

Nelson St Philip's Church of England Primary School

Leeds Road, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 9TQ

Inspection dates	8–9 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher makes sure that this is a very well-managed, harmonious and efficiently run school. All members of staff work well with parents, the church and community to ensure that pupils achieve well and enjoy learning.
- Senior leaders are highly effective and have secured improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- Governors' good knowledge, experience and commitment have supported the school well on its journey to becoming good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. They regularly raise money for different charities and 'look out' for people less fortunate than themselves.
- A passionate and highly skilled team provides outstanding support for pupils who have special educational needs or disability.

- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that high-quality support is always available to pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Pupils attend school regularly and behave impeccably in class. They are proud of their school, welcoming and highly respectful.
- Pupils' attainment has improved year on year at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 and is much higher than at the time of the previous inspection.
- By the time pupils left school at the end of Year 6 in 2015, their progress was good in writing and mathematics and outstanding in reading.
- Relationships between the school and parents are exceptionally strong. Parents say that their children are happy, safe and well looked after.
- All aspects of the leadership and management of the early years provision, including teaching and progress, are good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few opportunities are available for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to problem solving activities across the curriculum.
- Not all pupils are consistently challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability, particularly the most able in writing.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the quality of teaching further and, in so doing, raise levels of achievement to outstanding across the school by:
 - providing as many opportunities as possible for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to problemsolving activities across the curriculum
 - ensuring that all pupils, particularly the most able, are challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability in writing.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management good

- This good and harmonious school is exceptionally well led and managed by a highly efficient headteacher who leaves nothing to chance. Supported by a very capable senior leadership team and knowledgeable and well-informed governors, she has ensured that good-quality support is available to prevent pupils, and children in the Reception class, from falling behind, and that teachers and teaching assistants are trained well, and fully responsible for ensuring that pupils reach their potential. These actions have helped to make sure that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved since the previous inspection.
- Subject leaders, including those responsible for English, mathematics and science, are fully involved in improving the quality of teaching. They regularly take advantage of training and are familiar with the latest development in their subject areas. Subject leaders make their valuable contribution to improving the quality of teaching through regular observations of teachers, detailed analysis of assessment information and talking to pupils about their learning.
- All teachers and teaching assistants who spoke to the inspector said that many opportunities are available for them to develop their teaching and leadership skills, as well as their skills and knowledge in working with children with special educational needs or disabilities. Teachers new to the profession say that the coaching and mentoring that receive from senior leaders supports them exceptionally well. They also indicate that this support is helping to continually improve their teaching practice.
- Senior leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils have no additional difficulties in school. Very effective specialist support, targeted small-group teaching activities and one-to-one reading, writing and mathematics sessions ensure that any pupils who fall behind soon catch with their peers. Due to this comprehensive support, disadvantaged pupils make at least the same good progress as their peers in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- Senior leaders' work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally good. Pupils are very thoughtful. They respect each other's views and enjoy engaging in collective worship and prayers. Pupils often raise money for various charitable causes and have engaged in Sports Relief and Children In Need activities. For example, pupils recently raised money for a local food bank during Harvest Festival and spent a year raising funds for a local hospice.
- The school's work to promote British values is good. Pupils understand the culturally diverse nature of British society, appreciating that this extends beyond the boundaries of their community. They know the importance of tolerance, which is the current 'value of the month' in school, and abide by the law. Pupils are eager to exercise their democratic rights, and regularly apply for various positions of responsibility in school such as school captains, playground 'buddies' and members of the school council and pupil parliament.
- Pupils benefit from a stimulating and exciting curriculum. This captivates their interests, develops their reading, writing and mathematical skill well and promotes their love of learning. They have many opportunities to visit museums and local places of interest and enjoy going to the theatre. Pupils enjoy Tai Chi (relaxation exercise), horse riding and going to special events. For example, pupils recently attended a special World Book Day event at the Preston Football Stadium. Pupils have many opportunities to carry out project work on subjects such as the Anglo-Saxons and Roman Britain.
- The primary school sports funding is used very effectively. Due to limited space at the school, space at the local leisure centre is hired so that pupils can participate in a range of sporting activities. Staff from the centre come into school and help to improve pupils' fitness through multi-skills activities and support staff by developing their skills in teaching various physical education activities. Funding is also used to enable disadvantaged pupils to attend after-school clubs, including for yoga, volleyball and football, and increase participation in inter-school sporting competition at the local high school.
- Parents are highly complimentary about all aspects of the school, and rightly so. Those parents who spoke to the inspector were of the view that the school 'can't do enough'. Repeatedly parents indicated that school staff, including the family liaison worker, not only help them with matters pertaining to education, but provide advice on how they can access various health, housing and social services. Parents are very satisfied that their children are happy, safe and making good progress.
- The school has a very productive relationship with the local authority, whose representative is of the view that teamwork is good and the school is building on solid foundations. Hence the 'light-touch' support offered. Most recently the local authority has worked with the school to develop the role of middle leaders and refine the school's self-evaluation.



