

# Pikes Lane Primary School

Gibraltar Street, Bolton, Lancashire BL3 5HU

**Inspection dates** 15–16 June 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

- The headteacher, well supported by leaders, has the highest ambitions for the pupils of the school. She leaves no stone unturned in her quest for excellence. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning across the school is outstanding.
- Excellent leadership and teaching in the early years ensures that pupils get off to a flying start as they enter the school.
- The fundamental British values of respect and tolerance permeate every aspect of school life.
- Learning is fun at Pikes Lane. Pupils are extremely well motivated and thrive on the challenge that their teachers provide in lessons.
- Staff are highly vigilant and take appropriate actions to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Pupils make very strong progress from their starting points. As a result, they leave the school very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Governors have the highest aspirations for the pupils of the school. They keep a watchful eye on the impact of leaders' actions and provide highly effective support and challenge.
- The innovative use of information technology enhances pupils' learning very well.
- Pupils are proud of the diverse range of responsibilities that they hold. They make an outstanding contribution to many aspects of school life.
- Pupils have highly positive attitudes towards their learning. They display resilience and persistence when faced with challenge.
- Pupils who arrive at the school from different countries are very well supported. As a result, they settle in to school quickly and make strong progress.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management further by making sure that information and published documents on the school website, including those relating to equality and the provision for pupils who have special educational needs, reflect the practice in the school and meet statutory regulations.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors exude ambition for the pupils of the school. Second best is not good enough. Where barriers to pupils' learning exist, leaders at all levels focus their efforts on finding solutions. As a consequence, pupils achieve very well.
- The headteacher's resolute quest for excellence results in consistently strong teaching. As a consequence, pupils blossom from the moment they join the school. By the time they leave Year 6, they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders analyse in detail all aspects of school performance so they have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Any identified issues are effectively addressed. For example, standards in reading that were less strong than in mathematics and writing have risen rapidly this year due to leaders' robust actions.
- Middle leaders play a substantial role in school improvement. Their skills are nurtured through a wide range of professional development opportunities, including those provided directly by the headteacher. The recent introduction of a new Nursery provision for two-year-old children, for instance, has been successful due to the strong direction provided by the early years leader.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding is promoted extremely well through a relevant and rich curriculum. A high priority is given to the arts. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, evaluate the work of Henri Rousseau. Art work produced by pupils has recently been displayed in Bolton town centre. A number of pupils also enhance their musical skills while working with the Hallé Orchestra through the 'Shine' project.
- Pupils' understanding of different cultures is enhanced through links with a number of other schools from different countries. Pupils from Year 1, for example, currently share aspects of their learning, via a video link, with pupils from a school in Ireland.
- The fundamental British values of respect and tolerance permeate the school. Pupils are able to explain with great maturity what these values mean to them. Year 6 pupils, for example, engaged in a mature discussion with an inspector about how important friendships between Muslim and Christian pupils are in their school. Topics on remembrance, and assemblies delivered by a range of visitors including the mayor, further enhance this aspect of the curriculum.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure that pupil premium funding (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are cared for by the local authority) is used effectively. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is checked fastidiously to ensure that the impact of any initiatives is positive. As a consequence, the progress that this group of pupils makes is above that of other pupils nationally.
- Similarly, funding received by the school to promote physical education and sport is used very effectively. A specialist teacher is employed to deliver physical education lessons and enhance the skills of other adults. A wide range of extra-curricular sports are provided, ensuring increased participation in competitive sports. For example, pupils compete in wrestling competitions where they remain unbeaten since 2014!
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is very well led. Leaders diligently check the progress that pupils make and set challenging targets that reflect their high expectations. Partnerships with a range of external agencies and providers have been very well cultivated and further enhance the provision for this group of pupils.
- The school's website is bright and informative. However, some of the published policies, such as those relating to equality and special educational needs, do not reflect the very effective practice seen during the inspection. At the time of the inspection, the information about provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities did not fully meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They use the detailed information provided by the headteacher and other senior leaders to ask pertinent and challenging questions, holding leaders to account for their actions.
  - Governors keep a watchful eye on the school budget. They robustly challenge spending decisions to ensure that funding has a positive impact on pupils' education. In the past year, for example, the funding of personal hand-held multi-media devices for upper key stage 2 pupils has significantly enhanced the curriculum.

