

# St Mary's Rawtenstall Church of England Primary School

Haslingden Old Road, Rawtenstall, Rossendale, Lancashire, BB4 8RZ

**Inspection dates** 3–4 June 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- The work of this harmonious and inclusive school is underpinned by strongly held values of respect and care.
- The headteacher, leaders and governors have driven improvement at a fast pace since the school's previous inspection, taking all staff with them to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- Achievement is good across all subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics. All groups of pupils make at least good progress from their relative starting points.
- Teaching is good, built upon excellent relationships and teachers' strong subject knowledge.
- The quality of teachers' feedback and marking is now strength of the school, following concerted work to develop consistent and effective practice.
- Leaders make effective use of resources, including the pupil premium and sports funding, to help pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Reading is promoted very well throughout the school and this secures pupils' good literacy levels.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and imaginative. Pupils relish the additional opportunities provided through the school's programme of 'Wonderful Things'.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school, work hard and cooperate willingly with each other.
- Safeguarding is given high priority. Leaders and governors ensure that the school is a safe place to be and that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe.
- The early years is well led and gives children a good, solid foundation for their future learning.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportions of pupils exceeding expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics are not consistently higher than those found nationally.
- A few children do not achieve a good level of development during their time in the early years.
- Pupils' behaviour on the playground is sometimes over-boisterous.
- The professional development of teachers and middle leaders does not currently enable fully effective succession planning in school.
- Teachers sometimes do not show pupils clear models of excellent work to which to aspire.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to explain their reasoning in detail when solving mathematical problems.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes, across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors observed the school's work in many aspects; they visited additional support sessions for small groups of pupils, an assembly and hymn practice. They listened to three groups of pupils reading and talked to them about their reading habits. They held discussions with pupils, both formally and informally, and observed their behaviour around school. An inspector visited the after-school club.
- Inspectors observed the school's senior leadership team undertaking a scrutiny of pupils' work books.
- Inspectors held meetings with the school's senior leaders, the leaders responsible for the early years and for key stages, the special educational needs co-ordinator and various subject leaders. They spoke with all the teachers, three governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and two representatives of the local authority.
- An inspector talked to parents as they brought their children to school. There were insufficient responses made to the online questionnaire, Parent View, during the 365 prior days prior to the inspection to generate any data. Inspectors considered the 27 responses made by parents on a paper version of this questionnaire provided by the school.
- The inspectors gathered the views of staff by analysing the 24 questionnaires they returned during the inspection as well as through discussions.
- Inspectors considered a range of school documentation including the improvement plan, self-evaluation document, data relating to the achievement of pupils, records of leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning, information relating to the performance management of teachers, behaviour and attendance records and safeguarding information. Inspectors also scrutinised the information available on the school's website.

## Inspection team

Shirley Gornall, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Dave Blackburne

