

Radcliffe Primary School

Coronation Road, Radcliffe, Manchester, Greater Manchester M26 3RD

Inspection dates

10–11 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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils in reading, writing, mathematics, spelling, punctuation and grammar are improving, but are still below those expected for their age, particularly in key stage 2. Pupils, including the most able, do not progress rapidly enough.
- The quality of teaching is still variable. Staff do not consistently provide tasks matched closely to pupils' different abilities or that really challenge them to extend their skills and knowledge.
- The outdoor areas for children in the early years are not fully developed or utilised as a resource for learning.
- Although they are diminishing, differences remain between the standards attained by disadvantaged pupils at the school and those of other pupils nationally.
- Newly implemented behaviour management systems ensure that lessons proceed smoothly, but some pupils still need help to manage their own behaviour at all times.
- Most senior and middle leaders are new to their roles and have yet to become fully effective in the drive for school improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The dynamic leadership of the headteacher has inspired a new sense of purpose and placed a very clear focus on improving provision for every pupil.
- There is good capacity for sustained improvement due to the shared commitment and drive of leaders, staff and governors that is seen in recent improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel safe there. Their keen attitudes to learning are helping them progress more rapidly in all subjects.
- Rates of progress are improving across the school. The proportion of children who reached a good level of development at the end of the early years has increased and compares favourably with the national figure.
- The Nursery class gives children a happy and secure start to learning.
- Parents expressed very positive views of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment to match or exceed national outcomes and ensure that pupils make more rapid progress:
 - in reading, by enriching the supply of books for pupils to read for pleasure to boost their enjoyment of reading and help them gain a wider vocabulary and ideas to use in their writing
 - in writing, by improving pupils' ability to use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately to enhance the quality of their work in all subjects
 - in mathematics, by helping pupils to improve their knowledge of arithmetic and develop faster recall of number bonds and times tables, and giving them more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills across the curriculum.

- Build on current improvements in the quality of teaching to ensure that all is at least good by:
 - developing staff skills in framing questions that really challenge their pupils, especially the most able, to think and reason at greater depth
 - enhancing pupils' independence as learners, so they become increasingly involved with and responsible for their own learning as they move through the school
 - rigorously diminishing remaining differences in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils in the school and those of other pupils nationally
 - ensuring that staff in the early years classes make greater, more focused use of the outdoor areas for learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the appointment of the current headteacher, her dedication and hard work, supported by all leaders and staff, are showing positive results. Progress is improving, for example in the early years, and most pupils who left in 2016 made the progress expected of them.
- There is still a legacy of weaker teaching in earlier years, and sometimes, the most able pupils are not really challenged to do even better. Many teaching and learning systems are new and have yet to become fully established, so some slower progress remains, particularly in the older classes, and outcomes need further improvement in all subjects. Leaders have rightly placed raising standards and boosting progress at the heart of improvement planning.
- Most senior and middle leaders are only recently in post. Their clear plans are firmly focused on improving provision and outcomes in their areas of responsibility, but these are at a very early stage of making a real impact.
- The quality of teaching is now regularly checked. The rigorous system of performance management provides staff with clear feedback about what they need to do better, which they must implement. They are held accountable for ensuring that their pupils progress well, and are set performance targets linked to school priorities.
- Clear systems for tracking pupils' progress have been introduced to analyse and monitor the performance of different groups, such as disadvantaged pupils, boys and girls, so that extra help can be provided where needed. These systems are relatively new and still becoming embedded.
- Pupil premium funds are carefully targeted to boost attainment and progress for disadvantaged pupils, to break down any barriers to learning. The impact is thoroughly reviewed. School analysis shows that progress is improving. In 2016, disadvantaged pupils made four and a half terms' progress in mathematics, which is more than the progress pupils are expected to make. However, there is more to be done to further diminish the differences between standards reached by disadvantaged pupils in the school and those of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive well-directed support and guidance. Apart from challenges in lessons, there is little extra provision for those who find learning easier.
- Primary physical education and sport funding provides a range of additional activities such as fencing and archery. Staff have acquired additional coaching skills that they use to enhance pupils' enjoyment and participation in sports and physical activity.
- The curriculum is carefully planned on a two-year cycle to make sure that pupils in the mixed-age classes do not repeat topics. The curriculum is immersive, with lively displays that grab pupils' attention. Years 1 and 2 pupils spoke enthusiastically about their work on the Great Fire of London, and enjoyed tasting and comparing bread and cheese typical of that era.

