

# St Columba's Catholic Primary School

Tong Street, Dudley Hill, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD4 9PY

## Inspection dates

15–16 November 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders and governors have not addressed rigorously enough the areas for improvement since the last inspection.
- Not enough pupils make good progress in the early years and in Years 1 to 6, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Teachers do not provide work that constantly challenges the most able, or meets the needs of the least able learners, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Feedback provided by some teachers in lessons, and in pupils' books, does not help to improve pupils' learning over time.
- The teaching of subjects across the curriculum does not develop sufficiently pupils' wider skills.
- Not all middle and senior leaders are rigorous enough in checking the quality of teaching and learning, and the progress that different groups of pupils make.
- The school's use of pupil premium funding has not sufficiently diminished differences between the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and those of other pupils nationally.
- The absence rates of disadvantaged pupils are not falling rapidly enough.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is not fully developed.
- Governors have not held senior leaders sufficiently to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes over time.

### The school has the following strengths

- The newly appointed executive headteacher and head of school have high expectations. They know what needs to be done to improve the school's work, and are already having a strong impact.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Pupils' skills in matching sounds to letters are improving rapidly in key stage 1.
- All adults ensure that pupils are well cared for and are safe. Pupils say that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils' social and moral development is good.
- Some aspects of governance are improving. For example, governors are increasingly well informed about the school's work and are committed to improving teaching and pupils' learning.

## Full report

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good across the school, by:
  - raising all adults' expectations and providing work that is sufficiently challenging for all pupils, especially the most able
  - ensuring that all adults check carefully pupils' learning in lessons, revising work and the timing of activities to meet pupils' different needs, particularly the disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - ensuring that written feedback in pupils' books, as well as verbal feedback in lessons, makes a difference to pupils' understanding over time.
- Secure the rapid progress of all groups of pupils, especially the most able, particularly in reading and mathematics, by:
  - honing their abilities to scan written texts more efficiently, retrieve key information more quickly, and to make inferences and predictions about plot and characters
  - developing pupils' confidence in explaining the calculations that they carry out, and providing them with more regular opportunities to use their mathematical skills to investigate and solve relevant problems
  - planning for the development and mastery of skills across subjects other than English and mathematics, especially in science and history.
- Improve pupils' overall personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
  - reducing the absence rates of disadvantaged pupils so that these are more in line with those of all pupils nationally
  - improving pupils' spiritual and cultural development and understanding of British values.
- Develop the quality of leadership at all levels, including governance, by:
  - ensuring a more rigorous approach to checking the impact that teaching has on learning and progress of groups of pupils, including the most- and least able, over time
  - evaluating more systematically the impact of pupil premium funding on diminishing the differences between disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and those of other pupils nationally
  - developing governors' confidence in understanding the quality of teaching, and in asking challenging questions about how well pupils are learning.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders at all levels, including governors, have not addressed the outcomes of the last inspection with sufficient rigour. As a consequence, the quality of teaching has not improved sufficiently, and pupils' outcomes are not high enough across the school.
- Not all senior and middle leaders have developed sufficient expertise since the last inspection to check accurately on the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning and progress.
- Senior leaders' sampling of pupils' books, and analysis of pupils' progress information have not resulted in an accurate picture of the rates of progress of different groups of pupils. These include the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a consequence, senior leaders have not held staff sufficiently to account for the impact of their work on pupils' outcomes.
- Pupil premium funding has not been effectively spent. Differences in reading, writing and mathematics have not diminished by the end of key stage 1, and nor have the absence rates of disadvantaged pupils fallen sufficiently across the school. Although gaps between pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 and those of others nationally closed in 2015, these differences were not sustained in 2016. Differences are still not diminishing rapidly enough in many classes.
- School leaders and governors have not evaluated whether physical education and sport funding for primary schools has made enough difference in increasing the numbers of pupils participating in sporting activities on a regular basis, or in improving the expertise of both staff and pupils.
- There are shortcomings in the provision made for pupils who have special educational needs. The teaching and learning of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not checked with enough precision, or the rates of progress that such pupils make.
- School leaders have been slow to promote the importance of good attendance, offer appropriate rewards, discourage parents from taking holidays in term time, and engage more rigorously with families who do not encourage their children to attend school regularly. This work is now being pursued more rigorously, but with limited impact to date.
- The appointment of a new executive headteacher and head of school, towards the end of the summer term 2016, has brought about significant changes in staff expectations, and more rigorous processes and routines.
- The school's arrangements for checking the performance of teachers have been overhauled, and are now closely aligned with improving pupils' outcomes.
- High-quality professional development and training, sourced from the diocese of Leeds, the local authority and other local schools, are carefully linked to the needs of individual teachers, as well as the school's priorities.
- Staff work increasingly together to reflect on, and share, the best practice they observe. Outcomes of the Ofsted questionnaire indicate good staff morale and

confidence in the school's new leadership.

