

St Peter's CofE Primary School

Alexandra Street, Farnworth, Bolton, Lancashire, BL4 9JT

Inspection dates 2–3 February 2016

Overall effectiveness **Outstanding**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Pupils excel because strong leadership promotes pupils first and has high expectations of what they and staff can achieve.
- Governors, school leaders and staff work very well as a team to ensure all pupils develop academically and personally.
- The good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development emphasises the aspirational and caring ethos which pervades the school. This supports the promotion of British values very well.
- Highly effective and well-targeted support at an early stage ensures that all pupils develop the key skills to enable them to make very good progress and succeed.
- Pupils are very well equipped to continue their education into secondary schools.
- Vulnerable pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are extremely well cared for and supported to enable them to achieve.
- Safeguarding principles are a high priority and pupils are safe and well looked after.
- High-quality teaching enables pupils to make very good progress in their learning.
- Teaching assistants provide excellent support to pupils and are especially effective in helping pupils who need to catch up.
- Standards are continually rising and most pupils make more than expected progress across a wide range of subjects. Reading is a real strength.
- Effective systems are in place to monitor the progress of pupils and any underachievement is very quickly identified and addressed.
- Pupils' very good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning are making a significant contribution to the excellent progress most are making.
- Children develop very good learning habits in Reception class and there has been a year-on-year increase in the number of children who reach a good level of development, often from very low starting points.
- Provision in the Reception classes is of a very high standard and children get off to a very good start at school.
- Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum which enables them to apply their skills in reading, writing and mathematics across a range of subjects. They also are able to participate in a wide range of cultural and sporting activities.
- Parents value the hard work and care their children receive that enable them to succeed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to prioritise and develop teachers' subject knowledge to enable them to teach the whole range of subjects with ever increasing confidence and effectiveness.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- Strong and visionary leadership, with a clear commitment to providing the highest quality educational experience for all pupils, is at the core of the success of this school. But it is also a whole lot more. The improvement the school has made is a genuine team effort which also includes a blossoming partnership with parents and the surrounding community.
- There is a relentless drive and ambition at all levels in the school to provide the best possible life chances to all pupils, many of whom face difficulties and disadvantage. Success is not only measured in the significant progress that the pupils make in their learning but also in their personal development and growing maturity.
- There is no time for complacency at St Peter's and fresh challenges and improvements are continually being sought. School leaders know the school very well, evaluations are self critical and improvement plans meaningful, practical and realistic. Weaknesses in writing and spelling are being rigorously addressed and further improvements in teachers' subject knowledge across the whole curriculum are on the agenda.
- The broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum and a commitment to Christian values complements the promotion of British values and the development of pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural awareness. Pupils are asked to consider how moral values have changed over time within their topic linked to Victorian Britain or discuss and debate moral issues linked to current affairs, such as the refugee crisis.
- The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Displays around the school visually promote this at every opportunity. For example, each corridor is labelled to reinforce a value or an ambition and emphasises the aspirational ethos which pervades the school. Pupils regularly walk up progress avenue, cooperation alley or achievement road on their way to lessons, assembly or out to play.
- The school embraces new ideas that improve provision readily but also is keen to share its own expertise. Two specialist leaders of education are actively involved in providing practical support to local schools and other support is offered by senior leaders at a strategic level.
- Each subject leader is involved in the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment. This is integral to a comprehensive and very informative performance management process. Teacher performance is reviewed each term, based on a wide range of evidence including planning and outcomes for pupils across a range of sources and a range of subjects. Teachers are expected to use the outcomes to engage in professional reflection and identify professional development requirements and opportunities. The performance management process is rigorous and exemplary.
- The leadership of the provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is extremely well organised and effective. The special educational needs leader ensures that all the staff are kept fully informed and become knowledgeable about and are able to support and respond to the wide range of pupils' individual needs. Parents and pupils are fully involved in this process.
- Rigorous, efficient and well organised systems are in place to monitor the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils so that any underachievement is very quickly identified and interventions can be put in place. Regular meetings are held to monitor and track pupils' progress. These outcomes are used to hold teachers to account and feed into, on a termly basis, professional development logs which are used as the focus of the performance management process.
- Pupil premium funding is targeted very specifically and effectively at pupils in the early stages of their education in order that they acquire the basic skills necessary to enable them to engage fully with their learning. This includes targeted additional support and the engagement of a very effective family learning mentor who works particularly with vulnerable pupils and their families. The significant progress that most of these pupils make is testimony to the success of the strategies being employed.
- Additional primary sports funding is being used very well to purchase resources and provide training from specialist sports coaches from a number of sources. This includes Kearsley Academy who help organise opportunities for pupils to participate in competitive sport. All pupils participate in intra-school sports competition, despite the very limited access to outdoor amenities. Pupils interviewed expressed a keen interest and enjoyment of the wide variety of sports which are on offer.
- The local authority is aware of the strengths of the school and has provided only light touch monitoring support over the past few years. The school does make use of some of the training opportunities offered by the local authority, notably for governors.