- Extra-curricular activities include visits, such as to the Maritime Museum in Liverpool or Blackpool Zoo. These stimulate pupils' interest and progress in their classwork while enriching their personal and social development effectively. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy the various clubs on offer, such as the film club, martial arts club and different sports clubs.
- Providing equal opportunities for all pupils to participate in every activity is one of the fundamental British values promoted well through the school's 'values curriculum'. Well-considered spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps pupils reflect on the needs of others, and provides experiences that they might not have otherwise, such as with music or visits.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors or responded online or to the school's own survey gave very positive views. School surveys in 2015 and 2016 show increasing levels of satisfaction. They are well informed through weekly newsletters and feel that the staff are approachable. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are outside school to greet pupils and parents every morning.
- Leaders and managers work closely with the other school in the multi-academy trust to ensure that staff benefit by sharing good practice and training. In addition, leaders have made good use of external advisers to support all aspects in the drive for further improvement.

Governance of the school

- Governors bring relevant skills and knowledge, which they use effectively to support and challenge school leaders. Through regular reports from the headteacher, they are suitably informed to ask probing questions, for example about what is being done to raise standards, or how leaders ensure that they get the best value for money.
- Governors make use of local and national data to compare the school's performance with that of others. Consequently, governors know that pupils are beginning to make better progress but are well aware that standards should be higher.
- Governors agree that in order to raise standards, the key issue for the school development plan is to further raise the quality of teaching. Regular updates from the headteacher ensure that they monitor how performance management reviews and staff training are being used to increase staff skills.
- They check how pupil premium funding is used, and know that it boosted the progress of disadvantaged pupils in 2016, but that there are still differences between their performance and that of other pupils nationally.
- Governors make sure that the physical education and sport funding provides different activities that pupils enjoy and want to take part in and also helps staff learn new skills to pass on to their pupils.
- Governors ensure that traditional values feature prominently in the curriculum, together with the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to give them a sound basis for their future lives in modern British society.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Robust systems and procedures are known and understood by all staff, ensuring that pupils are kept safe and secure. Child protection training for all staff is up to date, and risk assessments are completed thoroughly. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and their parents agree. 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

