

# St Philip's Catholic Primary School

Half Moon Lane, Offerton, Stockton, Cheshire SK2 5LB

## Inspection dates

25–26 January 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Highly effective and dynamic leadership provided by the headteacher and assistant headteachers has brought about improvements in all aspects of the school's work. St Philip's is now a good school.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork across the school. Staff are committed to bringing about further improvements and morale is high.
- All groups of pupils, including the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make at least good progress from their starting points.
- The pupil premium is used effectively. The personal and academic needs of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, are met well due to the carefully tailored support provided.
- Consistently good teaching enables all pupils to achieve well. Well-planned, imaginative lessons capture pupils' interests and motivate them to succeed.
- The teaching of reading is a strength. Pupils are developing a real passion for reading.
- Pupils' progress in writing is not quite as good as that of reading and mathematics. Pupils do not write long pieces of work that challenge them to think creatively or apply skills fully.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. This is a happy, caring school. Pupils work hard and strive to do their best.
- Parents are overwhelmingly satisfied with the school and the way it educates and cares for their children.
- Staff are extremely vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe and know how to keep themselves safe.
- The curriculum is varied and offers pupils many exciting opportunities to learn. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Governors are well informed and provide effective support. They make regular visits to the school, robustly challenge leaders and hold them fully to account for their actions.
- Children make good progress during the early years. They settle quickly into school and enjoy learning. However, at times they could make even faster progress in writing when they work independently.
- Many subject leaders are new to their posts. Their role in improving the quality of teaching and learning is still developing.
- There remain a few variations in the rates of progress of boys and girls across the school.

## **Full report**

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

- Speed up progress in writing still further by developing pupils' skills and creativity as they write longer pieces of work.
- Ensure that adults in the early years develop children's writing skills when they work independently.
- Continue to eliminate any remaining gaps in the standards reached by boys and girls.
- Develop the skills of subject leaders to enable them to contribute fully to improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, assistant headteachers and governors have successfully maintained a secure focus on improving the school's performance despite significant staffing changes. As a result of the firm management of the performance of teachers the quality of teaching is now good and pupil outcomes have improved. Progress is now good or better across the school and standards continue to rise. The school is well placed to continue to improve.
- Regular and accurate monitoring provides leaders with a clear view of the strengths of teaching and areas to develop further. The coaching and professional development provided, including for those teachers who are at an early stage of their careers, encourage teachers to reflect on and develop their practice. All staff are highly committed to the school and its continued improvement. Teachers frequently share ideas and information about what is working well in their classrooms.
- Teachers' regular checks on the progress made by pupils are rigorously monitored to ensure their accuracy. Senior leaders use this assessment information effectively in their termly discussions with teachers about pupils' achievement. Any under-performance, including that of the most able pupils, is quickly identified. Well-planned additional support is put into place to bring pupils back on track with their peers.
- Since the previous inspection, detailed plans for the school's improvement have provided a solid framework for school leaders, including governors, to keep track of the changes needed and the actions taken to bring about the necessary changes. Senior leaders and governors have a thorough and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need development.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least good progress from their starting points. This is because pupils' needs are identified well and additional support is swiftly put into place. The knowledgeable leader of special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that the views of pupils and parents contribute to reviews of how pupils are doing. Pupils' additional and emotional needs are identified quickly and well-targeted teaching, tailored to individual need, is put in place and reviewed regularly. Funding to support special educational needs or disability is deployed effectively.
- The effective leadership of reading, writing and mathematics by senior leaders has driven improvements in these areas of the curriculum. Senior leaders are providing support and guidance for the leaders of the other subjects, most of whom are new to their roles. The new leaders are energetic and keen to contribute to the leadership of the school. They have begun to take on the responsibility of leading their subject areas but there has not yet been time for them to fully contribute to improving the quality of teaching.
- Leaders and teachers have planned the curriculum well. Subjects inspire pupils and offer them rich learning experiences that enhance pupils' personal as well as academic development. The curriculum is enriched by a range of trips and visitors and school clubs. As well as focusing on reading, writing and mathematics, school leaders have ensured that pupils' learning in other subjects, including science, music and art, has continued.

