

Holy Trinity Primary School

Cecil Street, Bury, Lancashire BL9 0SB

Inspection dates

1–2 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Improvements are not effective enough to ensure that pupils catch up quickly with other pupils of the same age nationally.
- Leaders have lacked urgency and rigour; improvement has not been fast enough.
- The new leadership team has started to improve the school but has not yet had enough influence on raising expectations and improving the progress of pupils through key stage 2.
- The governing body has not challenged leaders rigorously and they have not held them well enough to account.
- Pupils across key stages 1 and 2 are significantly underachieving in reading, writing and mathematics. This includes the most able and pupils that are disadvantaged.
- Teachers do not use assessment information effectively enough to plan learning. This leads to a lack of challenge and limits progress, including that of the most able pupils.
- Pupils can be easily distracted or restless because lessons do not routinely capture pupils' interest.
- Pupils sometimes lack confidence to work on their own because they are being asked to complete activities that they do not have the skills to do.
- Pupils are not regularly challenged to think more deeply and practise their reasoning skills.
- Pupils are not being given enough opportunity across the curriculum to practise their writing skills and to write at length.
- Many pupils have a limited vocabulary, which slows down their opportunity to be creative in writing and their enjoyment of reading.
- Occasionally, pupils are unkind to each other.
- The proportion of pupils that are persistently absent or late is high.

The school has the following strengths

- There are signs of improvement. The progress of pupils in the younger age groups is quickening.
- Leadership of the early years is a strength and teaching is good. As a result, children have a good start to school life and make strong progress from their starting points.
- There have been improvements in the teaching of phonics that have led to better attainment in 2016.
- Parents are strongly supportive of the school.
- Pupils feel safe in school, are well mannered and are polite.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - increasing the pace and momentum of improvement so that pupils make rapid and sustained progress
 - involving the wider leadership team in establishing a more rigorous cycle of monitoring to instil high expectations for pupils' progress and standards
 - ensuring that governors provide greater challenge to school leaders, about expectations, the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and standards.
- Accelerate rapidly the achievement of pupils, particularly at key stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good and ensures that pupils make rapid progress by:
 - providing greater challenge to pupils, particularly the most able and disadvantaged
 - offering interesting activities that excite pupils and hold their attention
 - giving pupils opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to solve problems and think more deeply about their work
 - providing greater opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their writing skills across the curriculum
 - developing pupils' skills and confidence to work independently
 - extending opportunities for pupils to communicate about their experiences in order that they broaden their vocabulary.
- Continue to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school, or who arrive late, so that they are given every chance to become successful learners.
- Ensure that a culture of respect is instilled in all pupils.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how leadership and management can improve in this area.

The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have made improvements particularly to the ethos and culture in the school and in the training and development of the teaching staff. The foundations have been laid for substantially improving the school further.
- There have been some improvements since the previous inspection, for example the systems used to check the standards pupils' reach and to track their progress. These systems are increasingly useful in informing leaders about which pupils are achieving well and which are falling behind. Leaders, however, have only recently felt that the information gathered is accurate and reliable. As a result, teachers have not used information precisely enough to identify pupils' understanding in a lesson and to plan for their next steps in learning. Consequently many pupils do not make rapid enough progress.
- Leaders' plans for improvement are broadly appropriate and have identified the areas of most importance to focus on, but they lack a sense of urgency and rigour. In areas such as improving the consistency of teaching and accelerating the standards in reading, mathematics and particularly writing, action to bring about improvement has been too slow.
- The relatively new deputy headteacher and team of middle leaders are involved in checks on the quality of teaching. As a result, teachers have raised their expectations and there are signs of improvement in teaching, particularly in the early years, where children make good progress. However, improvement has been at a much slower pace further up the school and as a result standards are still far too low.
- Pupil premium funding is spent on a range of initiatives to ensure that disadvantaged pupils can take part in everything the school has to offer. However, overall the achievement of disadvantaged pupils through key stage 1 and particularly key stage 2 is very low and indicates that the funding has not been used effectively.
- The leadership of the provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective in identifying barriers to learning and in providing additional support when needed. Changes in the curriculum have enabled these pupils to make good progress.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sport funding is used well. Teachers have had additional training and pupils have benefited from opportunities to be involved in a wide range of sporting activities, both within the school day and after school. This has included competing in local events. Pupils talk with pride about their sporting opportunities and how well they do at representing their school in competitions.
- The curriculum has been revised in line with the national requirements. It is broad, balanced and engages pupils, contributing to their enjoyment of learning. It is enriched by additional opportunities for pupils to experience a wide range of activities and interests. The music curriculum is a growing strength and the introduction of singing to pupils has played an important part in developing pride and self-esteem across the school.