- The vast majority of parents would recommend the school. Parents are kept very well informed, not only about the progress of their children, but also about the day-to-day activities at the school. The school website provides detailed information to parents about all aspects of the work of the school and this is easily accessible. Parents appreciate the care, support and academic challenge that the school provides.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are kept very well informed about all aspects of the school and know which practice is effective and which needs further investment and development. In particular, they are kept fully informed about issues relating to pupils' achievement. As a result, financial resources, including sports funding and pupil premium, are targeted appropriately and managed well.
 - Governors have continued to provide strong support and challenge for school leaders and through more regular visits are familiar with the day-to-day work of the school. They work closely with school leaders to check on the quality of the school's work and the progress of pupils. They seek appropriate training and external advice to support them in their work.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding principles are a high priority. Teachers and staff show due diligence and monitor any concerns about pupils' safety and well-being very carefully. Teachers receive regular training and updates on issues relating to child protection and the dangers of radicalisation. School practices are regularly reviewed and updated.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- The high quality teaching across the school ensures that pupils develop the skills they require to access their learning. As a result, they make very good progress and are very well prepared for secondary school.
- Teaching is driven by high expectations in every classroom from Reception right through to Year 6. There is a consistency of approach across the school with a strong emphasis on every child being able to succeed whatever their ability. As one parent put it succinctly, 'The school motto is "Learn, Sparkle and Shine" and that is exactly what my child does.'
- Teachers plan work in teams and there is a consistency between classes. There is a clarity about what is being taught. For example, strategies were observed in mathematics which allowed pupils to engage with a concept and consolidate their learning. Teachers also exhibited strong and consistent behaviour management strategies delivered in a kind, caring manner, resulting in positive learning behaviour from all pupils.
- Consistency is supported by high-quality team work. Teaching assistants are involved with class teachers to plan activities enabling their support to be focused. As a result, they are able to support pupils – enabling them to make very good progress. There is a clear understanding of what learning should take place and a shared high expectation of what pupils should be capable of achieving.
- Teachers clearly consider the specific needs of all pupils and if there are concerns they are pro-active in offering support. Interventions are purposeful and very well matched to the individual needs of the pupil, including reading, writing, phonics confidence and emotional support.
- Teachers exhibit very good subject knowledge in their teaching of English and mathematics but are not always as confident or secure in other subjects. Where a teacher has a particular subject specialism the additional quality shines through in the enhanced response from pupils. For example, much of the art, design and food technology is taught by a teacher with specialist skills in this area. Inspectors saw a lot of evidence of pupils being taught specific skills and techniques and applying these to their own creative work. The outstanding work in their art books reflects the high quality experience that the pupils have received in their lessons.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is very strong and caters very well for the needs of individual groups of pupils. Most-able pupils are challenged with additional comprehension activities, middle ability pupils are supported in larger groups whilst less-able pupils are given many opportunities to speak and listen in small groups in class settings and through one-to-one intervention support.
- Work is marked regularly and next steps identified, especially in writing and mathematics. Opportunities are provided each day for pupils to make corrections through 'Fix it' sessions.
- Homework is set regularly and helps extend and support pupils' learning. Parents commented on the regularity and quality of this work and how it provided them with good opportunities to become involved in their children's education.