- Leaders strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils know and understand the school's values of 'rejoice, respect and resilience'. The curriculum is broad and balanced and well enriched through a variety of trips and visitors to the school. It prepares pupils well for their next steps in learning and life in modern Britain.
- Senior leaders and governors have made sure that the additional funding for the relatively small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in each year group has been spent appropriately. As a result, disadvantaged pupils, including those who are the most able, make similar or better progress to that of other pupils nationally. Leaders have a sound rationale for the deployment of these funds.
- The sports funding for primary schools is used effectively to promote pupils' well-being and increase participation in sporting activities. At lunchtimes, pupils are more active because of the high-quality opportunities provided by a specialist coach in physical education employed by the school. Pupils understand the importance of keeping active and have the opportunity to play team sports with their classmates.
- Leaders take the need for good attendance extremely seriously. Any absences are followed up robustly. The school is highly inclusive and leaders are determined to ensure that all pupils attend regularly and on time and make the best possible progress given their abilities and starting points.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school. They say that leaders and staff know their children as individuals and that all who work in the school are very helpful and approachable. Many of the parents who spoke to the inspectors or who left comments on the inspection questionnaire commented positively about the leadership of the headteacher and assistant headteachers and on the improvements made in the school since the previous inspection.
- Since the previous inspection the school has benefited from the well-targeted challenge and support of the local authority.

### **Governance of the school**

- The governing body has reviewed its practices. Governors are passionate about the school and have ensured that they have the skills to work efficiently and effectively. Governors know their school well. They have an accurate view of the strengths and they are committed to addressing their identified areas for improvement. Governors support senior leaders effectively and hold them to account well.
- Governors know about the quality of teaching and they ensure that the school's performance management policy is robustly applied. They ensure that teachers are held to account for the pupils in their care.
- Governors ensure that the pupil premium is deployed effectively to support the personal and academic development of disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors regularly seek the views of pupils when they review the performance of the school or are considering any changes to aspects of school life.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Robust systems ensure that staff and volunteers are suitable people to work with children. Visitors to the school are checked thoroughly and made aware of the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Safeguarding and child protection training for staff is comprehensive and up to date. Staff are vigilant. They have a good understanding of what to do if they have concerns

about a child's safety.

- There are effective systems to protect pupils at risk of harm. These include close links with social services and other professional agencies. Records are robust and kept secure.
- Absences are followed up quickly and rigorously to ensure pupils' safety. The school provides parents with a range of information through its website to help them keep their children safe online and reinforce the importance of good attendance.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment have improved because of the unceasing resolve of the headteacher, assistant headteachers and governors to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential.
- Improved teaching is ensuring much better outcomes for pupils than at the time of the previous inspection. Teaching is now consistently good or better and the impact on learning, including for reading, writing and mathematics is reflected in the good and sometimes rapid progress pupils make.
- Teachers and well-trained teaching assistants work as a strong team. Teachers know their pupils' learning needs well. Well-planned lessons make meaningful links between subjects. Teachers carefully build on what pupils already know and can do. They use good subject knowledge to question pupils skilfully to check their understanding. Careful explanations clarify misconceptions and move learning forward.
- Pupils receive very clear feedback from teachers, in line with the school's policy, about how well they are doing and how they can improve their work. Pupils enjoy making regular checks on their progress in lessons, which they call 'progress pit stops'. Their work benefits from these regular reviews. Pupils are adept at reviewing their work to decide where they can make changes to improve their work or to show their teachers where they need some extra help.
- Classrooms and corridors are bright and well organised. Pupils are proud of the way their work is displayed around the school. For example, the school corridors display numerous book reviews by pupils to encourage others to read the books they have enjoyed. Pupils regularly stop to read new reviews that have been posted by fellow pupils.
- Reading is a strength of the school. The teaching of phonics is carefully developed in the early years and in key stage 1 and, as a result, most pupils get off to a good start in their reading. The wealth of books in the library area located in the heart of the school is very popular with pupils. The bookshelves act like a magnet as pupils move around the school; many pupils linger to browse the books as they pass down the corridor. Pupils read more fluently and widely. They talk readily about the books they enjoy and offer their opinions about different authors. Many pupils have developed a passion for reading and parents say that their children now read for enjoyment at home.
- In mathematics, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Skills are developed well through frequent opportunities to revisit previous learning. Teachers' focus on developing pupils' abilities to reason and deepen their learning in mathematics is proving successful.

