

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Roman Catholic Primary School Blackburn

Holmbrook Close, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 3UG

Inspection dates

22–23 March 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been successful in their relentless drive to improve the school over the last two years. They lead by example and are ambitious for every pupil.
- All leaders, including governors, have an accurate view of the school's performance; their expectations of staff and pupils are high.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is tracked regularly to ensure that no pupil falls behind. Almost all pupils make good progress and are attaining at least age-related expectations.
- Teaching is good across the school and leads to pupils making good gains in most subjects. Teachers are knowledgeable and they skilfully question and probe pupils' understanding of their work. Nonetheless, teachers do not always accurately assess pupils' writing to ensure that the most able pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable. Handwriting is not taught systematically enough to develop pupils' fluency in writing.
- Pupils are well behaved and enthusiastic about their learning. Their attendance is improving quickly.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and the work they do.
- Pupils are extremely safe in school because of the school's robust systems and processes. The family support worker ensures that all families find school a welcome place to be.
- Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum, covering a range of subjects. However, not all subjects are studied in enough depth to allow pupils to develop their understanding fully.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. A range of strategies ensure that these pupils are well supported.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make very good progress. They are keen to learn and enjoy their lessons.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start and make good progress. Opportunities to learn outdoors are particularly effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve leadership and management by improving the organisation of the curriculum to ensure that subjects are covered in sufficient depth and that standards are closely monitored.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment so pupils make even better progress by:
 - improving the accuracy of the assessment of pupils' writing skills, so teachers can plan effectively to ensure that the most able pupils achieve to their capabilities
 - developing a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting to enable pupils to develop fluency in their style.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have successfully moved the school forward since the last inspection. They are highly ambitious for every pupil and have a clear vision for improving the school. There is a positive learning culture within the school and a sense of everyone working together for the good of all the pupils.
- Leaders make regular checks on the progress pupils are making and quickly intervene if a pupil is falling behind. Plans to improve teaching are focused and accurate, and actions are clearly identified to ensure that key issues are tackled quickly and effectively. For example, strategies to improve the teaching of reading are effective, ensuring that pupils make strong progress in reading and develop a love of books.
- Arrangements for the management of staff performance are in place. Staff have valued effective professional development, which has led to significant improvements in the overall quality of teaching.
- The use of funding to support disadvantaged pupils is effective in ensuring that these pupils achieve well. They make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The use of some pupil premium funding to support pupils' emotional well-being has resulted in an improvement in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and has helped them develop positive attitudes to learning.
- Leaders make effective use of the funding provided to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Support programmes meet well the needs of these pupils and as a result, they make good progress.
- The government's funding for primary school sport and physical education (PE) is spent well. For example, specialist coaches deliver PE lessons and more pupils now take part in sporting activities. This contributes to pupils developing healthy lifestyles.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and covers a range of topics. It is often enhanced by a range of visits and visitors. For example, pupils enjoyed an educational trip to the zoo and pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. However, pupils are not always given sufficient time to study a topic in depth and as a result, their experience of subjects such as history, geography and art is not developed as strongly as in other subjects.
- Pupils have a good understanding of British values. As well as learning about British institutions, pupils experience democracy at first hand through the fair and transparent election of a school council. Pupils gain an understanding of the rule of law by helping to enforce parking rules outside the school. Pupils are tolerant of each other and respect people's different backgrounds.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are encouraged to apply for a range of leadership responsibilities in school, for example, as school councillors, prefects, librarians, chaplains or through membership of the online protection squad. The school values these roles and pupils take them very seriously. Pupils often raise money for national charities. They develop their cultural understanding through a range of visits, including to a mosque and to the local

museum.

- The adviser from the local authority has provided effective support for leaders. She has an accurate view of the school's position and has made a valued contribution to improvements in the school. For example, she has supported the early years leader in improving provision in the Reception class.

Governance of the school

- Following the previous inspection, governors reviewed their performance and set about improving the way they carry out their role. This review was successful. Governors now provide effective challenge and support for senior leaders. They have a clear understanding of the school's position, including the strengths and areas for improvement. The governing body receives and reviews a range of information about the school and asks challenging questions about how well pupils are doing.
- Governors have a good understanding about the way in which the pupil premium funding is spent. They know the provision for disadvantaged pupils has ensured that pupils attend school more often and are making good progress.
- The governors make sure the school website is up to date and contains the relevant information for parents.
- Governors take pupils' safety very seriously. They are well trained and knowledgeable about current guidance on matters including safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Senior leaders are resolute in ensuring that pupils are kept safe. Staff have a good awareness of safeguarding procedures and know what to do if they are concerned about the welfare of a pupil. This is because they are well trained and kept up to date with current procedures.
- A filtering system is in place to keep pupils safe online.
- There are robust procedures for the recruitment of staff, including appropriate checks on their suitability to work with children.
- The school site is secure and closely monitored.
- School leaders work with a range of professional agencies to help support families and ensure that all pupils are kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good across the school. Senior leaders have worked successfully to improve the quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
- Leaders rightly recognised that improvements were needed in the teaching of reading.

Their actions have been successful. Pupils enjoy reading and develop good comprehension skills. They enjoy using the school library and are keen to talk about the books they are reading.