- Governors are proactive in ensuring that they maintain their skills. They attend a range of training, including on safeguarding. As one parent governor explained, 'local authority training has given me a much greater understanding of my role'.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Statutory checks to ensure that adults are cleared to work with children have been undertaken. All staff have been trained so that they know how to respond should they have concerns about a pupil. Those pupils that spoke with inspectors stated that they felt safe in school. They particularly value the opportunity through the 'Bubble Time' scheme to speak to a trusted adult whenever they have a worry or concern. Evidence seen during the inspection shows that leaders take appropriate action to work closely with other agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding**

- Pupils enjoy their lessons. As one pupil stated: 'learning is fun; it has to be, that is how we focus'. Teachers have very high expectations of what every pupil can achieve. Classrooms are a hive of activity and burst with ambition.
- Pupils relish the opportunities that they are given to shape the curriculum and consequently their own learning. 'Leaders of learning' (pupils who find out what their peers want to learn) meet frequently, with parents, governors and teachers to discuss what aspects of the curriculum they would like to be enriched and developed. As a consequence, learning activities are highly relevant to the pupils and help to ignite a love of a broad range of subjects.
- Teachers use assessment very effectively to plan work that matches the needs and interests of learners of all abilities. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils including the most able. In Year 2, for instance, the most able pupils produced high-quality writing, developing their own authoritative voice, when their teacher enthused them by asking them to write instructions for a shark on 'how to be an excellent predator'.
- Teachers and teaching assistants display very strong subject knowledge. Pupils in Year 1, for example, consolidated and extended their learning of phonics (the sounds that letters make) due to the excellent teaching that met the needs of a wide range of pupils (including those who could not yet speak English and the most able).
- Pupils have an exceptional understanding of the skills that they need to be outstanding learners. They are confident when faced with challenges, as they have been taught how to overcome these. During a mathematics lesson, one pupil explained that she had 'collaborated with my partner to tackle the problem successfully'.
- Pupils' mistakes are used by teachers as an effective learning aid. Teachers encourage, and pupils relish, the chance to share their errors. As a consequence, an ethos has been created where pupils are prepared to take on greater levels of challenge without fear of failure.
- Leaders use teachers with specialist skills to enhance teaching and learning. The use of information technology to enhance learning, for instance, is a significant strength of the school. The specialist teacher for physical education uses assessment with the same rigour seen in English and mathematics to ensure that teaching meets the needs of all pupils.
- Teaching assistants make a substantial contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. The support that they provide, particularly for those pupils who are new to the country and do not speak English, is excellent.
- Feedback to pupils is incisive and supports pupils to improve their work. The school is currently exploring innovative ways to make feedback even more effective, through the use of technology. Those older pupils who spoke to inspectors state that this is helping them to understand more precisely what they need to do to further enhance their writing.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. By the time pupils leave Year 6, they are confident and articulate ambassadors of the school. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- A rich and diverse range of responsibilities are treasured by the pupils. They are proud of the impact that they have on school improvement and in supporting the learning of their peers. Year 6 pupils, for instance, run their own non-contact mixed martial arts club. They take their responsibilities seriously, ensuring that their values of discipline, respect and inclusion are at the forefront of the messages that they give to other pupils.
- 'I Genius' pupils hold lunchtime workshops for their peers and teachers. They offer advice, for example, on how to edit video clips for lessons. These workshops buzz with excitement and activity as learners of all ages are supported by the pupils. As a consequence, confidence and self-esteem, as well as computing skills, are developed very well.
- Pupils, by their actions and their words, demonstrate the school motto of 'together we can be the best'. Year 4 pupils, for example, work as 'young interpreters', welcoming international new arrivals into the school and supporting them to learn English words and phrases.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how their education equips them for the future. They have developed sophisticated learning skills that help them to display resilience and persistence when faced with challenge.
- School records and discussions with pupils show that incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils who spoke to inspectors state that any form of bullying is not tolerated and is dealt with effectively and promptly by adults. In a recent parental questionnaire, almost all parents who expressed a view stated that the school dealt with bullying effectively.
- Respect and tolerance permeate all aspects of school life. Pupils in discussions with inspectors state that they are all 'one family' and celebrate their differences. However, a number of racist name-calling incidents between pupils have been reported over the past 12 months. School records show that these have been robustly followed up by school leaders.
- Leaders ensure that pupil welfare and safety is given the highest priority. The work of the pastoral staff is highly valued. Strong links with external agencies ensure that effective support is in place for families and pupils.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are attentive in the classroom because lessons grab their attention and motivate their learning. Expectations of behaviour are high. Pupils are clear about the consequences should behaviour fall below expected standards.
- Behaviour outside the classroom is equally strong. Pupils move seamlessly from learning outside the classroom to returning indoors, arriving ready to continue their learning. Pupils are polite and well mannered, holding doors open, for instance, and taking the initiative when they see an opportunity to help others.
- Senior leaders methodically check the attendance of all groups of pupils. Where issues are identified, swift action is taken to remove any barriers to pupils coming into school. As a result, overall attendance is above the national average and the proportion of pupils absent from school regularly is below that seen nationally.

## Outcomes for pupils

## are outstanding

- From starting points that are often well below those expected for their age when they enter the school, pupils make strong progress across all stages of the school so that they reach standards, in most subjects, that are above the national average.
- The excellent teaching of phonics ensures that pupils, often with English as an additional language, achieve very well. In a key stage 1 lesson, for instance, pupils consolidated their understanding of the sounds that letters make very effectively as they took part in a 'phonics hunt' in class. As a consequence, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check has been at least in line with the national average for the past two years.
- Writing across the school is excellent. Pupils are given a wide variety of opportunities to apply their skills to different subjects. In Year 2, pupils were enthused to write a diary entry in the role of the Antarctic explorer Captain Scott. Pupils in Year 6 use a range of strategies successfully to add drama and tension to their writing. The most able pupils use an impressive array of sophisticated language to bring their descriptive writing to life.