■ The governance of the school

- Governors know the school well. They are able to offer good support because they are skilled and knowledgeable in the area of education and have a good understanding of the local community. They work alongside the school, regularly spending time with senior leaders, teachers, pupils and parents. Due to this, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths, as well as what it needs to do to improve further.
- Governors know that the quality of teaching is good because they receive regular reports from senior leaders and subject specialists. In addition to this, they come into school to talk to pupils about their learning and look at the work in their books. Governors are prepared to reward teachers for their work, but only if they are satisfied that teachers have reached their targets and are helping to move the school forward.
- Governors insist on knowing how spending is helping to improve standards and are very precise when
 it comes to accounting for the use of resources. They are fully aware that additional funding for
 disadvantaged pupils is helping to ensure their good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and
 their full participation in all aspects of school life, including educational visits and sporting activities.
- Governors are trained well and keep themselves abreast of developments in education. Most recently
 they have attended training in the 'Prevent' duty and safer recruitment.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All members of staff are highly vigilant when it comes to ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils and children in the early years. All members of staff, including teachers new to the school, know exactly what to do in the event of any concerns being raised by pupils. Leaders work exceptionally well with parents and other stakeholders to create a well-informed and safe culture in the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

is good

- Teachers and teaching assistants work exceptionally well together to ensure that pupils enjoy learning and make good progress. Teachers' good training, and use of information on pupils' prior performance, enables them to provide pupils with support just when it is needed and offer different activities to cater for their various skills and abilities.
- Teachers always ensure that pupils know exactly what they will be learning. Lesson objectives and instructions are clear and activities move on with a sense of urgency. Teachers are not afraid to stop activities in class if pupils have not quite 'got it'. This was well shown in a Key Stage 2 mathematics class where pupils were learning about estimations and measurements.
- After giving pupils various items to measure, including a straw, a sponge, a comb and a felt-tip pen, pupils were asked first to estimate the size of each item and then to measure their actual size. On seeing that some pupils were measuring items first, the teacher stopped the lesson and explained that it was important to learn from mistakes and that it did not matter if their estimates were wrong. This developed pupils' confidence and generated a good discussion about where and when estimates could be used in 'real life'.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in mathematics and are careful to ensure that pupils think deeply and explain the logic to their answers. This was exemplified in a Year 1 class, where pupils were learning about geometric shapes. The teacher praised the class for their good use of mathematical language and asked questions such as 'How do you know that shape is a square?' and 'How do you know that a circle has no vertices?' Pupils were applauded for their good answers and were very proud to put their names on the board in recognition of their hard work.
- Teachers take all opportunities to get pupils to read in class. They focus sharply on improving pupils' grammar, punctuation, spelling and writing and on developing their vocabulary. This was exemplified in a Year 2 class, where pupils were learning about the different animals that live on the grasslands of Southern and Central Africa. Fired with excitement, after the recent World Book Day where they dressed up as different animals, pupils were very eager to read about and write descriptions of different animals. The most-able pupils looked up words such as 'nocturnal', 'carnivore' and 'savannah' in their dictionaries while other pupils demonstrated their understanding of different animals in sentences such as 'zebras have black and white stripes for camouflage because they could get eaten by lions'. All groups of pupils made good progress and thoroughly enjoyed their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils very well and have high expectations of what they are capable of achieving. They encourage pupils to have faith in their own abilities, constantly developing