Requires improvement

- Inspection evidence, school records and the work in pupils' books confirm that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving. However, improvement is not fully consistent across the school. Teaching does not routinely provide tasks precisely matched to pupils' abilities or really challenge them to extend their skills and knowledge.
- Staff are expected to base lesson plans on assessment information so they know where to pitch work. Sometimes tasks are not really challenging for those who find learning easy and they spend time working on tasks that they can complete with ease, rather than extending their knowledge.
- At times, teachers do not ask questions that will help pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding, or develop their ability to think hard and explain their answers.
- Classrooms are bright and well organised with a range of prompts and reminders to help pupils with their learning. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils enjoyed selecting from a range of challenges, and most had the confidence to choose a difficult option. However, other pupils can rely on adults too much. Many lack independence and are at an early stage of being involved and taking some responsibility for their own learning.
- The friendly, supportive relationships observed in all classes between pupils and with staff have helped boost progress and ensure that lessons proceed smoothly. Staff manage behaviour well. Both pupils and parents like the interactive rewards system that sends messages to parents immediately their child earns a reward.
- Teaching assistants make a useful contribution to pupils' progress. They provide well-informed support, especially for those who are vulnerable or who need extra help with their learning.
- Pupils' work is marked thoroughly using the agreed school system. Pupils told inspectors they find teachers' comments helpful and they like using the purple pens to edit their work.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils said that the school is better due to the changes introduced by the headteacher, and parents agreed. One pupil said, 'You never feel lonely, you always feel you have a place in the school.' Kind, caring attitudes were seen when pupils gave awards to each other or thoughtfully named their friends' best qualities, such as loyalty or helpfulness.
- In all classes, pupils' books showed care and pride in the way they present their work.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and learn how to keep themselves safe, such as around water or on their bikes. Parents say that they feel welcome and can approach the school with any concerns.
- Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and know their actions have consequences. They willingly take on responsibilities. School councillors held a cake sale to raise money for charity, and pupils are keen to apply to be 'buddies' who help any with problems.
- Bullying is not seen as a problem. Pupils feel able to tell staff about any worries they may have and are confident they will always help. They know that bullying may happen in different ways, such as repeated name-calling, physical bullying, cyber-bullying or by text. Most parents agree that any bullying is dealt with well. However, pupils said that occasionally, some name-calling or unfriendliness happens in the playground.
- Staff and external agencies provide sensitive support for pupils and families who may be vulnerable, enabling these pupils to participate fully and progress at the same rate as their classmates.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs are well organised. Parents can leave their children in the safe setting, with plenty of activities and a secure start and end to the school day.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils are very polite, helpful and welcoming. Pupils described behaviour as 'mostly good' or 'ok'. The inspectors observed much good behaviour in class because staff manage their pupils well but occasionally, a few pupils need reminders about their behaviour, which can slow their learning.
- The majority of pupils move around the building and stairs sensibly and with regard to their own safety and that of those around them. A few are still learning to manage their behaviour, such as at lunchtime or out of class, and some parents commented on this in the school surveys. Leaders have responded by introducing new behaviour management strategies, but these have yet to be fully embedded.

- Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. Persistent absence has declined and exclusion is extremely rare. The school works hard to ensure that pupils attend regularly and on time using rewards and incentives, and the attendance officer works with families to promote better attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Although pupils' progress and attainment have improved, outcomes for pupils require improvement because progress is not yet consistently or securely good across the school. Over time, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been well below the national average at the end of Year 6. Leaders have rightly placed raising standards at the heart of improvement planning. Changes to the tests means that fully accurate comparisons with previous years are not possible.
- Outcomes in 2015 showed that the percentage of pupils who made the progress expected of them was below average in all subjects. However, outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2016 show that most made similar progress to other pupils nationally. Pupils made good progress in writing.
- In reading in 2016, despite improvements in progress, only about a third of pupils reached the expected standard at the end of Year 6. Older pupils had missed out on the teaching of phonics in their earlier years, which hindered the development of skills such as comprehension or inferring meaning from the text. Year 2 pupils have benefited from better teaching and the majority reached the expected standard.
- A strong focus on staff training has improved phonics teaching. In 2016, the proportion of Year 1 pupils who achieved the expected standard increased significantly. This was still below, but closer to, the national figure. There was a similar increase in the proportion of pupils who met the standard when they re-took the phonics check in Year 2 after not meeting it in Year 1. The school's analysis shows that pupils are set to continue this upward trend.
- Younger pupils recognise individual letter sounds and 'sound out' unknown words accurately, but some struggle to blend letters into words. The new subject leader has clear plans to develop pupils' love of reading in order to ensure that they are equipped with the reading skills they need to use across the curriculum.
- In recent years, a focus on developing writing skills means that this has been the slightly stronger subject. In 2016, 70% of pupils reached the expected standard, a figure moderated and found accurate by the local authority. The work in pupils' books shows that they write with increasing confidence as they move through the school.
- Just under half of pupils reached the expected standard in the spelling, punctuation and grammar check. Sometimes, basic spelling errors and inaccurate use of punctuation and grammar can mar pupils' work. Teachers' assessments in science showed that outcomes were close to the national average.

