

Our Lady and St Paul’s Roman Catholic Primary School, Heywood

Sutherland Road, Darnhill, Heywood, Lancashire OL10 3PD

Inspection dates

7–8 March 2017

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

- The results in 2016 represented a decline in standards for the school. Although progress is improving, outcomes are still not consistently good throughout the school.
- The recently appointed headteacher has introduced new strategies to improve teaching. It is too early to see the impact, and inconsistencies in teaching remain, particularly in some year groups.
- Newly appointed subject leaders have not had enough impact on improving the quality of teaching in their subject areas.
- Teachers’ expectations are not always high enough in some classes, especially in writing. Pupils do not make the progress they should.
- Due to weak teaching in the past, pupils still have gaps in their knowledge.
- At times a small number of pupils can disrupt the learning of others. This is more common where the teaching is weak.
- There is too much variation in the quality of the teaching of reading and as a result progress in this subject is slower.
- Although early years is improving, progress is not yet consistently good for the most able.

The school has the following strengths

- Since her arrival in April 2016, the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has acted swiftly to reverse the decline in standards seen in 2016.
- There is a new energy amongst leaders and this is driving forward the changes necessary. The school is improving.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses and are proactive in holding the headteacher to account.
- The progress of pupils is improving in key stage 1 and in Years 5 and 6. More pupils are working at a standard appropriate for their age.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills of the new middle leaders so that they can monitor their areas of responsibility effectively and improve the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that staff consistently apply the new behaviour policy so that the pupils' behaviour and self-discipline is good
- Improve outcomes by improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - making sure that the tasks within lessons are better shaped to meet the needs of pupils, especially in Years 3 and 4
 - improving the presentation and quality of writing across the school to ensure that pupils make the progress they should from their starting points
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do, including the middle-ability and the most able throughout the school
 - making sure that teachers apply the school's approach to the teaching of reading routinely.
- Improve personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - providing opportunities in the playground to ensure that they have the opportunity to build positive relationships with pupils from other year groups in a secure environment, making this part of the school day enjoyable for everyone

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection there have been several changes in leadership and teaching staff. This instability had a considerable impact on staff morale, parental confidence, pupils' behaviour and outcomes in 2016.
- Leaders have not yet ensured that the teaching, outcomes, personal development and behaviour, and early years provision are good.
- The newly appointed middle leaders have an accurate understanding of what needs to improve, but it is too early for their work to impact on raising the quality of teaching and outcomes.
- The appointments of the present headteacher in April 2016 and of the deputy in September 2016 have been the turning point for the school. The drive for improvement is already under way. Recent changes can be seen in the appointment of new staff and training to improve the quality of teaching.
- The headteacher, supported by the governors, has successfully tackled most of the staffing issues and brought stability to the school community. Morale has improved. Comments from the staff indicate they have confidence in the leadership of the school. 'We feel valued and listened to' is a typical view.
- Representatives from the local authority and the diocese have worked with school leaders to tackle historical issues and to support the headteacher to bring about the changes needed.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection, and those who responded on Parent View, are supportive and comment positively on the improvements in the school since the appointment of the new headteacher.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate. They are aware that results in 2016 were not good enough. They have correctly identified the main priorities around the improvement of teaching and learning and have been proactive in securing additional support. The partnership with the local teaching school is already having a positive impact on the quality of teaching; for example, the way questions are used to develop pupils' thinking is having an impact on progress.
- There is still work to do to ensure consistency and this is acknowledged by school leaders. They have correctly identified where teaching is weak and already have an appropriate package of support in place. There has not been time, however, for these measures to take full effect in ensuring that teaching is consistently good throughout the school.
- The school development plan sets out clear and appropriate targets for improvement and is understood by staff and governors.
- The curriculum is rich with activities and opportunities for the pupils igniting their interests with visits, artefacts and stories. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of visits and visitors, for example: a representative from a national charity, who spoke to the pupils about staying safe; Rochdale Hornets rugby league club, who came as part of their

celebrations for becoming League One champions for the first time in nearly 100 years; historical experts dressed as Roman soldiers, who worked with the children sharing artefacts and stories; and the local police community support officer, who talked with the older children about the rule of law and order.