- The executive headteacher and head of school exude high aspirations for all pupils and staff. They have strengthened processes for monitoring and evaluating the impact that teaching has on pupils' learning, and introduced more rigorous processes for pinpointing and addressing more efficiently shortfalls in pupils' progress.
- Much of their work is too recent to show enough impact. Nonetheless, the school's self-evaluation, and development planning for 2016/17, indicate that leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's performance, and have identified appropriate priorities and actions to make rapid improvements.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils appreciate the number of visits and visitors, which add interest to their learning. They told inspectors that they particularly enjoy learning about the York chocolate story, growing their own vegetables and generally acquiring horticultural skills. Equally, pupils appreciate opportunities to sing in the school choir, participate in ballroom dancing and take part in cheerleading.
- The curriculum is particularly effective in promoting British values such as respect and tolerance, and in contributing to pupils' good behaviour.
- The curriculum promotes well pupils' moral and social development, although aspects of their spiritual and cultural development are not so strong. The curriculum is not yet effective in helping pupils to acquire specific knowledge, skills and understanding beyond reading, writing and mathematics, in particular in science, history, art and information and communication technology.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors have accepted too readily the information presented to them by senior leaders. They have not questioned whether the quality of teaching and learning, and pupils' outcomes across all years, were high enough.
- Governors have not held sufficiently to account the school's leaders since the last inspection. As a consequence, teaching, learning and pupils' outcomes have not improved enough.
- Governors have not challenged school leaders on the effectiveness of the spending of the pupil premium funding, and the impact that it has had on pupils' outcomes since the last inspection.
- The newly appointed executive headteacher and head of school are now providing governors with regular and high-quality information about the school's work, and support to ensure that roles and responsibilities are better understood and carried out.
- A new committee structure has been introduced to streamline governors' work, and focus energies on the school's priorities.
- Governors understand the link between performance and pay progression. Present arrangements for the annual review of the executive headteacher's performance are appropriate.
- Governors place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. They ensure that staff training is up to date and relevant.

- Governors are committed to improving the school's performance, and to undergo further training to improve their skills and expertise.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff training is constantly updated, including training in the 'Prevent' duty.
- Leaders follow rigorously the school's safeguarding procedures, including, when concerns are raised, liaising closely with the relevant external organisations.
- Leaders ensure a safe environment for pupils through regular risk assessments. The school site is secure and staff are vigilant in keeping pupils safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across Years 1 to 6 is too variable and has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection.
- In some classes, teachers struggle with classroom organisation, and provide work that is too easy for the most able, or too hard for pupils from low starting points, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Teachers do not check pupils' learning with sufficient regularity or rigour in lessons and, as a consequence, miss opportunities to adapt the planned activities to meet pupils' changing needs. Pupils' learning slows in these classes.
- The teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling across the school requires improvement. Some teachers afford pupils too much time to write individual sentences and complete exercises, but do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use these skills to write for different purposes and audiences.
- The teaching of mathematics also varies. Some teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils, especially the least able and those who have special educational needs, to rehearse orally basic calculations to improve their mental mathematical agility. The most able are often not challenged enough to think about the different approaches they might take when completing written calculations. Opportunities are sometimes missed for some pupils to apply sooner, when they are ready, their mathematical skills to investigate and solve problems.
- The teaching of reading requires improvement. There are inconsistencies in pupils' abilities across classes to scan different texts, efficiently locate key information, and answer questions accurately and succinctly. Pupils' confidence in inferring and making predictions about plot and characters is underdeveloped. Nonetheless, some of the most- and least able pupils in Years 2 and 6 read fluently to inspectors. These pupils used their knowledge of phonics to read unknown words correctly. The teaching of phonics has improved since the last inspection, and is now good.
- The teaching of writing has also improved. The outcomes of the tests at the end of key stage 2 particularly showed that Year 6 pupils were writing with growing confidence for different audiences and purposes, and using a range of language and punctuation to good effect. However, work in pupils' books and in lessons seen by inspectors during

the inspection shows that the quality of pupils' writing still varies from class to class.