their confidence and nurturing them to become resilient learners. This was shown in a Year 4/5 class where pupils confidently discussed the sensitive issue of slavery and imagined what it might be like to be stolen from a village, and in a 5/6 class where pupils used their 'big voices' to great effect as they shared with their classmates the things that they liked, and didn't like, in French.

- Support for pupils with English as an additional language is outstanding. Pupils are not in this school for long before they are learning alongside their peers. This includes pupils with languages, such as Polish, Hungarian, Spanish and Italian, which are new to the school. However, the excellent strategies that teaching staff use ensure that such pupils quickly make remarkable progress in all areas of learning.
- The quality of marking is good. Teachers take a consistent approach to assessing pupils' work. The feedback they provide to pupils is in line with the school's marking policy. A close scrutiny of work in pupils' books shows that they regularly respond to teachers' comments and improve their work as a result of them.
- Though the quality of mathematics teaching is strong overall, pupils' books show that opportunities are sometimes missed for them to apply their mathematics skills to problem-solving activities across all subjects. Similarly, while there has been much improvement to the quality of writing, teachers do not always ensure that pupils, especially the most able, are sufficiently challenged to write at length and for different purposes. Senior leaders are aware of this and are providing more opportunities for the mostable pupils to improve their resilience by, for example, taking the lead in fundraising activities, and providing more challenging work in English and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils learn in a very calm, purposeful and peaceful learning environment, where staff cater for their social, emotional and academic well-being exceptionally well. Because staff know pupils very well, they are able to tailor the curriculum, and provision in the early years, to meet their individual needs.
- Pupils' resilience is developing. Staff put great emphasis on developing pupils' confidence. As a result of this, pupils are beginning to live up to the high expectations that teachers have of them.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe when online. They know that cyber bullying can take place on any device and that they should be very careful about which websites they visit.
- Pupils know that they should never give personal details out over the internet, share passwords or provide information on where they live. The school is particularly vigilant in this area and ensures that time is allocated for pupils to learn about the risks and dangers associated with the internet. Information is also provided to parents, and made available on the school website, to raise their awareness of these potential dangers.
- Pupils have a good understanding of safe and unsafe situations. Regular visitors from ChildLine, police, fire, health and family services, as well as from the Water Board, ensure that pupils have a welldeveloped understanding of the dangers and risks they may face when not in school.
- The personal, social, emotional and health aspects of the curriculum equip pupils with a good understanding of the dangers of illegal drug use and of the importance of healthy foods and regular exercise.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are of the view that behaviour is good. Parents, staff and governors are of this view too. The school's behaviour logs indicate that behaviour is typically good over time.
- Pupils' attendance is good and is much improved since the previous inspection. Pupils say that they 'love' school and the many opportunities they have to find out new things and visit different places.
- Pupils say that bullying is 'when someone says bad words to you, or hits you all the time', and insist that it rarely, if ever, happens in school. They are confident that they can report any concerns to any member of staff and say that they know things will always be 'sorted out'.
- Teachers expect pupils to behave well at all times. They are adept at supporting those pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour, and at identifying the signs that might lead to poor behaviour.
- Pupils enjoy coming together for whole-school events where the sense of community and common purpose is palpable. This was shown during an assembly delivered by the local vicar as pupils



