

St James' Church of England Primary School, Clitheroe

Greenacre Street, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 1ED

Inspection dates 30 June – 1 July 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.

- The headteacher leads and manages the school well.
- Senior and middle leaders carry out their duties effectively. They share the headteacher's determination to raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement further.
- Pupils achieve well. Almost all pupils make the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics. An above average proportion do better than this in reading and mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years.
- Teaching is of a good quality. Teachers make learning enjoyable and pupils talk sensibly and with enthusiasm about their work.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. They are kind and helpful to one another.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well.
- Parents are highly positive about all aspects of the school's work.
- The governing body has a good understanding of its role. Governors provide rigorous challenge as well as strong support.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics, especially for the most-able pupils.
- Pupils' spelling skills, while improving, are not yet secure and in some classes work is not presented carefully enough.
- In marking, teachers do not always check that pupils respond positively to the guidance given to improve their own work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in all year groups. A joint observation was carried out with the 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 scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff and members of the governing body, and with a representative from the local authority.
- A wide range of documentation was considered, including systems for tracking pupils' progress, safeguarding arrangements, policies, a record of the leaders' and managers' 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 and with parents.
- Inspectors considered 43 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Yates, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Allyson Ingall

Additional Inspector

Michael Platt

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly bigger than most primary schools.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is 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 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 standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The Reception classes provide full time early years education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding in order to continue to raise pupils' achievements by ensuring that:
 - there is more challenge and extra opportunity for the most-able pupils to use and develop their writing skills
 - pupils of all abilities develop good spelling skills and consistently present their work well
 - all teachers, in line with the school's marking policy, require pupils to act on the guidance provided to improve their work and thereby make the best possible progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteacher, leads the school consistently well. School leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have correctly identified the priorities for the school, including the need to improve achievement, especially in writing.
- Middle leaders are increasingly involved in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The school tracks the progress of all pupils effectively and the headteacher is aware that the information gathered needs to be presented well. Immediate help is given to any pupils who are falling behind to ensure they catch up quickly.
- The curriculum is of a good quality. Pupils like the topics they are asked to study and enjoy learning at first hand from visits out of school to places of interest. Leaders have adapted the curriculum to comply with new national requirements and are developing new methods to check how well pupils are doing.
- Arrangements for managing teachers' performance are in place and robust. Teachers know they are accountable for pupils' progress. Where any weaknesses in teaching are identified, leaders take action to help teachers improve their skills.
- Pupil premium funding is used very well to support disadvantaged pupils. The progress of these pupils is closely checked with monitoring showing that they make better progress than other pupils in the school.
- Highly effective leadership and management of the special educational needs provision ensures disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are very well catered for. Pupils' individual needs are carefully identified and the right level of support is provided. As a result, pupils make at least good and sometimes better progress in their learning. This confirms that the school is committed to fostering good relationships and to ensuring equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a high standard. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. For example, the school invited in a highly distinguished war veteran to talk about his experiences in fighting for King and country to help pupils appreciate the importance of British values of fairness and standing up for what you believe in. Pupils appreciate that voting is a good way of making sure that all pupils, if they want to, can put their names forward to become eco-council members or school council representatives. They understand that they have been elected by their classmates, not just chosen by teachers.
- The primary sports funding is used effectively. Pupils enjoy an increased range of physical activity after school, including dodge ball and cricket. Many regularly participate in competitive sports activities with local schools. Pupils confidently talk about the importance of exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.
- Safeguarding requirements are effective. Staff have received training in child protection issues and this ensures that there is a good level of care for pupils. Risk assessments and record-keeping arrangements are thorough and robust.
- The local authority provides appropriate light touch support for this good school. It agrees with the school's view of its performance and its priorities. The headteacher has been in post for two years and has received good support from the local authority in developing further the accurate evaluation of teaching and learning.
- Parents' opinions of the school are very positive. Parents say that their children are well cared for and that they are well-informed about how well their children are doing.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is of a good quality. Governors are highly experienced and bring to meetings high levels of expertise. They know the school well. The governing body receives detailed reports about pupils' achievement and improvements in the quality of teaching.
 - Governors ensure that their training is up-to-date and deploy the skills they bring to the role effectively. Those that can come into the school on a regular basis. Governors robustly challenge senior leaders. Their good knowledge of comparative data ensures that they accurately compare the school's performance with other schools nationally and make sure that clear links exist between teachers' performance in the classroom and decisions about their pay. This enables governors to tackle any underperformance effectively and reward good or better teaching.
 - Governors have a good understanding of how the pupil premium is deployed and its impact on disadvantaged pupils' performance and well-being. They know that the primary sports funding is being used effectively. The governors make sure that the school's safeguarding arrangements are effective and meet requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are courteous and considerate. Their positive attitudes and mature behaviour reflect the school's strongly held values and beliefs as a church school, and contribute well to their good achievement.
- Pupils work and play well together. They have a strong sense of right and wrong. For example, they expressed their sadness about acts of violence that had taken place in Tunisia in the days leading up to the inspection.
- Pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities as eco-leaders, worship leaders, play leaders and school council members. The eco-group present awards to classes for observing important environmental issues, such as turning off lights to save energy.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils are clear that adults will help them should any problems occur.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying. They say that bullying is not an issue at 'our' school. They know about bullying based on prejudice and say it does not happen at this school.
- As a result of the importance given to this aspect of safety by the school, pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe on the internet. Parents are very positive about how well the school keeps their children safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Relationships between staff and pupils are very strong. As a result, pupils are confident in expressing their opinions or seeking help if some aspect of their work is causing them a problem.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They manage pupils' behaviour well and make good use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding.
- Expectations of what pupils can do and achieve are mostly good. Learning is purposeful and pupils are keen to do well. They get on with their work quickly and enthusiastically. However, in a minority of lessons, there are examples of some work for the most-able pupils being too easy.
- There is a strong focus on teaching reading skills throughout the school and phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is taught successfully in Key Stage 1. Pupils read a variety of books, including those linked to the topics they are studying.
- Teachers have recognised that more still needs to be done to ensure that spelling skills are taught well throughout the school and that all pupils' work is presented neatly.
- There are some good opportunities for pupils to develop the quality of their writing, especially in Year 6, with pupils confidently writing in imaginative and interesting ways. However, this is not consistent across the school, with insufficient challenge provided for the most-able pupils to use and develop their writing skills well.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Pupils are provided with activities that challenge their mathematical thinking. Number facts and calculation skills are taught well but opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to use and apply these skills in solving problems.
- Teachers provide useful comments when marking pupils' work. However, not all teachers make sure that pupils act on the guidance provided. As a result, opportunities for pupils to make more rapid progress are sometimes missed.
- Teaching assistants are mostly well deployed and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They provide effective, targeted support for individuals and groups of pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs make good progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- More effective use of assessment information has brought about further improvements in pupils' achievements since the start of the academic year. From their starting points, pupils now make good progress.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is in line with national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Thorough tracking data held by the school and other inspection evidence show that Year 6 pupils are

