

St Gabriel's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale

Vicarage Road South, Castleton, Rochdale, Lancashire OL11 2TN

Inspection dates	14–15 June 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils do not make good progress in all year groups.
- Pupils' progress in writing is not consistently good.
- Some teachers do not adapt activities well enough to provide challenge for the most able pupils.
- Teaching assistants are not used effectively to make a big enough difference to children's learning.
- Teachers do not make sure that pupils are clear about their next steps in learning.
- Significant instability in leadership and staffing has hindered leaders and governors in improving the quality of teaching and outcomes.
- The newly established senior leadership team has not had time to impact fully on bringing about improvements to outcomes.
- Some middle leadership roles are not yet established or are in the early stages of development. They therefore are not yet effective in improving the quality of teaching and outcomes.
- Pupils have a limited understanding of other cultures, faiths and beliefs.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed headteacher has an accurate view of the school and has already brought about improvements to the quality of teaching.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics and in reading in most year groups.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start and make good progress from their starting points.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - further developing the roles of senior leaders to ensure that they play a full part in raising the quality of teaching and pupils' progress
 - ensuring that middle leaders are firmly established in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their areas and subjects
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of other cultures, faiths and beliefs
 - ensuring that the school's marking policy is implemented consistently.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - implementing plans to increase opportunities for pupils to undertake longer pieces of writing independently, in order to improve and hone their skills
 - ensuring that assessment information is used well to build on pupils' previous learning and that there is sufficient challenge for the most able pupils
 - ensuring that teaching assistants are used to promote learning effectively
 - making sure that pupils are clear about their next steps in learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, the school has experienced much instability. The current headteacher is the fifth to hold the role within this time and there have been many staff changes. This instability has affected leaders' and governors' progress in bringing about improvements in teaching and learning. Although improvements have been made, over time leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching and outcomes are good.
- The school is now entering a more stable period, with a permanent headteacher and a recently established senior leadership team which awaits the arrival of a deputy headteacher in September 2016. However, some senior leadership roles are in an early stage of becoming established and the roles of others have been redefined. As a result, senior leadership is not yet effective in improving teaching and outcomes.
- Many middle leaders, such as the special education needs coordinator, are new to their roles and others are not in place at present owing to staff changes. This means that the impact of middle leadership on improving outcomes is not yet good.
- Despite these many changes, leaders and governors have brought about improvements to the teaching of mathematics since the last inspection. Teachers have attended training, and as a result, the quality of teaching and outcomes in mathematics has improved. Current progress in mathematics in most year groups is good.
- The recently appointed headteacher has worked determinedly to promote her vision for excellence and an ethos of commitment to improvement. She has established a clear system for monitoring the quality of teaching. Improvements are evident in, for example, the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent), and in pupils' attitudes to learning. She is aware that other aspects of teaching, such as the teaching of writing and the consistent implementation of the school's marking policy, are areas for further development.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of interesting experiences which motivate and engage pupils. It includes opportunities to develop mathematical skills well. There are fewer chances for pupils to develop and apply their writing skills through writing extended pieces. Pupils enjoy taking part in trips to reinforce learning, such as the Year 5 trip to an 'evacuee experience' as part of their studies about the Second World War. Pupils' experiences are broadened through participation in after-school clubs, such as those for choir and dance.
- Leaders ensure that most aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well. Pupils learn to be polite and considerate and to respect the opinions of others. However, the curriculum does not include sufficient opportunity for pupils to develop an understanding of different cultures, faiths and beliefs.
- Pupils learn about the British values of democracy through elections to the school council. Their understanding of these values is enhanced through activities such as 'British values week', where pupils learn about responsible behaviour and the importance of the law.
- Leaders and governors make appropriate use of the pupil premium funding to provide extra support for disadvantaged pupils in their learning. As a result, gaps between these pupils and others are narrowing.
- The primary sports premium has been spent well to extend the opportunities that pupils experience to see the benefits of sport for their health and personal development. Specialist sports coaches have provided support to develop pupils' physical skills. Pupils also benefit from a range of clubs, such as those for gymnastics, football, karate and athletics, to develop their skills and enjoyment of exercise.
- Parents speak positively about the school. They report that their children enjoy school and are safe and happy. Most of those who spoke with inspectors or responded to Parent View praised the communication with the school and the impact of the new headteacher.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are passionate and determined to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can and are ready for the next stages of their learning. They have an accurate grasp of the strengths and priorities facing the school. They have provided support to school leaders during the many changes that have taken place since the last inspection.
 - Governors are not afraid to challenge school leaders. They ask searching questions about, for example, the use of pupil premium funding.