- enthusiastically sang, and danced to the 'Christian Disco Song' and offered very sensible suggestions as to why we should all be tolerant, caring and respectful towards each other.
- Pupils' have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including racism, which they say never happens in school. They know that people are not all the same and say that it is wrong to judge someone because of what they believe in, or how they look.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection. Their attainment at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 in 2015 was the best that it has been for at least the last five years. Pupils' attainment in reading and writing was average at the end of Key Stage 1. Their attainment in reading was also average at the end of Key Stage 2. Though overall standards were not as good as for those found nationally, they are steadily improving.
- The school's own compelling evidence, and inspection evidence, indicates that children join the Reception class with weak skills in relation to what is typical, in most areas of learning. From their low starting points, most make good and often outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. At the end of Year 6 in 2015, pupils made outstanding progress in reading and the vast majority made at least good progress in writing and mathematics. This good and outstanding progress was replicated across the school in 2015. The school's own assessment information shows that the trend is continuing in 2016, as all pupils, including the most able, are making accelerated progress.
- Pupils are very proud of their achievements in reading. They are eager to read and have good expression and comprehension skills. Pupils' reading records show that they read often and are familiar with the work of a wide range of authors. Senior leaders' and teachers' determination that pupils should discover the joy of reading is paying off. This is shown in the good and outstanding progress that pupils make in this subject across all year groups. The very small number of pupils who were not secure in their reading skills at the national phonics screening check in 2015 are making good progress because they are exceptionally well supported in Year 2.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is good because teachers' subject knowledge and the leadership of mathematics are strong. Work in pupils' books shows that there are opportunities for them to apply their calculations skills to problem-solving activities. For example, in Key Stage 1 pupils have regular opportunities to carry out class surveys and use the school hall to develop their understanding of directions and coordinates. However, too few opportunities are available for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving activities across other subjects of the curriculum.
- The school celebrates pupils' achievements in writing, with many examples of extended and well-written work displayed in the school hall and in classrooms. Pupils are eager to learn, many demonstrating their love for learning by engaging in long-term homework projects and research activities. This was evident in the excellent work of Year 5/6 pupils exploring the beliefs, culture and traditions of the Vikings, and in the beautifully presented, well-researched and fully indexed work produced by pupils on 'The World of The Komodo Dragon'.
- Work in pupils' 'Independence Day' writing books (where they can pursue their interests and write about them) show good examples of writing for different purposes. Pupils' religious education books give thoughtful accounts of the lives of various biblical characters. All such opportunities support pupils' good progress in this subject. However, senior leaders have made it a priority to provide even more opportunities for pupils, particularly the most able, to practise and refine their writing skills, in order to boost their attainment in this subject.
- Pupils with English as an additional language are cared for very well by highly skilled and experienced teachers and teaching assistants. They are fully assessed as soon as they arrive in school and a tailored programme of support is put together for them. This ensures that they settle into school life quickly and make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A highly skilled and dedicated team, consisting of the headteacher, family liaison worker and specialist teaching assistant, work tirelessly to ensure that any special educational need or disability that a pupil may have is identified early and dealt with efficiently. Staff are able to do this because they are expert at carrying out diagnostic testing, work closely in partnership with families and can enlist the support of a range of specialist partners. This positive working relationship helps to ensure that pupils make good and often outstanding progress across the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils make the same good and outstanding progress as their peers in school in reading,



writing and mathematics. At the end of Year 6 in 2015, disadvantaged pupils' performance in some areas, such as reading and grammar, punctuation and spelling, was better than that of their peers in school and other pupils nationally. As with their peers in school, disadvantaged pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics was about two terms behind that of other pupils nationally. However, gaps in writing and mathematics are rapidly narrowing between all pupils in school and pupils nationally.

■ Senor leaders are acutely aware of the need to raise girls' aspirations and develop their confidence. They do this through, for example, providing extra mathematics classes just for girls and designing projects which help girls to perfect their money management skills through various fundraising activities. The net effect of these actions has been to promote equality of opportunity and narrow the gaps between girls' and boys' attainment.