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of Bangladeshi heritage. There is a small minority of pupils of Pakistani heritage and a small minority from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well-above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and therefore supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than the normal transition points is higher than found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school club.
- The school does not make use of alternative educational provision.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching so that more is outstanding, leading to more pupils consistently exceeding expected progress, by:
  - providing pupils with clear models of high quality work in order to raise their expectations further of what they can achieve
  - providing more opportunities, especially in mathematics, for pupils to explain their thought processes when solving problems.
- Continue to raise achievement in the early years so that nearly all children achieve a good level of development by the time they leave the Reception Year.
- Ensure that the small minority of pupils whose play is overly boisterous think about their peers as courteously on the playground as they do in lessons.
- Further improve leadership by ensuring that teachers are given excellent professional development to enable them to contribute to the leadership of the school and, therefore, enable improvement capacity to be strengthened.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides robust and rigorous leadership. His absolute commitment to making the school as good as it possibly can be is shared by his senior leadership team and all staff. As one teacher commented, 'This is an amazing place to work because everyone is valued.' Parents and pupils echoed this view.
- The strong ethos of respect and care that the school promotes is evident in the very positive relationships between pupils, staff and families. The school is a happy and harmonious place in which equality of opportunity is promoted very strongly, including through the imaginative extra-curricular initiative 'Wonderful Things'. The school has designed this to provide children of different groups and backgrounds with a wide range of opportunities that they relish. The school does not allow harassment in any form and inspection evidence confirms that it is conspicuously successful in promoting mutual tolerance and understanding.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a significant strength. Pupils of different faiths learn about each other's beliefs and build on the fundamental values that they share, as well as exploring contrasts in religions. Pupils are reverent during prayers and sing wholeheartedly. A rich programme of visits and visitors helps to develop their understanding of different cultures and lifestyles.
- Leaders have developed clear plans to secure school improvement, including developing the assessment of pupils' work in new ways in anticipation of national curriculum levels being discontinued. Their plans are ambitious but realistic, and include appropriate arrangements for monitoring and evaluation. Leaders ensure that all aspects of the school's work are kept under review. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and is supported by a wealth of evidence.
- Since the previous inspection, leadership has been more widely distributed in the school. Supported by local authority advisers, teachers have developed their leadership of different subjects and improved their skills in evaluating the curriculum and the quality of teaching. Subject leaders have checked teachers' planning, observed pupils' work in lessons and undertaken scrutiny of their books to ensure that work is correctly pitched and that pupils are successful in their learning. Some senior leaders have a very heavy workload; they and the governors recognise that succession planning and leadership capacity can be further enhanced by professional development opportunities to enable more staff to contribute to the leadership of priority areas.
- During the last year, leaders have focused relentlessly on improving the quality and consistency of teachers' marking. They have been successful in this regard and the developmental feedback they have provided for teachers has been well considered. The implementation of whole-school policies is consistent across the key stages. The collaborative nature of staff working means that there is regular discussion about teaching and learning, and abundant willingness to explore different approaches to improving practice.
- The school provides an exciting curriculum that stimulates pupils' interest and provides a good level of challenge. Teachers have worked hard to develop the curriculum in line with raised national expectations of what pupils should experience and achieve at different ages. The quality of work in computing testifies to the positive way in which teachers and pupils have embraced this additional challenge.
- Additional sports funding is used well. Careful spending has resulted in pupils of all ages having access to a wide range of sports and activities. Participation rates are good for different groups of pupils and the school regularly achieves success in local tournaments. Teachers' skills and confidence in delivering different physical activities has increased through coaching.
- The coordination of provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good and the school has developed an effective structure for evaluating the impact of different forms of support that pupils receive.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. Leaders, teachers, support staff and governors are vigilant. They know the pupils and their families well and are quick to recognise when they may need help. Leaders keep the school's policies, including those relating to safeguarding, under close review.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The school's governors are enthusiastic and dedicated. They bring a range of skills to their roles and these enable them to provide considerable support and challenge to the senior leaders. Governors know the work of the school well, ensure that performance management processes result in teachers being appropriately rewarded, and liaise effectively with the local authority services when their help is required.