- A significant focus on mathematics by leaders in 2015 has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils' books and school assessment information show that pupils make strong progress in every class. Expectations of the most able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are equally high. In Year 5, for example, pupils of different abilities made strong gains in their understanding of how to calculate averages because their teacher planned activities that built upon their prior learning and skills. In 2015, the progress that pupils made was significantly above the national average.
- In 2015, the progress that pupils made in reading by the time they left Year 6 was in line with that seen nationally but below that of writing and mathematics in the school. Leaders' actions have ensured that a love of reading now resonates throughout the school. Reading skills are given prominence in most lessons, including in subjects such as art and mathematics. Initiatives such as providing reading classes for parents have helped promote reading at home. As a result, school assessment information and evidence gathered during inspection show that current pupils are now making strong progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. This is because the school has good procedures in place to identify and support pupils at an early stage. High-quality teaching ensures this group of pupils is challenged very effectively. In 2015, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made overall progress that was above that of other pupils nationally and other pupils in school.
- The school supports the significant number of new arrivals to the school very effectively, many of whom are at early stages of learning to speak English. Teaching assistants, in particular, contribute strongly to the rapid progress that these pupils make.
- Topic books show that pupils also achieve well in subjects other than mathematics and English. Pupils in key stage 2, for instance, are able to use information that they have gathered to compare the lives of different monarchs.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. Senior leaders diligently check the progress that they make to ensure that the funding the school receives is having a positive impact. As a result, in 2015, the progress that disadvantaged pupils made was significantly above that of other pupils nationally and above that of other pupils in the school.

## Early years provision

## is outstanding

- Outstanding leadership and high calibre teaching ensure that children make an excellent start to their education at the school. Children enter the school with knowledge and skills that are often well below those expected for their age, and make strong progress throughout the Nursery and Reception classes. As a result, by the time children enter Year 1, they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. The proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development has been above the national average for the past two years.
- Teachers ignite children's passion for learning through their infectious enthusiasm. In the Nursery class, for example, children delighted at the sight of their teacher stomping like a dinosaur as they consolidated their counting skills.
- The vibrant indoor and outdoor space is used well to provide a raft of exciting activities that stimulate curiosity. Children in the Reception class were mesmerised in one lesson, as they used magnifying glasses to study the intricate patterns of fresh plaice, mackerel and crab.
- Well-established routines and high expectations mean that behaviour across all classes in the early years is exemplary. Children arrive in class ready to learn and, as a consequence, very little time is wasted. Children listen to adults attentively and sustain concentration very well during activities. Children display good manners as they listen politely to each other when they answer the register in many different languages.
- Class teachers and the early years leader deploy other adults to very good effect. Teaching assistants use questioning to prompt children to think more deeply. They have excellent subject knowledge and use this to keep detailed records of how well children are achieving. The 'communication champion' provides effective support to those pupils with English as an additional language, ensuring, with the class teacher, that they have rich and diverse first-hand experiences to develop their language skills.
- The school has developed strong relationships with parents. Regular 'family sessions' help to develop parents' skills to support learning at home. Resources, such as story sacks, are also provided to encourage the development of reading skills. Those parents who spoke to inspectors stated that staff are always approachable and available to provide help, advice and ideas.

- The Nursery classroom for two-year-olds provides a calm and welcoming environment. Excellent relationships between adults and children contribute well to helping children develop their language skills. As is the case elsewhere in the early years, activities are very well matched to the learning needs of the children. Adults are vigilant in ensuring that children are kept safe.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105161
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002876

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	468
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ruth Speak
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise McArdle
<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 333633
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.pikeslaneprimaryschool.co.uk">www.pikeslaneprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@pikes-lane.bolton.sch.uk">office@pikes-lane.bolton.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1–2 December 2011

## Information about this school

- Pikes Lane Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average (pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority).
- Virtually all the pupils are from different minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average.
- In 2015, the school met 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.
- At the time of the inspection, the school website did not meet statutory requirements. It gave insufficient detail regarding equalities and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in each class of the school.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, members of staff, representatives of the governing body and two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, school improvement planning, assessment information and reports on the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during the school day and observed them during playtime, lunch and before and after school. They also met formally with several groups of pupils, including leaders of learning, to chat about their learning and behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors heard a number of children read.
- Inspectors took note of displays around the school and the work in the outdoor areas.
- A range of pupils' books were checked.
- Inspectors spoke to a small number of parents at the start of the day. They also took account of the comments to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the 33 responses to the pupil questionnaire and the 45 responses to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the responses to recent parent and pupil questionnaires undertaken by the school.
- Four further Ofsted inspectors joined the inspection on the second day of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Martin Bell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Rigby	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Kelly	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Gill	Ofsted Inspector

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