- Many pupils told inspectors that mathematics is their favourite lesson. However, over time, this has been the weaker subject and only 38% of pupils reached the expected standard in 2016. Pupils do not have swift recall of their times tables, and often forget basic number bonds when putting their mathematical knowledge into practice, for example when given problems to solve. Pupils' work books contained few examples of mathematics being used in other subjects. The new subject leader has focused plans to ensure that pupils attain higher by developing staff skills and ensuring that the subject is well resourced.
- Most-able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are given extra challenges in lessons to help deepen their knowledge and reasoning skills, for example, the 'chilli challenges' in Year 6. However, these pupils are not routinely stretched, and consequently over time, few have attained above the standards expected of them in any subject.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils has improved. In 2015, disadvantaged pupils were about one year behind other pupils nationally in all subjects. School records and analysis show that these pupils now progress in line with other pupils nationally and the remaining attainment differences are diminishing.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well organised and ensures that they progress at a similar rate as other pupils with the same starting points. Staff are well trained in assessing their needs and providing support so that these pupils have equal opportunities to access all subjects and activities.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- When children start school, their skills are below those typically found at their age, with weaknesses in reading, writing, mathematics, and speech and language.
- Progress is improving for all groups of children, including those who are disadvantaged. The proportion reaching a good level of development by the end of their time in Reception class has risen over time and was almost 70% in 2016. Most are ready for further learning in Year 1, with good transition arrangements ensuring that their learning continues smoothly.
- In Nursery, good welfare arrangements, the friendly environment and warm, caring relationships mean that children soon feel safe and secure so they settle quickly, and are ready for learning. Although in school for just over eight weeks, children have made good progress in social skills. They take turns, understand the simple routines such as washing their hands before eating and confidently choose from the different learning activities on offer.
- Throughout the early years, staff use every opportunity to extend and develop language skills, for example, encouraging children to describe how it felt when they dipped their hands into red paint to make poppy prints on Remembrance Day. Reception children developed their language in the shop, acting as customers and shopkeeper. Many have limited vocabulary and their language skills progress slowly. Some struggled to name what they wanted at snack time, and others found it hard to recognise the letters in their name as they looked for their label.

- Some children in the Reception classes have not mastered holding a pencil or forming letters accurately. Staff ensure that there are writing activities available at all times, often linked to the daily phonics lessons.
- Children enjoy counting and recognising numbers. In Reception, most children can identify basic shapes and staff take every opportunity to develop mathematical language, such as two-dimensional shapes, pentagon, triangle and hexagon.
- Behaviour is good in both classes. Children become increasingly able to stay involved with their tasks and activities, and take turns to use equipment. They respectfully observed the two-minute silence on Remembrance Day, an early lesson in traditional values.
- Leadership requires improvement because the quality of teaching, although improving, is variable. Staff do not consistently match activities accurately to children's ability; for example, a mathematics shape activity was too difficult. In addition, the potential of the outdoor area for learning is not maximised as a resource to boost children's progress in all areas of learning.

School details

Unique reference number	139999
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10019778

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	314
Appropriate authority	The multi-academy trust
Chair of the multi-academy trust	Mark Granby
Chair of the governing body	Glyn Whitworth
Headteacher	Jenny Broadhurst
Telephone number	0161 723 4538
Website	www.radcliffeprimary.bc-et.co.uk
Email address	jenny.broadhurst@radcliffeprimary.bc-et.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is larger than most primary schools. It opened on 1 January 2014 and is part of Bury College Educational Trust. When the predecessor school was last inspected, it was placed in special measures.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is similar to the national average, and a few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average.

- The school meets the government's floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A significant number of staff have joined the school since it became an academy. The headteacher has been in post for 16 months, the deputy headteacher for 12 months and the two assistant headteachers for just three months, and there have been a number of teaching appointments.
- The school provides daily breakfast and after-school clubs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team met with pupils, staff, governors, representatives of the academy trustees and the school adviser. They also spoke with parents as they brought their children to school.
- They observed lessons in all classes, including one observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors listened to some pupils read and observed pupils in an assembly, at lunchtime and outside.
- Leaders looked at pupils' work books, school records, leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and learning and the systems used to gather an accurate picture of how well pupils are doing.
- Safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- There were not enough responses recorded on the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, so inspectors looked at the school's own surveys.
- Inspectors examined parents' responses to the online survey and the 28 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Kathleen McArthur, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lis Burbage	Ofsted Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector

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