- English lessons develop spelling, grammar and punctuation skills effectively and pupils apply these skills well when they write in English and other subjects. A neat handwriting style is taught consistently across the school and pupils' books are tidy and presented well. However, pupils have few opportunities to write at length to develop their creativity and use of the basic skills, and this sometimes restricts the progress that pupils, including the most able, can make in writing.
- Pupils are developing the ability to use coding when they write programs in computing lessons. Teachers use technology to bring learning to life. For example, Year 5 used virtual reality to bring the Roman world to life.
- Regular opportunities are provided to enable pupils to think about the lives of others and to consider challenging issues. During the inspection, for example, Year 6 were thinking about why people might seek to migrate from their home country. They maturely reflected on this important issue and sensibly identified some of the reasons – the pulls and pushes – which might affect decisions to take this step.
- External assessments and school performance information in 2016 show that some variations existed between the standards reached by boys and girls across different year groups. Teachers are aware of this and have adapted the curriculum and provided additional support to close the gaps. Work in pupils' books shows that both girls and boys are making at least good progress and gaps are diminishing but not yet closed.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils attend school regularly and are very clear about the importance of their education. Attitudes to learning are excellent; pupils are keen to learn and show great levels of concentration.
- Work in lessons and in pupils' books shows that they have a willingness and confidence to 'have a go' when tackling new work. Pupils show great perseverance and learn best and make the most rapid progress when their teachers provide work which makes them think. They particularly enjoy the regular, multi-level challenges set by teachers. Pupils are ambitious and they like to aim high, many choosing to tackle the highest level of challenge.
- Pupils feel very safe and cared for. They are aware of the different types of bullying including cyber bullying and prejudiced-based bullying. Pupils say incidents of bullying almost never happen but if issues do arise they trust the staff to sort them out quickly. All pupils know to 'zip it, block it, flag it' if they come across anything unsafe on the internet.
- Pupils' work and their comments to inspectors demonstrate that they have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils understand the importance of eating healthily and keeping active. Many participate in the school sports activities at lunchtime and after school.
- Pupils make an excellent contribution to their school community in a variety of ways. The pupil leadership team members are elected by their peers and take their role in helping with the decision-making process in school very seriously. Older pupils who act

as 'reading heroes' enjoy helping younger children with their reading. The digital leaders help other pupils to get the best from technology and use the internet safely.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school and they take great pride in their work. They are respectful of each other and the adults who care for them. Pupils are articulate and well mannered when they talk to each other, adults and visitors alike. Pupils thrive in the calm, positive learning environment in this friendly school.
- In lessons, pupils work hard and behave very well. This is because they are genuinely interested in learning. Teachers and the support staff have extremely high expectations of pupils, as do pupils of themselves.
- Pupils respond very well to the school's reward system. For example, they strive to become the 'writer of the week' and to have the honour of wearing the yellow sweatshirt that identifies them as such.
- All parents who completed the online questionnaire said that their children are happy, well looked after and kept safe in school. The overwhelming majority of those who responded with comments online and those who spoke to inspectors said that their children are happy in school and they have no concerns about behaviour.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

**Good**

- Swift and well-planned actions taken by senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are proving successful. Outcomes achieved by pupils are now good and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- External assessments, scrutiny of pupils' work, observations in lessons and talking with pupils about their learning show that the pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has increased since the previous inspection.
- The majority of children enter the Reception Year with skills, knowledge and understanding broadly similar to those typical for their age. However, the range varies from year to year with children's writing, communication and language skills generally below those typical for their age.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their starting points. The proportion reaching a good level of development has increased year on year. It is now above the national average and an increasing proportion are exceeding the standards expected for their age. Leaders and staff are aware that with even greater challenge, some children, including the most able, are capable of doing even better in writing. Children are well prepared for their move up to Year 1.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have improved since the previous inspection and progress is good. Pupils' attainment is at least in line with that expected for their age and a good proportion are doing better than this in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Progress at the end of key stage 2 has improved steadily in all subjects since the previous inspection. It is now above average in reading and in line with the average in writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 in 2016 was at least in line with the national average.