- Teachers ask searching questions and match the work they provide to the abilities of the pupils so that they are fully engaged in their learning.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Pupils have opportunities to use practical equipment to solve problems and use their reasoning skills. As a result, the progress pupils are making in mathematics is good.
- The teaching of writing is good. Most pupils achieve the standard expected for their age. However, leaders recognise that teachers do not always use information they glean from assessments to ensure that they plan effectively for the most able pupils to reach the highest standards.
- Pupils are proud of their work. However, the standard of handwriting is not consistently good because there are occasions when teachers do not systematically teach handwriting to help pupils develop their fluency.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Teachers use a range of strategies to make sure pupils can use their knowledge to read both familiar and unfamiliar words.
- Teachers provide regular homework, which most pupils enjoy completing. Homework gives pupils opportunities to choose the type of work they would like to do.
- Teaching in subjects such as history and geography focuses on pupils gaining knowledge about topics such as the Great Fire of London and the local environment. However, these topics are not always taught in enough depth for pupils to gain a secure enough understanding of the subject.
- The school's agreed marking policy is followed in each class and pupils know what they have done well. This contributes to their good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say everyone gets along together well. They have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. They say that bullying does not really occur, but if it did, it would be noticed and dealt with swiftly.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and the parents who contributed to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed. Pupils are very aware that the school site is secure and that adults keep them safe.
- Pupils have a good understanding of online safety. The school's online protection squad talks to all pupils about what to do if they do not feel safe on the internet. Pupils value the support of their peers.
- Pupils are proud of their school and they say that all children are welcome in their

school regardless of race, gender or background.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils and staff say behaviour has improved considerably since the previous inspection. This is because behaviour is now very well managed. Pupils who occasionally have difficulty controlling their actions are very well supported and do not disturb the work of others.
- Pupils enjoy being rewarded for their good behaviour. For instance, they value 'golden time' and 'golden jumpers', and they say these encourage them to behave well.
- There has recently been an improvement in the proportion of pupils who attend school regularly. High levels of attendance are rewarded, and the improvements in teaching mean that pupils are keen to attend lessons. Staff work successfully to make sure that pupils of Traveller heritage attend regularly. The attendance of all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, is improving.
- The school runs a very popular breakfast club. It offers games and activities for pupils, and has contributed to most pupils being on time for school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes in the national assessments and tests in 2016 showed the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, in both key stages 1 and 2, was above the national average.
- Most pupils make good progress from their starting points, in both key stages 1 and 2, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Current assessment information and work in pupils' books indicate pupils make good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. The needs of the most able pupils are generally well met. However, the progress of the most able pupils in writing is not as rapid as in other subjects. This is because teachers do not use the assessment information they have in order to plan work that would move these pupils on quickly enough, so they can write at the higher standard.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check in 2016 was above the national average. Currently, pupils in Year 1 are making good progress in phonics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because they receive effective support in class.
- Disadvantaged pupils perform similarly to their peers in school. Their progress is good. Differences in achievement have diminished between these pupils and other pupils nationally. The school has effectively removed barriers to learning for those disadvantaged pupils who have difficulty meeting the school's expectations for behaviour and attendance.
- The progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. From low

starting points in reading and writing, they make rapid progress and the majority reach the standards expected for their age by the end of Year 6.

- The school's current assessment information and work in pupils' books identify achievement in reading as good. This is predominantly because leaders have focused their efforts on developing the teaching of reading comprehension skills across the school.
- Achievement in mathematics is good. This is because pupils are getting better at problem solving and reasoning mathematically. The proportions of pupils working at the level expected for their age in Years 2 and 6 were above the national averages in 2016.
- Achievement in other subjects, such as art, history and geography, is not as good as in English and mathematics. This is because teachers do not give as much opportunity for pupils to study these subjects in depth.

Early years provision

Good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have systematically set about ensuring improvements to the early years over the last two years, and their efforts have paid off. Teaching has rapidly improved and as a result, children make good progress. The number of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year has improved year on year.
- Overall, children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge below those typically expected for their age. In addition, an increasing number of children are now joining Reception who speak English as an additional language. Good teaching and an early emphasis on language acquisition are enabling children to make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants know the children and families extremely well and form good relationships with them. Children enjoy being in school and are keen to learn. For example, a group of children used their observational skills and demonstrated sustained concentration to draw daffodils. One child said, 'Do you like the petals on my flower? I think it is beautiful.' Another group enjoyed doubling the spots on a ladybird and showing off their mathematical skills.
- Children enjoy learning outdoors and the very good provision allows them a choice of experiences. Children enjoy using the construction area and the mud kitchen. They showed resilience while trying to build dens, using a collection of materials.
- Behaviour is good. Adults are calm, kind and caring and they attend to the needs of children very well.
- The procedures for assessing the children are good. Teachers and other adults observe and talk with children about their learning. They create activities to match children's interests and know how to move children on in their learning.
- Relationships with parents are good and they appreciate their children are looked after well. The children have a 'what I've been learning at home box' and a number of parents support their children's learning by adding contributions to the box and returning it to school.

- Links with local nursery settings are developing and arrangements for visits to school allow children to make a smooth transition to school life.
- Children are extremely safe and leaders ensure that rigorous safeguarding policies are kept up to date and implemented. Children's welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	119512
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10024107

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	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Mitchell
Headteacher	Martina Staffa
Telephone number	01254 59420
Website	www.ourladyprimary.org.uk/
Email address	office@olps.blackburn.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds. Some pupils are of Traveller heritage and an increasing number come from other White backgrounds, most of whom speak Polish.
- The proportion of pupils leaving and joining school at times other than the normal transition points is high.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.

- The local authority has supported the school since the previous inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in lessons.
- The inspectors listened to pupils reading. They looked at examples of pupils' work and observed pupils at lunchtime and breaktimes.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. They spoke with parents as they brought their children to school.
- The inspectors took into account the five responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. There were no responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including assessment information on pupils' current progress across the school, the school's view of its own effectiveness, and how the school checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspectors checked the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and looked at records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Emma Jackson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lis Burbage

Ofsted Inspector

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