- The school has a well-attended breakfast club and after-school club which pupils say they enjoy. As a result, pupils are ready for learning at the start of the school day and have the opportunity to build positive relationships with pupils from other year groups in a secure environment.
- Leaders use the additional sports funding well to improve teaching. Pupils commented enthusiastically about the 'Link for Life' coaches, who work with the pupils and staff to develop and improve both physical and mental health and well-being through a range of activities. The new karate sessions are very popular and are helping to improve the behaviour of pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4, with respect and self-discipline.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. They take their roles as members of the school council and chaplaincy very seriously and recognise the responsibility that goes with the position. There is still work to do to make sure that books and displays reflect the increasing diversity of the local community.
- Leaders recognised that the funding for disadvantaged pupils was not making enough difference. Consequently, they commissioned an external audit to make sure that the best use was made of the pupil premium grant. As a result, funding is more focused and the difference is diminishing.
- The process for monitoring the funding for sports premium and for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also evaluated with greater rigour. Evidence seen on inspection shows that progress for these pupils is improving.
- The school liaises effectively with outside agencies to support the most vulnerable pupils. Parents spoken to during the inspection praised the work of leaders in securing the correct support for pupils, improvement in behaviour and progress in learning.

Governance of the school

- The governors have been proactive in addressing the issues which led to the decline in outcomes in 2016. They are making the changes necessary to bring about improvements in staffing and outcomes for pupils.
- Governors recently commissioned a review of governance and it identified what skills new governors needed to have. These new governors have brought a new energy and drive for improvement.
- The chair of governors is well supported by a governing body that has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are committed to ensuring that swift action is being taken to bring about improvements.
- The governors have worked closely with the headteacher to correctly identify the key priorities. Improvements are beginning to impact on progress for the pupils.
- The 'impact committee' minutes show increased challenge and support as they hold

leaders to account. A key demand is: 'Show me how I know that.'

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Concerns around child protection are dealt with promptly by the designated leader and followed through effectively to make sure that action is taken to keep children safe.
- Designated staff are suitably trained and an up-to-date policy is in place. Pupils know whom to go to if they need help and commented that 'if you have any worries you know who to go to'.
- All staff have received timely training updates, including the 'Prevent' duty and how to keep children safe in education. New staff receive training as part of their induction from the deputy head.
- Staff and governors are aware of their responsibilities to keep children safe and monitor any individual concerns with suitable vigilance.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not good because of the inconsistencies in some year groups.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations and as a result there is a lack of challenge for some pupils.
- Where teaching is not strong, low-level disruption from individual pupils impacts negatively on the learning of others. This slows progress.
- In some classes, activities do not accurately match pupils' needs, interests or their starting points. This results in slower progress being made, especially for the most able pupils.
- Progress for middle-ability pupils is not consistently good and gaps remain in their knowledge.
- The inconsistencies in the teaching of reading in some classes are leading to slower progress for some pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making stronger progress in classes where teaching and the support from additional adults is good.
- There are no wide variations in achievement for the different groups of children. However, there are some inconsistencies in lower key stage 2.
- Where the support from additional adults is most effective, pupils benefit from high-quality questioning which reminds them of things they already know, and encourages them to develop their thinking further.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning leads to work of a higher quality being produced. This was seen in English, where pupils were working on newspaper reports. They showed a good understanding of how to use vocabulary to 'change voice', worked well together and listened respectfully while improving each other's attempts.