- Through the standards and effectiveness committee, governors keep a close eye on pupils' achievement. They have a good knowledge of the spending and impact of resources, including the pupil premium and sports funding. They have also supported the leaders' bid for a substantial grant to develop extra-curricular provision. A key strength is the governors' understanding of the community the school serves and their creativity in finding ways to engage families.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They co-operate well with their peers, as observed when Year 2 pupils shared electronic devices to search for on-line definitions of unfamiliar words. Pupils value the opinions of others in the class and listen attentively to their teachers. They complete their homework on time and to a good standard. They know, as one Year 6 pupil commented, 'Working hard now gets us into good habits for the future.' Pupils present their work carefully, including by trying hard to write neatly.
- Pupils are taught to take care of each other and of other members of their community; for instance, older pupils have written accounts of how to help dementia sufferers. Pupils actively welcome a range of visitors to their school with curiosity and enthusiasm.
- Pupils wear their uniform smartly and take good care of school equipment. Some pupils willingly volunteer to take on additional responsibilities, including tidying the dining area after lunch or supporting staff who lead assemblies. The pupil council is well respected and pupils' views of future activities to be added to the 'Wonderful Things' programme are sought and valued. Often pupils who have moved on to high school return to St Mary's as volunteers.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and during supervised activities is typically sensible and respectful. Any disruption to learning is very rare. There have been no exclusions from the school for several years. On occasions, pupils are over-boisterous on the playground and their enthusiasm for football can mean interference with other children's quieter play.
- Pupils arrive at school punctually and ready to learn. Attendance levels are rising, but not as quickly as the national rate. Despite the school's comprehensive work with families and other agencies, pupils' attendance remains a little below the national level.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Governors and leaders give safeguarding a high priority. Appropriate checks are made when staff are appointed to the school and clear policies are in place to ensure that any concerns can be addressed. All staff have received relevant and up-to-date safeguarding training. Child protection procedures are robust.
- Governors ensure that the school building is safe and well maintained; there is a rolling programme for the continual improvement of the school grounds.
- Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying in the school. They can distinguish between 'bullying' and 'falling out' and have confidence that the staff help them to resolve any difficulties. The school promotes anti-bullying messages strongly, including through work with charities and other agencies. Staff ensure that pupils understand what constitutes different forms of bullying.
- There have been no racist incidents recorded in school for a number of years. Staff are vigilant to ensure that good relations are strongly promoted between pupils of different faiths and backgrounds. Pupils who start the school with very little English at different points of the year are integrated well into the school community.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors or completed the questionnaire unanimously agreed that pupils' behaviour is good and that their children are kept very safe in school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe on-line is well considered. Pupils know about internet safety in age-appropriate terms and understand the need to maintain their own safety when using modern technology.

## The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good throughout the school, leading to pupils making consistently good progress over time, including in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils read widely in different subjects. They are encouraged to read expressively and to explore a range of fiction and non-fiction books. Teachers pay

close attention to developing pupils' ability to read fluently and to comprehend different texts. Pupils' writing skills are consolidated through frequent opportunities to write for different audiences and purposes. Their mathematical skills are developed well, and there is an increasing emphasis on 'going deeper' in supporting their mathematical understanding; however, pupils are not always encouraged to express their reasoning fully.

- Good relationships and high expectations characterise teaching across subjects and for different age groups. Teachers have established 'non-negotiables' for each class that define the basic expectations of all pupils' work. These are prominently displayed in classrooms and ensure that there is clear progression across year groups.
- Teachers know the pupils in their classes well and plan activities that enthuse them. They reward positive learning behaviour and generally notice quickly if any pupil has misunderstood an instruction or is struggling to master a concept.
- Teachers build pupils' confidence by breaking down work into manageable steps according to pupils' ability. Pupils are encouraged to complete tasks to a 'good' standard and to build further to achieve 'great' outcomes. In some cases, these levels of challenge are very precisely adjusted to meet the needs of the class. This was evident in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, where the expectations of what different pupils should know about time were closely established. Pupils respond well to the challenges teachers set for them and are increasingly adept at assessing for themselves whether they have met them.
- Teachers' marking and feedback are of consistently high quality. Pupils enjoy reading their teachers' comments and they take care to improve their spelling and respond to any additional individual questions that teachers pose for them. Teachers' marking is neat and legible, reflecting the high quality of presentation that is in turn expected of pupils.
- Teachers ask probing questions of pupils and encourage them to express their answers in sentences. They continually expect pupils to develop interesting vocabulary. For example, Year 4 pupils, learning about folk tales, wrote sentences about *Brer Rabbit* that included 'fascinating adjectives'. Sometimes, opportunities are missed for pupils to explain their thinking in detail, especially in mathematical problem-solving.
- Although teachers have high expectations of pupils, they sometimes miss opportunities to share models of high quality work to set a standard for pupils to aspire to. For example, there is abundant display of pupils' work throughout the school, but it is not always clear what skills are being demonstrated by pupils through this work; consequently, the capacity of display to inform other pupils' work is under developed.
- Teachers review samples of pupils' work together to ensure that they have a shared knowledge of standards. They have made links with local schools with a view to wider moderation in the future that will enable them to develop new ideas and ensure that their assessment of pupils' work is consistent.