- The teaching of other subjects, such as science and history, is inconsistent. It does not develop sufficiently pupils' specific skills. Visits to lessons and sampling of pupils' books showed limited examples of pupils linking ideas, making inferences and predictions, and explaining and justifying their findings.
- The impact of teaching assistants is variable, especially in lessons. This is because they are not always deployed effectively, and their work carefully checked, by class teachers.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Teachers provide insufficient opportunities across the school for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and values, and consider the different faiths, feelings and opinions of people from different countries and backgrounds. Lessons do not promote enough experiences that fascinate pupils about the world around them.
- Pupils' appreciation of the range of different cultures within school, and further afield, as an essential part of their preparation for life in modern Britain, is not well developed.
- Pupils' knowledge of democracy, and of Britain's parliamentary system, is limited.
- Opportunities are limited for older pupils to take on responsibilities, and the work of the school council is underdeveloped.
- The school has a calm and orderly atmosphere where pupils play and mix happily with each other. Pupils are polite and well mannered, holding doors open for adults and generally showing consideration for one another.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know that staff will keep them safe. They are confident that staff will sort out any problems they may have. They know whom they can talk to about their problems in school. Relationships between staff and pupils are caring.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and are clear about the importance of keeping safe while using a computer or a mobile phone.
- Pupils understand about the different types of bullying, including cyber- and homophobic bullying, and know that bullying is something that is repeated regularly. Pupils say that bullying is not something that happens often, and that incidents are dealt with quickly.
- The daily breakfast and after-school clubs provide welcoming and positive social experiences for the many pupils who arrive before, and stay after, the formal start and end of school. These experiences reinforce the school's aims to help to develop considerate and independent young people.
- Pupils learn how to eat well and stay healthy, physically and mentally. They develop a good appreciation of the importance of hygiene, diet and exercise.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attendance, while improving, is below average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is not improving rapidly enough, and is well below the attendance of all pupils nationally, and other pupils in school.
- The behaviour of pupils around school is good. Pupils of all ages and abilities are proud of their school, and are welcoming to visitors.
- Most pupils are respectful of one another. Behaviour at lunchtimes and playtimes is good. This is a result of clear behaviour policies, consistently applied by all staff, so that pupils understand the consequences of poor behaviour.
- In lessons, pupils are largely calm and attentive. Most pupils respond quickly to their teachers' instructions, which ensures that they get on with work quickly.
- In some classes, where teaching is insufficiently motivating, or where activities are not challenging enough, a minority of pupils become restless and lose concentration. The presentation of some pupils' work in books, in these classes, lacks care and organisation.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- In 2015, Year 6 pupils attained average outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics, representing good progress from their individual starting points.
- In 2016, the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected or higher national standard was well below the school's targets and national figures. Visits to lessons and pupils' current books and records show that outcomes in reading and mathematics require improvement.
- While Year 6 writing outcomes in 2016 were average, work in pupils' books and in lessons indicates that the quality of pupils' writing varies from class to class.
- In 2015 and 2016, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics were below average by the end of key stage 1. While present overall rates of progress are improving, especially in Year 1, outcomes are still variable across the key stage. They do not yet represent good progress, given the typically below-average levels of development of children at the end of the Reception Year.
- Key stage 1 pupils' outcomes in phonics are rising, due to improved teaching. In 2016, Year 1 and Year 2 outcomes were in line with national averages.
- Pupils' reading skills require improvement because there are inconsistencies in their abilities to scan written texts to retrieve information efficiently, and to respond more concisely to questions about what they have read. Pupils' abilities to make inferences and deductions about what they have read, as well as predict future developments in plot and character, are not consistently well developed.
- In mathematics, some pupils are not agile enough in calculating mentally, and the most able are not always confident in explaining how they have worked out answers. In some classes, opportunities are too infrequent for pupils, especially the most able,

to apply their developing mathematical skills to investigate and solve problems.