- Vibrant displays, frequently celebrating pupils' work, especially writing, are visible in all classrooms and in every corner of the school. These provide not only colour, but are a resource used in lessons to support learning, celebrate the achievement of the pupils and promote the caring culture that permeates the school.
- The frequent and wide range of extra-curricular activities that pupils have access to provide an additional rich tapestry of experiences which add to the high-quality learning going on in classrooms. Very good use is made of visits and visitors to stimulate pupils' learning and interest. Specialists, including artists and musicians, add welcome variety and colour to lessons and focus days.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. Attendance has improved and is now above the national average. No group of pupils is disadvantaged by poor attendance.
- Pupils are encouraged to be ambitious and to continually strive for improvement. They frequently talk about what they are keen to do next, how they are going to make their work better and the way they support and challenge each other when working in groups. Parents spoke very positively about how their children increased in confidence as they progressed through the school.
- Very positive relationships are the cornerstone of making this a strong and loving community. Pupils leave their cares at the door and inclusion is an integral part of everyday school life. Last year, the school attained the Inclusion Quality Mark which identified that, 'all staff are committed to ensuring that every child matters and this is evident in every classroom. The school values the individual, promotes confidence and encourages all children to "Learn, Sparkle and Shine" in a harmonious environment'. Inspectors found this to be true.
- Parents were effusive in their praise for the school, 'Children are thriving in this school. The teachers not only support my children to reach their goals educationally, they offer support around developing them to become kind and well rounded adults.'
- Records indicate that bullying is rare. Pupils are well aware of different forms of bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudiced based bullying. Parents and pupils identified that any concerns are dealt with straight away. The school is very responsive and any poor behaviour is dealt with very quickly.
- The school accepts many pupils who exhibit challenging behaviours or have complex personal needs. These are identified very quickly and strategies are put in place to offer support and guidance. The mental and emotional health of all pupils is nurtured with real care.
- Vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs are provided with exceptional care. Parental links are very strong and extensive, immediate and effective use is made of appropriate multi-agency support.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Given the large number of pupils who exhibit emotional and behavioural needs, pupils' attitudes to learning are first class. They are motivated and fully engaged with their learning. In lessons, they listen and follow instructions and quickly engage with their work.
- These positive attitudes are mirrored around the school. Pupils are considerate, open doors to adults and play well together. Outside the school, they are real ambassadors for the values the school stands for. As one parent identified, 'When in public, the children are always well mannered and extremely well behaved.'
- The school behaviour policy is applied with great consistency by all the staff and pupils are left in no doubt what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and they respond accordingly.

Outcomes for pupils are outstanding

- All pupils, including the large number who enter school from low starting points and those with special educational needs, make substantial progress, not only in reading, writing and mathematics but also across

a range of subjects. Like nationally, girls tend to do better than boys, especially in writing.

- The school understands its pupils well. It recognises that many need to develop the basic skills of language, communication and number in order to make more rapid progress in their learning. A great deal of time, support, and funding (including pupil premium funding) is allocated to provide pupils with additional help and support in their early years in the school to enable them to succeed before they leave to enter secondary education.
- The impact of this intensive support is that as pupils develop the basic skills and become more confident in their application, their rate of progress begins to accelerate, notably throughout Key Stage 2, where less intervention is now needed. The greater majority of pupils make more than expected progress by the time they leave school, especially in reading and mathematics.
- As a result, the school has seen attainment at the end of the Year 6 steadily rise as the gap has been closed in writing and mathematics, and especially in reading. Attainment is now above average in reading and mathematics and broadly average in writing. The school recognises that spelling, punctuation and grammar is an area that needs further improvement and this is a focus of current initiatives.
- Parents are very positive about the impact and improvement evident in their children as they progress through the school. As one parent remarked, full of praise about what the school has done for his son, 'I prefer it to the outstanding school he previously attended. Until he came to this school my son had been unable to read or write simple sentences but now, in six months, with the help and support he has received, he is able to write at the level of the rest of the class.'
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve very well. Over time, the gap between disadvantaged and all pupils nationally has closed in mathematics and especially reading where pupils in St Peter's do better than pupils nationally. The gap in writing has not closed quite as fast and this has been a priority this year.
- There are regular opportunities for pupils to improve and reflect on their writing during 'Fix it' time each day. This has impacted well on progress. Every opportunity is taken to promote accurate writing and grammar. For example, contractions are written on the stair steps as a reminder and re-inforcement for pupils as they walk around the school.
- There are also plenty of opportunities for developing writing in a wide range of subjects, including topic. Inspectors saw lots of evidence of application of skills learning in writing across the curriculum. Presentation in most books is of a high standard.
- There is a strong emphasis on improving spelling and grammar. This is a whole-school target, since this is a recognised weakness. Most books demonstrated examples of learning activities tailored to develop this area of weakness. There is good evidence of whole-school spelling strategies being employed so that pupils are given plenty of opportunities to practice and apply their spelling, leading to progress being made.
- The school is teaching reading effectively and this is evidenced in the pupils reading aloud. Pupils are equipped with the necessary phonics strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and could talk with good comprehension about their reading. The percentage of pupils passing the phonics screening test has improved over the years and is now above the national average.
- Reading is a high priority. Books go home every night and parents are encouraged to comment in pupils' reading records. There is a strong focus on inclusion and ensuring that 'no pupil gets left out'. For those pupils who are unable to read with an adult at home, teaching assistants act in absentia and ensure that they are read to in school.
- The school's reading recovery programme is accurately identifying pupils requiring reading support and working with them to tackle underachievement. This was demonstrated by the good progress in reading and positive attitudes to reading shown by these pupils during the inspection.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- Children join the Reception class from a wide range of pre-school experiences with skills and abilities which are well below expectations for their age. Communication and language skills are especially weak. All children make quick progress because the quality of provision and support for children is exceptional. Teachers know their children very well and target activities to enhance their social, emotional and academic development. For example, adults work closely with the speech and language therapy team to ensure that targeted children receive immediate, and the best possible, support.
- As a result of effective support, care and high-quality teaching, there has been a year-on-year increase in the number of children who now reach a good level of development. Although this still remains below the

