

St Joseph's RC Primary School, Halliwell, Bolton

Shepherd Cross Street, Halliwell, Bolton, Lancashire BL1 3EJ

Inspection dates

29–30 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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Progress in key stage 2 is not rapid enough for pupils to reach the standards required nationally.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 is broadly average in reading and mathematics but below national average in writing.
- Leaders' checks on teaching and learning do not focus enough on how well pupils achieve in response to teaching.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, pupils do not develop their skills and knowledge well enough across year groups.
- Attendance is below the national average and persistent absence is high, although there have been some improvements this year.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make enough progress.
- Leaders do not have robust systems in place to assess and track pupils' progress. Consequently, leaders are unable to intervene rapidly to accelerate the progress that pupils make.
- Teaching is variable across the school. Teachers do not challenge all groups of pupils appropriately.
- Sometimes, pupils' behaviour in lessons disrupts learning. Support for pupils with complex behavioural needs is not always carefully planned or monitored.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account well enough, or check how effective leaders' actions are in raising standards.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' personal development and welfare are supported well. They are confident, articulate and considerate of each other.
- Procedures for keeping pupils safe from harm are thorough.
- In the early years, pupils settle quickly and achieve well due to the high-quality provision.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching and learning so they are consistently good and enable all pupils to make accelerated progress especially in key stage 2 by:
 - making sure that teachers have clear and high expectations of behaviour and how much work pupils can do
 - developing teachers' subject knowledge and ensuring that teachers model and explain teaching points well
 - providing activities that are appropriately challenging for all groups of learners
 - ensuring that time is used effectively in lessons
 - sharing best practice within the school to embed new teaching approaches in mathematics and reading.
- Improve leadership and management of the school by:
 - improving the monitoring of teaching by focusing on how effectively pupils learn and ensuring that actions are followed up quickly
 - ensuring that assessment is regular, progress is accurately tracked and standards are robustly moderated
 - further improving attendance and reducing the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent
 - ensuring that in subjects other than English and mathematics, pupils develop their skills and knowledge well
 - making sure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive well-targeted support that enables them to make good progress
 - monitoring more closely the impact of the actions taken to support pupils with complex behavioural needs
 - ensuring that governors check regularly how effective leaders' actions are in raising standards.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not ensured that all teaching is good. Teaching is inconsistent across year groups and new initiatives are not firmly embedded. Consequently, pupils do not make consistently good progress.
- Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching by lesson observations and by scrutinising teachers' planning and pupils' books. However, their feedback to teachers does not focus effectively on pupils' learning, particularly the learning of different groups. Furthermore, next steps are not always followed up quickly enough to ensure rapid improvement.
- Leaders have not developed an effective system for assessing pupils' learning. Assessment of learning is irregular and does not accurately track the progress of individual pupils and different groups of pupils. Leaders do not moderate teacher assessments effectively. Consequently, assessment of progress is too generous and leaders are slow at identifying and tackling underachievement.
- The funding for pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities is not used effectively to enable these pupils to make good progress. The provision in classes and additional support is not sharply focused enough to meet pupils' specific needs.
- The pupil premium grant is used effectively to diminish the difference for disadvantaged pupils with others nationally. Additional support is carefully planned to meet pupils' next steps and regularly reviewed.
- The primary sports premium is used effectively to increase rates of participation through employing a specialist sporting coach to train staff, providing a wider range of after school-clubs and renewing sports equipment and resources.
- Although leaders have a thorough understanding of external data, their self-evaluation is too generous. Key priorities for the school's development are appropriate and the school improvement plan is beginning to be used effectively to drive school improvement.
- Middle leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They have introduced a variety of initiatives. However, changes have not been embedded consistently across the school and it is too early to see the impact of the new initiatives.
- The curriculum is broad and the school teaches a range of subjects and topics. However, pupils' books show that there is limited coverage of subjects and pupils do not effectively develop skills and knowledge appropriate to their age groups. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in different subjects.
- Leaders have recently undertaken an audit of behaviour to identify key issues. They have provided training on dealing with challenging behaviour and introduced a new behaviour policy that encourages pupils to take greater ownership of their learning. However, leaders do not analyse behaviour records effectively to identify improvements, trends and patterns over time.
- Focused behaviour plans are in place for pupils who have complex behavioural needs and there has been some positive impact. However, some pupils are still not

conforming to the school's expectations. Leaders do not have an effective system of pastoral support, and procedures for dealing with challenging behaviour are not robust enough. Furthermore, leaders do not report on standards of behaviour to governors and therefore governors do not have a clear overview of this area of the school.