- Governors know the quality of teaching in the school and the areas for improvement. They understand that pay awards are linked to the impact teachers are making on outcomes for pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Arrangements for keeping pupils safe are robust and well managed. Checks on the suitability of staff meet statutory requirements. Procedures to identify and respond promptly to concerns are well understood by staff. There are positive links with parents and other agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across the school. Staff do not always provide work which accurately meets the needs of pupils, particularly the most able. Where this is the case and activities lack challenge, learning slows and pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The teaching of writing does not ensure that pupils make good progress. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. Pupils lack opportunity to apply the skills they are learning in longer pieces of writing. This means that their skills are not developed to the full.
- Staff do not always follow the school's policy and give feedback to pupils which explains to them how to improve their work or extend their learning. This means that at times pupils are not clear about what they need to do next to improve their work. This slows their progress.
- Teaching assistants are not deployed in the best possible way to promote learning. At times, they do not actively engage in pupils' learning, which means that they do not develop pupils' potential to the full.
- Where learning is effective, staff provide activities which challenge and engage pupils. Year 1 pupils enjoyed applying and extending their mental calculation skills as they played a game rolling a dice and then selecting the correct number of coins to add up.
- Where staff establish clear and high expectations for pupils' learning, pupils focus well on tasks and this has a positive impact on their progress. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoyed developing their skills in persuasive writing as they were clear about the task and concentrated well to complete their work.
- Phonics is well taught. Staff ensure that this learning is well matched to pupils' abilities and that pupils apply this knowledge in their reading. Pupils show enthusiasm as they join in activities identifying letter sounds and applying their knowledge to read a range of words.

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 say that they enjoy school. They value friendships and say that staff care for them and help them with their learning. The good relationships between pupils and staff have a positive impact on pupils' personal development.
- Pupils feel safe. They say that, if they have any concerns, they are confident to talk to staff who will help to sort out the problem. They learn to keep themselves safe and have a good awareness of how to be safe when using the internet.
- Pupils know about the different types of bullying. They say that bullying happens occasionally, but that when it does, staff are on hand to deal with the issue.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy their roles as school council members and playground buddies.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. They happily hold doors open for adults and many are confident to talk to visitors. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Lunchtimes are orderly and calm.
- Pupils engage well in their learning. On a few occasions, when teaching does not meet their needs fully, they lose interest and become distracted.
- The behaviour of a few pupils who find managing their own behaviour difficult is managed well by staff, leading to improvements in their behaviour over time.

- Pupils cooperate well with each other in lessons. They happily share ideas together and work well to assess each other's work. These positive relationships contribute to their progress in learning.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes for pupils are not consistently strong across year groups and subjects. In most year groups, pupils' progress in writing is not yet good.
- In 2015, pupils' progress and attainment in writing dipped to significantly below national averages at the end of key stage 2. Attainment in key stage 1 in all subjects dipped from significantly above average in 2014 to significantly below average in 2015.
- Work in pupils' books, school data and observations of lessons show that currently, pupils are making expected progress in writing in most year groups throughout the school.
- Pupils make better progress in mathematics and reading. Current progress in these subjects, in most year groups, is good.
- Pupils' attainment in key stage 1 is improving but remains below average in writing. Attainment at the end of key stage 2 is broadly average.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar and often better progress than their peers. As a result, gaps are closing. Pupils who have special educational needs or disability receive appropriate support to make similar progress to their peers.
- The most able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in writing, owing to lack of challenge in their learning. In 2015, an above-average proportion of pupils attained the higher levels in reading and mathematics in key stage 2. This was not the case for writing or for the higher levels in key stage 1, where pupils' attainment was below the national average.

Early years provision

is good

- From starting points that are below those typical for their age, children in the early years make good progress and most attain a good level of development by the end of Reception year. This means that they are well prepared for the transfer to Year 1.
- Staff provide an interesting and stimulating indoor environment for children. Children engage well independently with the broad range of resources available.
- Children are very engaged in their learning and show a keen interest in stories and books. They enjoyed recounting the story of Goldilocks and show a good understanding of the story through their role play.
- Children show a good understanding of, and an interest in, number. They happily identified which numbers are odd and even on mats in the outdoor area, and responded well to the challenge to find the teddy which has the answer to 'double 5' on it.
- Children concentrate well and listen carefully during phonics sessions. They show a keen interest in words and letter sounds, and demonstrate a growing ability to apply their phonics knowledge to work out unfamiliar words.
- The newly established early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths of the provision and areas for development. She is aware of the need for further development of the outdoor area to promote learning more effectively, and has plans in place to do this. Children's learning is tracked carefully and any children lagging behind are identified for further support. As a result, all groups of children make good progress.
- Children behave well and show positive relationships with staff and each other. They cooperated well to decide who would play the different roles of the three bears in role play.
- Children show a strong sense of security in school and learn how to keep themselves safe using different tools and materials.
- Staff question children skilfully to develop their learning. For example, children are encouraged to think how they know that a number they have chosen is an even number. Children express their ideas and thoughts well, showing good progress in their speaking and listening skills.
- Parents praise the communication with staff and feel involved in their children's learning. This positive partnership contributes to children's good progress.

School details

Unique reference number	105825
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10012164

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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Chadwick
Headteacher	Laura Bolton
Telephone number	01706 650280
Website	www.stgabrielsrc.com
Email address	office@stgabrielsrc.rochdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 May 2014

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. Pupil premium is additional government funding used to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- In 2015, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Since the last inspection, there have been significant staff changes. There have been four changes of headteacher and almost all staff are new to the school since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning throughout the school. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils' work books and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the chair of the governing body and five other governors, the headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors also held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information produced by the school, including: information on pupils' progress and attainment, behaviour and attendance; procedures for safeguarding; and the school's own evaluation of its work. They considered reports to the governing body, minutes of its meetings and the school's plans for further improvement.
- Inspectors considered the 52 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, one letter from a parent and the views of 44 parents who expressed their views via text message to Ofsted.
- There were no responses to the online staff and pupil questionnaires to consider.

Inspection team

Elaine White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