- When teachers use questions effectively, pupils are engaged in their learning and are enthusiastic. They are eager to apply their skills and knowledge, leading to improved rates of progress over time.
- Phonics is taught well. Strong adult knowledge, clear strategies and good behaviour management ensure that pupils engage well in their learning and are challenged appropriately.
- Teaching in key stage 1, at times, meets the needs and interests of the pupils. This was seen where the story of 'The Queen's knickers' was used to stimulate pupils' imagination. The result was a wonderful display in the corridor and impressive writing produced by the pupils, which showed that they had made progress in their learning.
- Where teachers assess the pupils' understanding and learning accurately, particularly in reading, activities are appropriately challenging and progress is evident. This is not the case in all classes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- Previous instability in staffing and leadership has affected the personal development of some pupils, who find it difficult to concentrate. They lack the resilience and self-discipline to manage their own behaviour without consistently applied sanctions and rewards.
- Attitudes to learning in some classes are not as strong and pupils do not take enough pride in their work.
- Pupils speak confidently about improvements in school since the new headteacher arrived. Any concerns or issues are dealt with quickly.
- Pupils spoken to recalled the 'stay safe' work they have done in school and as a result they know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including bullying and when using the internet.
- Year 6 pupils spoke very positively about the importance of their roles as special friends to the younger children and how they helped them to settle into school and enjoy being at Our Lady and St Paul's.
- The increase in the number of clubs and activities has allowed many pupils to develop their physical health and has instilled a greater sense of self-confidence.
- Safeguarding is effective and school is rigorous in following up on any areas of concern about child protection.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Leaders are working to change the culture and raise expectations.
- Low-level disruption is having an impact on the progress that pupils make in classes

where teaching does not meet the needs of pupils. Although strategies have been put in place to tackle the inappropriate behaviour of a small minority, they are not fully embedded across school.

- During a discussion with the school council a small number of pupils commented that there is often rough play at playtimes, particularly with the boys, and that adults do not always intervene in a timely manner. This was confirmed by the inspectors' observations.
- There is work to do to improve the behaviour of some pupils, especially at playtimes and lunchtimes, in order to make this part of the school day enjoyable for everyone.
- Attendance is above the national average and pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly.
- The majority of pupils have polite manners, shown as they hold open the doors for adults and each other. They move calmly around school, for example as they go to assembly, physical education lessons, lunchtime and during breakfast and after-school club.
- Where the teaching is strong, relationships between staff and pupils are also strong. In these lessons, pupils take pride in their work and strive to do their best. Progress is being made and outcomes are improving.
- Most pupils have responded well to the behaviour systems introduced since the appointment of the headteacher and wear their 'Golden Jumpers' with pride.
- The majority of parents spoken to during the inspection commented positively on the improvements in behaviour since the appointment of the headteacher. They have confidence that any issues are dealt with quickly and appropriately by the leaders.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The results in 2016 represented a decline in standards for the school. Although progress is improving, outcomes are still not consistently good throughout the school.
- There are specific reasons to explain the dip in standards, which are firmly linked to the previous instability in staffing and leadership.
- Current progress and attainment information and the learning observed during the inspection show that things are improving, but there is more to be done to ensure that pupils' outcomes are good across the school.
- The work in pupils' books clearly shows progress over time from the start of the year, but the rates of progress made are inconsistent, particularly in some classes in key stage 2.
- Pupils are not making rapid enough progress to be able to meet the age-related expectations by the end of the year. However, this is not the case where teaching is stronger.
- There are some inconsistencies in the teaching of reading across key stage 2 and as a result, pupils do not make enough progress.
- There are no wide variations in achievement for the different groups of children.

However, there are some inconsistencies in lower key stage 2.