- Well-promoted spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means the school is a calm and considerate environment where pupils mix together well. Pupils are actively involved in promoting the school's values around school and also in the wider community. Through assemblies and the curriculum, pupils raise funds for charities and learn about tolerance, democracy and the rule of law. Displays around school celebrate other faiths, cultures and how to be a good citizen.
- Leaders value highly the involvement of parents and offer many opportunities for them to find out how they can help their child learn. Parents in turn are very supportive of school, they feel staff are approachable, help their children make progress and ensure that they enjoy being in school.
- The local authority has provided appropriate support for the school in developing teaching, learning and the curriculum. This has been welcomed and valued by school staff and leaders. However, the impact on outcomes for pupils has been slow to take hold and therefore this support has not been as effective as it might have been.
- The school also benefits from support from the Bury Teaching Schools Alliance and a national leader in education. This has provided school staff at all levels with access to beneficial opportunities to learn from experienced and high-quality leaders and teachers. Although of good quality, this support again has been slow to impact on the progress of pupils.

Governance of the school

- The recent review of governance in the school recognised that governors know the school well and are hard-working.
- Governors are committed to the school but they have been insufficiently challenging. As a result, the governing body is not rigorous enough, and does not ensure the highest of expectations, or hold leaders fully to account, to the extent that they should.
- The governing body has a clear understanding of performance management procedures and has oversight of the management of teachers' pay increases. However, their oversight has been ineffective because the quality of teaching has not improved at a rapid enough pace.
- The governing body ensures that the PE and sport funds are spent appropriately. However, governors have failed to ensure that pupil premium funding has been spent effectively across the whole school. As a result the achievement of disadvantaged pupils is not as good as it should be.
- Staff and governors are diligent in carrying out their responsibility to ensure that the school provides a nurturing environment in which pupils feel safe and cared for.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding has a high priority in the school. Robust systems are in place and are understood by staff. Staff undertake regular training to ensure that they know what actions to take in the event of any concerns.
- Leaders are persistent in cases where the school is concerned for a pupil's welfare. Effective relationships with other agencies and with parents ensure that pupils are kept safe and their welfare needs are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Leaders' efforts to improve the quality of teaching have been of limited impact; consequently the progress that pupils make is still too slow. Pupils are not catching up in their learning quickly enough.
- Too much teaching across the school does not meet pupils' needs. Lessons are not planned precisely enough to tackle effectively the underachievement across the school. This is particularly evident in key stage 2 where pupils' skills lag significantly behind those of other pupils nationally.
- The accuracy of assessment information across the whole school has only recently been established. Although teachers are now using this information to plan more precisely to meet pupils' needs, the length of time that it has taken to establish reliable assessment information, particularly in key stage 2, has delayed the impact it has had on ensuring rapid progress for pupils.
- Some teachers provide good-quality learning resources and endeavour to make lessons interesting. However there are too many lessons where teachers do not plan activities that capture the interest of all pupils. As a result, pupils can be easily distracted and fidgety. They particularly struggle when asked to work things out for themselves. For example, in the reading sessions, observed during the inspection, some pupils completed very little work. This was either because the work was not suitable for them or because they did not have the skills or confidence to work on their own.
- Teaching is not sufficiently demanding for pupils. In English, pupils who are most-able confident learners are sometimes held back because tasks are undemanding.
- As a result of the recent focus and training, teachers have developed better knowledge in mathematics and are teaching the subject more confidently. However, some of the activities that are given to pupils can be repetitive. Pupils are not challenged enough to try out ways of solving problems and are not offered opportunities to deepen their understanding of mathematical ideas. They are, however, encouraged to talk about their learning, and this is beginning to have positive effect across school in increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- The teaching of writing has improved since the last inspection. Teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve in this subject. Fiction and non-fiction books are used to interest and engage pupils in their learning. Pupils have some opportunities to write for a purpose. However, their opportunities to write at length in different subjects are infrequent. This restricts the development of their writing skills and stamina.
- An important focus for the school has been to develop the communication skills of all pupils, but there remains more to do in this area. Many of the pupils speak English as an additional language and some have limited vocabulary. These pupils struggle to explain their learning. A restricted knowledge of words limits their understanding when they read and their creativity when they write.
- There is some effective teaching across the school and, in these classes, teachers' subject knowledge is strong. This leads to pupils being excited about their learning. Where teaching is effective, teachers ask the right questions to aid pupils' thinking, draw out learning, and help them move on. Staff and pupils see a mistake as another

opportunity to learn.