currently making good progress and are on track to improve on the 2014 national test results, especially in mathematics. However, current data suggests that most-able Year 6 pupils have done less well in writing than in other subjects.

- The dip in pupils' attainment in Key Stage 1 in 2014 has been addressed, with the result that their attainment this year is in line with what is expected nationally.
- Younger pupils' understanding of phonics has improved this year. By the end of Year 1, an above average number of pupils reached the standard expected for their age in the national screening check for phonics.
- The school has rightly recognised that pupils' spelling skills need to improve. Across the school, basic spelling mistakes detract from the quality of pupils' writing.
- The most-able pupils are challenged well in reading and mathematics and make good progress. They are highly motivated to do their best because of teachers' high expectations. For example, in mathematics, a group of Year 6 pupils used their mathematical skills well in using tree diagrams in answering problems. However, over time, the most-able pupils' progress in writing has not been as strong. This is because the tasks set do not always sufficiently challenge them to work at higher levels.
- Across the school, the progress pupils now make in mathematics is good. This is a result of teachers setting tasks that challenge pupils' thinking.
- Progress in reading is good. Younger pupils show interest and enthusiasm for books. Older pupils speak enthusiastically about the type of books they enjoy.
- The results gained by disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2014 national tests indicate that their attainment exceeded that of other pupils in the school. They made expected progress when compared to pupils nationally in reading, mathematics and writing. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils was better than other pupils nationally in reading and writing, and approximately just over two terms behind other pupils nationally in mathematics.
- Records of the achievement of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school show that they make good progress and their achievement is higher than other pupils in the school in all three subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their individual starting points. Teachers and support assistants have a good understanding of these pupils' needs and set tasks that enable them to learn well.

The early years provision

is good

- Leadership of early years is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure children feel safe and secure. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and children's welfare needs are at the heart of everything that happens. Routines are well established and relationships are very strong, thereby ensuring those children are sensitively cared for and behave well.
- Staff is very sensitive to the particular requirements of disabled children and those who have special educational needs. The learning and welfare of these children are nurtured well and they make at least good progress.
- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. They make good progress from their individual starting points. The proportion reaching a good level of development is broadly average. As such, most pupils are well prepared to access the Year 1 curriculum.
- Leaders have correctly identified areas to improve children's progress in reading and mathematics. For example, the mathematics activities in the outside area that involve children using their number skills to solve number problems are helping to boost their skills.
- Parents speak highly of their children's enjoyment of school. Good steps are taken to involve parents in their children's education. During the inspection, children who are due to start school in the next academic year attended, with their parents, a well-organised 'taster' session.
- Teaching is good in the early years. Learning activities that take good account of what children need to do next in order to make good progress are well planned. During the inspection, children made good progress in developing their writing skills when asked to write their own version of a famous nursery rhyme. Their efforts about the exploits of Miss Muffet included the following actual spelling by children 'She sat on a swing eeting (eating) sum (some) apil (apple) pie.'
- Children's phonic skills are developed well. Most adults are knowledgeable and well prepared. A good range of activities are provided to enable children to improve their phonic skills and apply what they have learnt when they engage in play activities.

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	119419
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	461711

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	281
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Clayton
Headteacher	Fiona Pattison
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2012
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