Early years provision

is good

- The strong leadership of the early years provision has ensured that the proportion of children attaining a good level of development has increased year on year for the last three years. In 2015 a broadly average proportion of children entered Year 1 with the skills and abilities necessary for the next stage of their learning. Currently children are making rapid progress and attaining well.
- Children learn in stimulating indoor and outdoor learning and playing areas. Despite the very limited outdoor space available to children, they enjoy being outside. This is because staff are imaginative and make learning fun. Children enjoy experimenting with different materials, including rice, to see how quickly they pass through different size openings and how fast they can power a wheel. Other children like to play on their wheeled toys, 'sleep' under the covered area and talk to their friends from Year 1.
- Indoor provision is very well laid out, clearly linking to different areas of learning. Here children behave sensibly and safely and are purposeful at all times. They are cooperative and enjoy working on construction 'projects' and painting and decorating clay bowls for baby bear (from Goldilocks and The Three Bears). Lots of opportunities are available for children to explore the properties of water, count and use weights and measures. The most-able children can recognise shapes such as squares, triangles and rectangles. They can also identify octagons and say how many sides they have.
- The quality of teaching is good. This was demonstrated during a phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) session where children made good progress because they listened carefully, and were familiar with the daily routine of sounding out words and writing them down. In one group children accurately sounded out words such as 'girl', 'snow' and 'whirl', while in another group they were encouraged to use their writing frames to write down the 'ow', 'oi' and 'oo' sounds. In a third group, children were very confident and were assisting each other in reading words such as 'get', 'pen' and 'fat' while the teaching assistant insisted that they read fluently and listen carefully.
- Work to broaden children's experience and develop their understanding of the world around them is good. This was shown when children went to the local furniture shop to see if they could get a replacement chair for baby bear, and when they met the Olympic gold medallist Hannah Wheelan. Children regularly visit Walverden Park, where they were recently challenged to find out why there were so many leaves on the ground.
- Children are continually assessed. Information from ongoing assessments is recorded in children's learning journey books and shared with parents, who are well informed and encouraged to record their children's development and progress at home. Parents are welcomed into the Reception class and are regularly invited to various workshops and 'Friday Friends' where they can come into school and learn with their children. Such initiatives are helping to ensure children's good progress and their readiness for learning in Year 1.
- Parents are of the view that their children are safe and well cared for at school. Staff ensure that the same rigorous safeguarding procedures in operation in Key Stages 1 and 2 are applied in the early years provision.
- Senior leaders have made it a priority to explore ways of encouraging parents to engage with their children's learning and to further enhance opportunities to broaden children's knowledge and understanding of the world.



School details

Unique reference number119437Local authorityLancashireInspection number10002243

This inspection 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 140

Appropriate authority

Chair

Margaret Thacker

Chair Margaret Thacker

Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge

Kathryn Ellige

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Date of previous inspection 1–2 October 2013

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are of Pakistani heritage and speak English as an additional language. A small proportion are of White British heritage. An increasing proportion of pupils are from various European countries. These pupils speak various languages including Polish, Hungarian, Spanish and Italian.
- The school meets 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.
- Since the previous inspection there have been a number of appointments, including two newly qualified teachers. The governing body has been restructured and a new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed.



Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read. Joint observations were carried out with members of the senior leadership team
- The inspector listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised in class and separately with senior leaders.
- The inspector considered 14 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) and nine text responses from parents. Inspectors met with parents at the beginning of the school day. The school's own surveys of parents and pupils' views were also taken into account, as well as responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by nine members of staff and nine pupils.
- A meeting was held with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Meetings were held with school leaders responsible for English, mathematics, science, early years provision and provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability.
- A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector examined a range of documents. This included the school's reviews of its own performance, checks on the quality of teaching, development plans, safeguarding documentation, information about pupils' progress and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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