- Disadvantaged pupils are making progress similar to other pupils nationally from their starting points. Work in pupils' books, assessment information and observations in lessons show that the difference is diminishing over time.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making similar progress to other pupils in some classes. Where teachers assess accurately and support is specifically focused to meet their needs, they are making better progress.
- Progress for the most able in writing is not as rapid as it could be as they do not have enough opportunities to write at length and show a deeper understanding of their knowledge and skills.
- The introduction of a new way to assess mathematics is beginning to help teachers to identify gaps in learning and address any misconceptions. This is not embedded consistently enough across the school to ensure increased rates of progress from their starting points.
- Evidence gathered during the inspection and observations carried out by the inspectors show that the pupils in Year 6 are making stronger progress as a result of quality teaching from September 2016.
- There has been an improvement in the phonics screening check scores in Year 1 over the last three years and the pupils are now almost in line with others pupils of the same age.
- Pupils who read with the inspectors made good use of their phonics skills in their reading and in written work seen in pupils' work.
- The work in books for some pupils shows how they are applying their knowledge in a range of other subjects, for example the work they have been doing on the 'Great Fire of London' and 'The Romans'.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Instability in staffing has impacted on the leaders' capacity to develop improvements in the provision and maximise opportunities for the children.
- Although early years is improving, progress is not yet consistently good for the most able.
- The teaching of phonics varies depending on which adult is leading each session, leading to inconsistencies in the basic skills taught.
- Some areas of the outdoor environment are looking neglected and as a result, children have limited access to develop their own interests in this area.
- Some children are beginning to listen to each other and respect each other's differences. This is not the case for all the children who struggle to share equipment. However, inappropriate behaviour is dealt with appropriately.
- Adults model co-operation and encourage children to do the same. For example, a group of three children were building a tower with the large bricks and the adult was making positive suggestions and modelling how they could work together to ensure

that the tower did not fall over. The children then came up with their own ideas to help each other by passing bricks and holding the tower. They took great delight in watching the tower get taller: 'It's bigger than you now!'

- There is an increasing number of children joining the school who speak English as an additional language, and the support is limited. This has been correctly identified as an area for improvement and leaders are developing links with outside agencies in order to access the correct support for the children and their families. Parents spoken to say that they appreciate the support and help received and the additional funding is supporting this area of improvement.
- The range of books available for the children are not always of a high enough quality. Children do enjoy stories, especially the story 'Whatever next', which had stimulated a range of activities including a wonderful spaceship made from boxes, paper and sticky tape and a number of small people on it heading to the moon.
- The older children speak confidently about what they are doing. A small group were able to explain clearly the 'Legoland' map game they were making together.
- Adults develop children's problem-solving skills through the appropriate use of questions, for example 'I wonder...' and 'What would happen if...?'
- Teacher assessments are accurate and used to identify clearly the children's next steps. There is a range of evidence from across all the areas of learning, with examples of writing and photographs which clearly show the progress that the children are making. Evidence is less strong for mathematics.
- Leaders in the early years have a growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses and have identified clearly the key areas for improvement.
- There has been an improvement in the good level of development reached by the youngest pupils over the last three years. The information for 2016 shows that they are now typical for children of the same age.

School details

Unique reference number	105819
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10024114

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jayne Gregson
Headteacher	Marie Gavin
Telephone number	01706 360827
Website	www.ourladystpaulsrc.rochdale.sch.uk
Email address	mgavin@ourladystpaulsrc.rochdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 February 2015

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school. The present headteacher was appointed in April 2016 and the deputy head and middle leaders were appointed in September 2016.
- The school is working closely with the local authority and the diocese to address historical issues around leadership and staffing.
- The school is working closely with the local teaching school to support staff training and the role of the middle leaders.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average. There is a changing cultural diversity within the local community.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is

above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is also above the national average.

- The school has a Nursery class which has part-time sessions in the morning and the Reception class provides full-time early years education.
- The school operates a breakfast club and an after-school club each day.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- In 2016 the school did not meet the government's current floor standards.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classrooms to observe teaching and learning, including some joint observations with the headteacher. They also spent time looking through pupils' books and listening to a number of children read.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, a representative from the diocese, a representative from the local teaching school and representatives from the local authority. Inspectors also held discussions with senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with a number of parents after the school day and took into account the 16 views expressed on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- There was a discussion with pupils from the school council, as well as other conversations with pupils in school and on the playground. Views from pupil and staff questionnaires were also taken into account.
- Inspectors analysed a range of assessment information presented by the school, and key school documents, including those related to safeguarding.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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