national average, the gap is being relentlessly closed and the number of children who are 'school ready' is growing.

- Children are developing very good learning habits. They know the rules, play cooperatively and consistently demonstrate listening, respect and friendship towards each other and the adults they come into contact with.
- The learning environment is carefully planned and is very rich in resources. Reading corners are inviting and children learn in a print-rich environment which includes displays of their own work.
- Phonics is taught well with lively and engaging teaching. This leads to the good development of basic writing and reading skills.
- Continuous provision, both indoor and outdoor, is specifically targeted to address children's needs and despite the small space available is well managed and resourced.
- Assessment is meticulous and provides a strong overview of each child's achievement.
- Communications between home and school are very good and parents are kept fully and regularly informed about how their child is doing. Relationships are very positive. There is an open door policy and parents are invited into school for 'stay and learn' sessions termly. These are very well attended. Learning journals are informative and kept up to date. These provide photographic and anecdotal evidence about children's achievement.
- Reading journals also exemplify the good communications between home and school. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly and these journals are not only used to celebrate the child's progress but also are used to identify areas for development. For example, teachers regularly comment about the child's reading and list words they would like parents to practise at home.
- The early years leader is striving to ensure that the needs of every child are fully met. She knows her children very well and oversees a curriculum which is well planned, engages the children and moves their learning on. Close working with staff in Year 1 ensures continuity in learning and smooth transition into a more formal classroom environment.
- Staff are well managed and led. Training needs are identified and addressed to maximise impact on children's development and learning. This ensures that provision in the Reception classes is of a very high standard.

School details

Unique reference number	105239
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10001268

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Masters
Headteacher	Mrs Lynn Williams
Telephone number	01204 333090
Website	www.st-peters-farnworth.bolton.sch.uk
Email address	office@st-peters-farnworth.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 February 2011

Information about this school

- St Peter's is a larger than average-sized school. It has increased from a single form to a two form entry school and is still expanding.
- The school is a lead school for a cluster of schools who are in partnership with St James teaching school and Manchester Metropolitan University as a School Direct teaching school.
- Children enter Reception from a range of providers and with a wide range of pre-school experiences.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is very high and double the national average.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is low and very few pupils have English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support for their special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- The increasing popularity of the school means that the number of pupils moving into and out of the school at unconventional times is decreasing. Pupil mobility is now in line with the national average.
- The school has received a number of awards including The Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People (silver), the Activemark, Artsmark gold, ICT Mark, Leading Parent Partnership Award, RE Quality Mark (gold), Inclusion Quality Mark and the PE Quality Mark (bronze).
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes in the school. This included the teaching of phonics as well as intervention sessions. They also listened to several pupils read.
- On the first day of the inspection, Her Majesty's Inspector conducted two learning walks through the school accompanied by the headteacher, looking at outcomes and engagement in lessons.
- Inspectors evaluated and scrutinised pupils' work across a range of subjects, especially English, mathematics, science and topic work.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation including school policies, school improvement partner monitoring reports, an external evaluation of teaching and learning, the school self evaluation and development plans as well as procedures to safeguard pupils.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, staff, six governors and a representative from the local authority. A telephone conversation about the work of the school was held with the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors also met with two groups of pupils to discuss their work, how safe they felt and what they thought about the school. They also talked to many other pupils during lessons and around the school.
- Thirty responses were considered from the online questionnaire 'Parent View'. Her Majesty's Inspector also talked to parents attending a coffee morning on day two of the inspection.

Inspection team

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Schelene Ferris	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Gill	Ofsted Inspector
Barbara Harrold	Ofsted Inspector

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