improving knowledge of other cultures and religions. British values are effectively addressed in lessons, and through activities and assemblies. For example, democracy is better understood because there is an elected school council, and during the inspection there was a pupil-led assembly commemorating VE day.
- The school uses pupil-premium funding increasingly effectively to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils in the classroom, individually and in small groups. In addition, it is used to provide extra support for vulnerable pupils and to improve links with parents. The work of the learning mentor is increasingly important in this respect. As a result, attendance has improved and any gaps in the performance of disadvantaged pupils are closing.
- The additional primary school sports funding has been used to improve provision and pupils' access to physical education by improving the skills and knowledge of staff, and enabling pupils to benefit from more specialist teaching. This has widened the range of sporting activities offered, and the school takes part in more competitions. Consequently, more pupils now participate in sports activities and competitions.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and are effectively implemented.
- The local authority has provided effective monitoring and support for the school which have contributed to improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know how well the school is doing and where it needs to improve. They have a good understanding of the use and analysis of data about pupils' attainment and progress and how these are linked to the quality of teaching. Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, and have a clear knowledge of how the pupil premium is spent and the impact it is having

on raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

- Governors are very supportive of the school, and ambitious for its development. They challenge the school and hold it to account through an effective sub-committee structure and by asking probing questions. They set challenging targets as part of the headteacher's appraisal and make sure that pupil performance is considered when making decisions about teachers' pay. Governors ensure that the school's finances are well managed and are clear that the school meets all statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils get on well with one another and with adults in the school. The school is characterised by a climate of mutual respect and a strong caring ethos. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and enables them to make good progress.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are well motivated, listen attentively and work independently and in groups effectively. As a result, lessons proceed smoothly without any interruptions to learning.
- School records and discussions with pupils show that poor behaviour is rare. Pupils say that there is no racist or discriminatory behaviour in school, and that on the few occasions pupils do misbehave, staff sort it out quickly and fairly.
- Inspectors observed good behaviour in lessons, in assembly and around the school. Pupils are considerate of one another and are polite to visitors. They mix well, play enthusiastically and safely together during breaks, and behave sensibly and responsibly at lunchtime.
- Pupils take on responsibility in a variety of different areas. They act as team captains, help in assemblies and around the school, and older pupils act as 'buddies' for younger children. This makes a positive contribution to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and are proud of it. Attendance has improved and is now close to average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel very safe and are well cared for in school.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of the different forms of bullying, and are very aware of the harmful effects of name calling and discrimination. They say that there is no bullying in the school at present, but would report it if it occurred. They are very confident that the school would sort it out quickly.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of safety-related issues, and speak confidently about how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including e-safety when using the internet, road safety and when cycling.
- Parents who responded to the school's questionnaire were very positive about the school. In particular, they all think that their child feels safe, is treated fairly by staff and enjoys coming to school.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is improving and is good across the school. This was confirmed by the work in pupils' books and the school's records of pupils' progress and checks on the quality of teaching. This enables pupils in all classes to achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff know pupils well and relationships in the classroom are positive and productive. Staff set work that engages pupils effectively in their learning. Pupils say lessons are 'fun and interesting' and that they 'have a laugh but learn a lot'. As a result they enjoy learning.
- Reading is taught effectively and pupils have a good knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). This ensures pupils make good progress.
- The teaching of writing has improved markedly since the previous inspection. Pupils write effectively and at length in a variety of different styles, and show an improving understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar. For example, Year 6 pupils greatly enjoyed writing a newspaper report based on the poem 'The Lion and Albert'. They showed a good appreciation of the poem, had to think carefully about what they were doing and produced some very effective writing. Consequently they made good progress.
- Pupils are well taught overall in mathematics, and this enables them to make good progress. However,

they are not given enough opportunity to use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge to solve practical problems.

- The quality of marking and feedback has improved recently. Pupils' work is marked regularly and well. Staff use praise effectively and give pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work. It is clear that pupils respond to this advice.
- Although teaching overall is good, it is not yet outstanding in its impact on pupils' achievement over time. Staff typically have high expectations of what pupils can achieve but they are not always high enough. Staff do not always make sure that the work set is challenging enough to enable pupils, including the most able, to learn as well as they could. Pupils are not always given work that is hard enough to enable them to make the best possible progress and reach the highest standards.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work increasingly closely together to provide effective intervention and support where it is needed. This support is well focused to meet the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils and ensures that any gaps in their progress and attainment are closing.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement is improving and they make good progress during their time in the school. From starting points in the Reception Year that are generally below those typical for children's ages, they reach standards that are close to average by the end of Year 6.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics have improved sharply. There was a dip in performance in 2014, but current Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve above average standards this year. This shows good progress from pupils' starting points. Evidence from observing learning in lessons and examining pupils' work confirms that pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are currently making good progress.
- In 2014 the school did not meet 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. This was due to a legacy of weaker teaching in Key Stage 2. However, firm and decisive leadership by the headteacher has led to rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and a rise in pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspection evidence and the school's most recent data shows that all groups of pupils are making good progress and achieving well. Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve improved results this year, with standards that are close to the current national average, almost all pupils making expected progress, and the proportion making more than expected progress being close to average.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in reading because they are well taught and staff ensure that pupils read regularly. Pupils have a good knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics check was above average in 2014.
- The school has focused successfully on improving pupils' achievement in writing. Pupils have many opportunities to write at length in different subjects, and there is an appropriate emphasis on spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Pupils' make good progress in mathematics. They have secure basic numeracy skills, but there are too few opportunities for them to use and apply these skills to solve practical problems.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium are improving. In 2014 the standards achieved by disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 was around five terms behind other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, and around six terms behind in writing. In comparison with other pupils in the school they were around four terms behind in writing, five in mathematics and almost six in reading. Disadvantaged pupils made slower progress than other pupils in the school and nationally. However, the school's most recent data show that these gaps are closing rapidly because disadvantaged pupils are receiving increasingly effective support and making more rapid progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well and make good progress. Their needs are accurately identified, and they receive good quality support. Consequently, they make progress at least as rapidly as other pupils, and better in some cases.
- The most able make good progress and achieve well overall. However, in common with other pupils they are not always given work that is challenging enough to enable them to reach the highest standards and make the best possible progress.

The early years provision**is good**

- Most children join the early years with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age, especially in writing.
- Children make good progress and catch up quickly from their individual starting points. The proportion who achieved a good level of development at the end of the Reception year was above average in 2014. Children are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff ensure that learning activities are purposeful and well focused, and that children are fully involved in their learning. Children have access to a good range of indoor and outdoor activities in a stimulating learning environment.
- Children behave well and show good attitudes to learning in a safe and caring environment. They listen carefully to adults, concentrate on tasks, and work well together sharing and showing concern for others.
- Staff work well to meet the needs of individual children. They check children's progress regularly, and use this information to plan tasks and activities to further develop children's learning. Any disadvantaged or vulnerable children are well supported and make good progress.
- There are good links with parents and local nursery providers. These ensure that children settle quickly into the early years provision.
- The leadership of the early years is effective. Staff are well trained and know how well children are doing. This is helping to raise children's achievement.

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	119396
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	461742

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mandy Croucamp
Headteacher	Janet Neale
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2011
Telephone number	01254 887223
Fax number	01254 829525
Email address	head@rishtonmethodist.lancs.sch.uk

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