- Reading has improved throughout school, albeit from a low base. Leaders have invested in a range of good-quality texts to enhance pupils' interest in reading. The teaching of phonics is strong and gives pupils the skills to read unfamiliar words. Pupils have regular opportunities to read to an adult in school until they are fluent and are motivated to read by themselves. Pupils enjoy reading. Pupils that struggle with reading have good support to practise their skills and are proud of the progress they make. The most able readers enjoy their reading and have a good range of texts from which to choose. They read frequently and increasingly independently.
- There are some strengths in the teaching of other subjects. Science, music and physical education are all taught well. As a result, pupils are excited and animated by their learning and often make good progress. Evidence in pupils' science books shows that they explore science topics and consider concepts in a range of practical ways.
- The support provided for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broad, targeted and of a good quality. These pupils often make good progress. They are well cared for and participate fully in all that the school has to offer.
- In key stage 1, the most able disadvantaged pupils are taught well. They are challenged to produce increasingly complex work. By contrast, in key stage 2, this group of pupils underachieves because teachers' expectations are low.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection felt that there were instances where unkind or negative language was used by some pupils towards each other. They felt that teachers did help them to deal with this situation when it arose but it did not always solve the problem.
- Pupils spoken to were clear about what bullying is and said that incidents do not happen often and are always dealt with by an adult. Parents spoken to in the playground felt that bullying was dealt with appropriately or that they were unaware of any bullying towards their child. Other inspection evidence confirmed that this is the case.
- The importance placed on pupils' personal development and welfare is evident throughout school. Most pupils develop as thoughtful and compassionate citizens.
- The vast majority of parents who spoke to inspectors expressed praise for the school and the work of staff. All parents felt that their children were happy, safe and well looked after.
- As a result of leaders' work on developing the social, emotional, spiritual and cultural aspects of the school, pupils are becoming increasingly confident learners and a number are able to talk about their learning. Pupils told inspectors how proud they are of their school and how well looked after they are by adults. They also talked with pride about their 'school promise', which they could give many instances of how they

lived by.

- The provision for pupils who are vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities is a strength of the school. There is a prompt focus on early identification of need or concern and things are put in place quickly to support pupils. This reduces the barriers to learning that these pupils might face and ensures that they make good progress.
- Pupils were unanimous in their view that they felt safe in school and could share with inspectors examples of how the school kept them safe. Pupils talked about assemblies and lessons where they had been taught how to keep themselves safe, personally and online.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Although there is a productive atmosphere in some lessons and pupils visibly enjoy their learning, in others pupils are distracted and their interest in tasks wanes. As a result, pupils are quick to put work aside and talk to their neighbour about something else, engage in behaviour that is irritating to those around them or begin to daydream. This is because lessons are not planned precisely enough to meet these pupils' needs. Some activities are not sufficiently interesting, engaging or challenging.
- Pupils' attendance has improved over the last few years, and for the first time is similar to the national average. However, persistent absence and lateness remains an issue for the school. The school's attendance officer has worked hard with this group of pupils and their parents and has had some notable successes, but too many pupils still do not attend school regularly enough. This not only has a bearing on pupils' opportunities to learn, but on their welfare and the school's role in developing a healthy culture and attitude to attending school each day and on time.
- Leaders have worked hard to establish routines, which pupils respond to well. As a result, school is usually a calm, orderly and purposeful place to learn.
- Pupils are encouraged to take pride in their work. There have been improvements in the presentation of pupils' work due to the more consistent use of school policies.
- Pupils are fully aware of how they should behave and the consequences of poor behaviour. They say incidents of inappropriate behaviour do occur, but are dealt with quickly by teachers. Pupils are usually responsive and respectful to adults. Pupils who have behavioural needs are well supported to ensure that their behaviour does not often distract others' learning.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves well around school. They are polite and well mannered.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils do not do as well as they should across the school and in most subjects. As a result, pupils are underachieving considerably, particularly in key stage 2. There are signs of progress across the school but it is too inconsistent.
- Pupils start school with skills, knowledge and understanding below, and some well below, that which is typical for children of their age and some have very little

knowledge of English. At the end of key stage 2, in 2016, only a small minority of pupils achieved the expected standard for their age and virtually none achieved a higher standard in reading, writing, mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling.