- Pupils' progress in writing, although good, is not as strong as in reading or, increasingly, in mathematics. The progress of a minority of pupils in writing is not as rapid as in other subjects.
- The school's own information and work in pupils' books show that current pupils are making good progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar good progress to that of other pupils. Their needs are identified early so that specific support can be given to help them make good progress from their starting points and given their individual abilities.
- The pupil premium is deployed effectively. Effective teaching and well-focused support enable the small number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group to make at least good, and sometimes rapid, progress from their starting points.
- Work in pupils' books and on display throughout the school and visits to classes shows that pupils make good progress in a wide range of other subjects. This is because the quality of teaching in other subjects is good, including science, history, geography and art.
- Early reading skills are taught well. The proportion of pupils reaching the national standard in the end of Year 1 phonics check is in line with the national average. Almost all pupils reach this standard by the end of Year 2.
- Inspection evidence shows that pupils read fluently, with confidence and expression, and show a clear understanding of what they are reading. Reading skills are applied effectively across the curriculum at key stage 2. These approaches ensure that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, move on quickly in their reading.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, also make good progress. However, leaders are aware that there is scope to enable these pupils, like the others in the school, to make even better progress in writing.
- In the past, standards achieved by boys and girls have varied but teachers have changed the curriculum to close the gaps. Work in pupils' books shows that both boys and girls are making at least good progress.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- The leader of the early years ensures that transition from the Nursery settings that children attend is smooth and effective. As a result, children settle well and quickly get used to classroom routines. The Reception class provides children with a positive start to school life.
- Children are polite and confident, eager to talk to adults and each other. They work and play happily together and help each other with their learning. Children take turns and listen carefully to the adults and each other. They demonstrate good levels of curiosity and readily choose from the range of activities on offer that interest them.
- Standards have risen so that a higher than average proportion of children now reach a good level of development. An increasing proportion are also doing better than this. Numbers are too small to report separately on disadvantaged children or children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, all children make at least good progress in their Reception Year and they are well prepared for Year 1.



- The early years curriculum captures children's interests well. Children enjoy learning in the well-equipped outdoor space. They are benefiting from the improvements made in the provision in this area since the previous inspection.
- Indoors, a number of activities were the focus of children's learning. For example, children were busily engaged in the 'baby clinic' set up in response to their interests. During the inspection, children happily tended to the 'babies' as they developed their understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy, and of the role of others in helping them to do so.
- Teaching is good, particularly when children are engaged in activities directed by an adult. At these times, adults check regularly how well children are doing and adjust the learning to take account of what they need to do to improve. However, sometimes, when children learn independently on activities they have chosen for themselves, adults miss the opportunity to engage with children. This means that, at times, opportunities to help children make even more progress, particularly in writing, are missed.
- Development of early writing skills has a high profile in Reception. Teachers create a range of opportunities for children to write, providing activities to capture their interests. However, adults do not always intervene at the right moment to encourage and move children's learning on, and this sometimes prevents children making even more rapid progress with their writing.
- Teachers and support staff work together as an effective team. Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff are vigilant in ensuring the health, welfare, safety and well-being of every child in their care.
- Children's speech, language and vocabulary skills are developed well. Adults skilfully encourage children to talk about what they are doing and model the type of language to be used as they learn.
- Parents hold highly positive views about the teaching and care their children receive in the early years and say how much their children enjoy school. They value the opportunity to share the developments made by children at home with staff in school.

## School details

Unique reference number	106126
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10024109

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marian Slee
Headteacher	Carole Hogan
Telephone number	0161 483 0977
Website	<a href="http://www.stphilipsstockport.co.uk">www.stphilipsstockport.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@st-philips.stockport.sch.uk">admin@st-philips.stockport.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	3–4 March 2015

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum and the policy for special educational needs and/or disabilities. A statement on the school website showed that it was under construction. All relevant information was available in the school.
- The school is smaller than the average primary school.
- There are no Nursery classes. Children attend the Reception class full time.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much smaller than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.

- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant staffing changes with most teachers and some teaching assistants retiring or moving on to other posts. Two assistant headteachers have joined the school since the previous inspection and five out of the seven year-group teachers were new to the school in September 2015. Most of the new teaching staff were at the start of their teaching careers. A number of the teaching support staff have also joined the school since the previous inspection.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2016. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- A private provider offers a breakfast club on the school's premises. This provision is subject to separate inspection arrangements. Inspection reports may be viewed on the Ofsted website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. They observed learning in classes and when pupils learned in small groups. Two observations took place jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with them about their work. They listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of reading skills. Inspectors talked to pupils about the books they have enjoyed and those that they are currently reading. Inspectors took note of displays around the school.
- Inspectors talked with pupils informally as they played at breaktimes, visited the dining hall at lunchtime and observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around school. They met formally with three groups of pupils.
- An inspector met with the chair of the governing body and three other governors.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority and with members of school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day. They took account of 64 responses to Ofsted's online survey (Parent View) and the school's most recent surveys of pupils' and parents' views.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including information about pupils' progress, school improvement plans, information about teachers' performance and external views of the school. Inspectors reviewed the contents of the school's website and scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding completed by school staff.

## Inspection team

Lyn Pender, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Schelene Ferris

Ofsted Inspector

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