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress from their various starting points and achieve well.
- Effective teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) in the early years and Key Stage 1 leads to the proportion of pupils at the end of Year 1 achieving more highly in the phonics screening test at the end of Year 1 than nationally.
- Pupils' attainment is on a rising trend at Key Stage 1. In 2014, pupils' attainment in writing was weaker than that in reading and mathematics. Teachers have focused on giving pupils more opportunities to write in different subjects, as well as developing their basic sentence structure and widening their vocabulary. Standards are rising as result of this.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment rose sharply in 2014 and all of the pupils achieved the nationally expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. Furthermore, 45% of pupils attained the higher Level 5 in all three subjects, almost double the national figure.
- All pupils who left the school in 2014 made at least expected progress from their starting points. The proportions that exceeded expected progress also compared favourably with national figures. The school's reliable tracking information indicates that performance in 2015 will be good, although not as strong as in 2014.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and achieve well over time. They respond enthusiastically to their teachers' high expectations and have ambitious aspirations for their futures. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 has been below average in reading, writing and mathematics but is now rising as a result of reinvigorated leadership and strong teaching. Pupils' progress accelerates in Key Stage 2.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. In 2014, all pupils in Year 6 made expected progress from their



starting points in all subjects. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils exceeding expected progress was slightly lower than for other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics but higher in writing. Disadvantaged pupils were around one-and-a-half terms behind other pupils in the school in mathematics, reading and writing; however, they performed as well as non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils in the English grammar, spelling and punctuation test lagged behind that of their peers in school by around four terms.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points as a result of well-focused support from teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupils who speak little English when they join school receive effective support, including from bilingual assistants in school. They quickly learn English, develop spoken fluency and acquire a broad vocabulary supported by intensive reading.
- Standards of reading rose rapidly in 2014. The school has invested in support for reading, including through the well-targeted use of pupil premium funding. Visiting authors are very popular with pupils, as one enthusiastic Year 6 reader commented: 'You would be amazed at how many authors have been to our school and we really enjoy reading their work'. Pupils develop good levels of comprehension alongside effective decoding skills. This is because teachers talk to them regularly about their reading and encourage them to share books with each other.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are effectively promoted although opportunities for explaining reasoning verbally are not always well developed.

### The early years provision is good

- Leadership of the early years is good, characterised by careful planning, thorough monitoring and a relentless drive to find ways of removing barriers to early learning. For example, the school has been successfully involved in a project developed by the local authority to support Bangladeshi pupils. This has focused on establishing strong relationships with families to enable good communication about their children's learning. The project has had a positive impact for all groups of children because their work is shared with their families on a daily basis through their fascinating 'WOW books' and followed up at home. Parents are thoroughly engaged with their children's learning because of this imaginative approach.
- The early years leader actively seeks ways of developing the learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, to maximise exciting learning opportunities. Children were fascinated to search for mini-beasts in the wild garden and could explain how tadpoles turned into frogs.
- Effective leadership and good quality teaching have resulted in the majority of children being well prepared for Key Stage 1. The proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development has doubled in the last two years and is now similar to the national level.
- The early years teacher and her dedicated support staff quickly gain an understanding of children's skills, experiences and interests when they join school from a variety of different settings. Some children have not had access to pre-school provision and a significant number of children join with limited spoken English. Overall, children join the school with skills that are below those typically found for their age group. They make good progress and gain in confidence because staff plan activities carefully and provide interesting choices for children. The richness of spoken language used by early years staff contributes strongly to children's progress.
- Children's enthusiasm for learning is captured early and their expressive language is continually nurtured. Children working in the outdoor area challenged each other to follow instructions and showed good cooperation when placing carpet tiles in alphabetical order. Other children showed excellent control of scissors as they cut out photographs of their classmates and negotiated placing them alphabetically. Their excitement about a forthcoming farm visit built upon their experience of the 'farm shop' in the classroom. Staff observe children's work closely, support their exploration sensitively and praise every small step.
- Children behave well in the early years. They are friendly and cooperative; children of different backgrounds interact well together. The school provides a safe environment for them and they begin to learn about personal safety and start to take responsibility for themselves.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119368
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	454656

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	194
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Karen Girling
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ian Holden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 June 2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 216407
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