- At the end of key stage 1, in 2016, not enough pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils achieved well below national averages. The proportion of pupils who achieved at higher than the expected standard in reading and mathematics was just above that of other pupils of the same age nationally.
- Work in current pupils' books confirms that there is an improving picture of progress lower down the school. However, standards for the oldest pupils are too low. This is because the gaps between their skills and knowledge and those typical for pupils of the same age, is still too wide.
- Pupil premium funding is not used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, they do not make sufficient progress throughout key stage 2. Similarly, the most able disadvantaged pupils do not achieve well.
- At the end of key stage 2, the pupils identified as most-able do not make the progress expected in reading, writing and mathematics and none attained higher levels in any of the three subjects. The school's most-able pupils do not make the gains of which they are capable.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the national screening check for phonics at the end of Year 1 has improved year on year but remains below that typical for children of this age. The improvements in phonics are due to more consistent teaching and a much closer link to the good development of reading skills.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. The support offered by teachers and teaching assistants is effective and ensures that pupils succeed in their learning.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start school with skills and knowledge below, and a number well below, those typical for their age. Their skills are particularly low in communication, managing feelings and behaviour, reading, writing and number. However, by the time they leave early years the vast majority are making good progress.
- Children benefit from a vibrant and stimulating environment in which to learn. This is coupled with high expectations by adults to make sure that children thrive and enjoy a very positive start to school life.
- There have been steady improvements in children's achievement since the last inspection. Children are well prepared and confident to start in Year 1.
- The leadership of the early years is strong. Firm foundations have been laid by the early years leader, who has had a notable impact on the good quality of experiences and learning from which children clearly benefit. She has a clear view about the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Where actions have been taken to tackle issues, these have been successful. A focus on the importance of teamwork, sharing practice and the good-quality development of staff has ensured that adults are skilled

and confident to get the best learning from children.

- The early years is well organised to create a rich and varied learning environment for all children. Activities are fun, capture the children's imagination and allow them to practise their skills. For example, during the inspection, children were immersed in making their own witches' broomsticks for Halloween. They planned their designs, practised their scissor skills, counted and chose the materials they were using, and described to each other what they were doing well.
- Children have plenty of opportunity to explore outdoors, using a range of equipment that encourages them to build, create and try out their own ideas. As a result, children, whatever their ability, are absorbed in their learning. For example, children were observed making colourful, magical potions with great enthusiasm. They counted out each ingredient and made up spells and chants as they mixed.
- Additional funding is used well to provide resources and support for disadvantaged children. Leaders have a good understanding of the impact this has on children's learning. Disadvantaged children make similarly good progress to that made by other children and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good. Routines are well established, and staff share a high level of expectation of what children will achieve. Adults have good subject knowledge and there is a strong consistency of approach and manner across the two classes. Children with English as an additional language benefit from adults who use both the child's first language and English skilfully to support their learning.
- The importance placed on reading, writing and mathematical skills is very evident, with regular opportunities for children to write, practise their letters and sounds, and use number. The development of language and speaking is also a high priority, along with building self-confidence. Adults engage with children very well and are skilled at asking questions to draw out children's understanding, encourage them to talk and feel self-assured.
- Teachers' assessment and the tracking of children's learning are of a good quality. The information teachers gather is used effectively to plan a curriculum for children that is interesting and relevant. Adults observe, record, reflect on and adapt children's learning effectively. They take pride in creating beautiful 'floor books' that are full of pictures, snippets of ideas and things said; these record important events and moments through the year.
- Safeguarding is effective. Risk assessments are thorough and the classroom is a safe environment for children. Children's behaviour is good and adults are quick to provide support to children to help them understand the importance of being polite and treating one another with respect. Children play and learn together well and are very motivated to learn.
- The strong emphasis on creating a caring and nurturing environment is evident from the very positive relationships adults have with children, and children have with each other. There are also very good relationships between staff and parents, who describe the adults in early years as 'friendly and approachable'. Staff encourage regular communication with parents and they invite them to events such as 'stay and play' and meetings about reading and phonics. They also produce a helpful booklet, which is translated into the various spoken languages, to help parents read with their children.

Parents feel very positive about how well their children have settled into school and the progress they have made.

School details

Unique reference number	105331
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10024105

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Thew
Headteacher	Marcus Elder
Telephone number	0161 764 2993
Website	www.holytrinitycofe.org.uk
Email address	HolyTrinity@bury.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 January 2015

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and a similarly high proportion speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than the national average.
- The number of pupils that join and leave the school is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and assessed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Inspectors observed pupils in the playground and during lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and in the 'learning journals' of children in the early years.
- An inspector listened to a number of pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, pupil support and attendance officer, early years leader and curriculum leaders.
- An inspector met with eight members of the governing body, including the chair. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority and Bury Teaching Alliance.
- A group of pupils discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with an inspector, and inspectors also spoke informally with pupils in the playground and around school.
- There was only one response to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors talked briefly with a number of parents before school and took account of the school's own questionnaire to parents.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including: minutes from meetings of the governing body; information on pupils' attainment and progress; the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plan. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sheila O'Keeffe

Ofsted Inspector

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