- In writing, although the outcomes of the tests at the end of Year 6 have been average for the past two years, pupils' general knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling, as seen in books and in lessons across key stages 1 and 2, is variable. Opportunities are insufficiently frequent for many pupils to hone these skills in writing for different purposes and audiences, and in sufficient depth and detail.
- Disadvantaged pupils make inconsistent progress. In 2015, differences had diminished in comparison with other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2, but not at key stage 1. During the inspection, inspectors found that the overall progress of disadvantaged pupils, especially in writing and mathematics, was no better than that of their peers.
- Pupils from low starting points, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make no better than expected rates of progress. In some classes, teachers do not check regularly enough the progress that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make in lessons. Senior leaders have not rigorously measured the small steps made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in their learning across all subjects.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are not challenged sufficiently to reach the highest levels. Work is often too easy, and does not require them to think and find out things for themselves.
- Many pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in language acquisition and learn to speak English fluently. This is because they receive timely and high-quality support from specialist practitioners. The overall progress made by pupils who speak English as an additional language in reading, writing and mathematics is similar to that of their peers, and no better than expected.
- Pupils develop variable knowledge, skills and understanding in subjects across the curriculum, such as science, history, art and information and communication technology. This is because not all teachers spend sufficient time on these subjects, or insist on pupils developing skills beyond gathering information and describing what they have learned.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Many children enter Nursery with skills and understanding that are below those typical for their age.
- Children are quickly helped to settle by sensitive staff who help them to develop positive relationships and increasing levels of self-confidence and self-awareness.
- By the time children leave the Reception Year, however, not enough have made good progress, especially boys and disadvantaged children. As a result, they enter Year 1 with overall skills and knowledge that are still below those expected for their age.
- Not all adults check the progress of children carefully enough and plan activities to match their changing needs. This is particularly the case for some disadvantaged children, and some who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, they do not progress at a faster rate than their peers.



- Not all children who have specific learning difficulties have the tailored support they need. Teachers do not share systematically the outcomes of support or review them with parents.
- Not all staff consistently ask questions that deepen children's thinking as they play. Some adults do not evaluate accurately children's developing understanding. For example, in an activity designed to support children's recognition of different shapes, adults called out the particular shapes into which they wanted children to jump, but did not challenge the fact that many simply followed one another, without demonstrating recognition of each shape.
- General provision both outdoors and inside is motivating. Some adults are quick to use children's interests to help them learn well. For example, boys were encouraged to send cars down a drainpipe, to motivate them to count and read the numbers that the cars landed on.
- The vast majority of children are happy in the early years. The 'Eden' provision for two-year-olds is particularly effective. Staff are knowledgeable about the typical development and characteristics of learning for two-year-olds, and match stimulating activities carefully to children's needs, to encourage cooperative play as well as their independence.
- Early years staff promote positive partnerships with parents. Appropriate information is generally given to parents prior to, and during, their children's time in the early years. Parents expressed satisfaction with their children's early experiences at school, praising the work of the early years staff. However, not all parents regularly contribute to their children's learning journals because they do not have access at home to the school's online system.
- Staff are vigilant about the safety of children in the early years and hold appropriate first-aid certificates. They conduct regular health and safety checks on outdoor equipment, and all aspects of the setting have been assessed for potential risks to children.
- The early years leader is committed to improving further the quality of teaching, learning and assessment within the early years, and understands what to do next.

## School details

Unique reference number	107326
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10019717

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	454
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Burton
Executive headteacher	Catherine Markham
Telephone number	01274 681961
Website	<a href="http://www.stcolumbas.bradford.sch.uk">www.stcolumbas.bradford.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@stcolumbas.bradford.sch.uk">admin@stcolumbas.bradford.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	22–23 October 2014

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- Four in 10 pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and one third of pupils speak English as an additional language. Both proportions are above national averages.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- Children in the Reception Year attend full time. Children in the Nursery attend part time. The school also provides for two-year-olds.
- The school works informally with schools in the Catholic Schools Partnership, and the BD4 local schools partnership.
- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in staffing, including the appointment of a new executive headteacher and head of school. Governing body committees have also been revised.
- The governing body makes provision for daily breakfast and after-school clubs.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a range of lessons across the school, looking at pupils' work in all lessons. Two visits were made with a senior leader. In addition, one inspector also visited a whole-school assembly.
- Alongside senior leaders, inspectors reviewed pupils' progress data, information about the performance of teachers, documents pertaining to safety and behaviour, and information pertaining to safeguarding.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and observed pupils' learning in small groups. They spoke with pupils in lessons, at lunchtime and at playtimes, and met with groups of pupils separately.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher and head of school, middle leaders and members of the governing body. Conversations were also held with representatives from the diocese of Leeds and the local authority.
- Too few parents responded to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents) for inspectors to access their views; however inspectors did take account of 19 online responses returned by pupils, and 23 responses from staff.

## Inspection team

Andy Swallow, Lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Wiles	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Langley	Ofsted Inspector

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