- Pupils develop a good understanding of what is right and wrong. They are confident, articulate and develop strong social skills. Pupils show care and consideration towards each other. They develop a basic understanding of democracy and the rule of law through the school council and creating their own class rules. Pupils are interested to learn about other faiths and cultures. They show respect and tolerance towards others and mix well with pupils from different cultures.
- Leaders work hard to engage with parents through whole-school themed days and parents' workshops. They work closely with university providers to offer courses to develop parents' skills in literacy and numeracy. Parents value the opportunities to become more involved in their children's learning and enhance their own knowledge.

Governance of the school

- Governors are committed and supportive, but they do not hold leaders to account well enough. They do not check regularly how effective leaders' actions are in raising standards across the school. Some governors have recently joined the governing body and are keen to develop their skills. They have accessed online training and attended relevant courses. Governors regularly work with subject leaders to obtain a better understanding of standards.
- Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Although they have a broad overview of data, they do not have an accurate understanding of the performance of different groups of pupils. Governors do not always probe beneath the surface and ask challenging questions about data. They are aware of how the pupil premium is being spent but have limited knowledge about its impact on raising standards for disadvantaged pupils. Governors review the school's key policies and ensure that safeguarding systems are robust.

Safeguarding

- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The single central record of checks on the suitability of adults to work with children is well organised and complies with current requirements. Leaders have undertaken training to ensure that their processes for recruiting staff are robust.
- Staff receive regular training on child protection and how to keep pupils safe from harm. Staff have knowledge of the changes in the most recent government guidance relating to safeguarding. Staff are vigilant and confident about the process to follow should they have a concern. Pupils feel safe and well looked after. Leaders work well with parents and a variety of external agencies when needs arise, including the early intervention team, police and the school nurse. Child protection records are detailed, accurate and show the impact of actions.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable across the school. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. The quality and presentation of work in books are inconsistent across the school.
- Some teachers lack the necessary subject knowledge to be able to explain the key teaching points. Teachers do not always provide activities that challenge all groups of pupils. Consequently, many pupils spend too much time on tasks that are too easy. The most able pupils are not given enough opportunity to learn quickly and extend their learning.
- In some classes, a lot of time is spent refocusing pupils' behaviour and teaching time is lost due to low-level disruption. Teachers do not always use learning time effectively. This is particularly the case in mathematics lessons. Consequently, pupils lose interest and concentration.
- The school's feedback policy is not consistently applied. Teachers' feedback is not consistently effective and there is insufficient expectation that pupils will act upon it.
- Reading has a high profile in the school. Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading through new books, online reading books and whole-school reading-themed weeks. Adults use questioning skilfully to help pupils clarify language, make predictions and summarise key points in the text. For example, in an upper key stage 2 class, pupils were confidently explaining words like 'prejudice' and used question stems to write their own inference and deduction questions. Pupils were seen engrossed in their own independent reading and completing a variety of appropriate reading response activities to develop their understanding of texts.
- In mathematics, the introduction of a new scheme of work has allowed teachers to develop pupils' fluency in number skills and operations, and their confidence in reasoning. Pupils make good use of practical resources and visual aids to support their understanding of calculation skills. Pupils are becoming more confident in explaining their thinking and are able to use appropriate mathematical language in their responses. For example, in a lower key stage 2 class, pupils used Dienes blocks to perform division calculations and were confident discussing the most efficient calculation methods.
- The curriculum in subjects beyond mathematics and English lacks variety. Pupils' books show that subjects are not appropriately covered across the year groups to develop a progression of skills and knowledge effectively. For example, in science there are limited opportunities for pupils to undertake practical investigations and develop their scientific enquiry skills. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in a range of subjects.
- Some teachers have a strong subject knowledge and their input is lively and engaging. They use questioning skilfully to challenge and deepen pupils' thinking. Pupils respond positively to this, and work well together to discuss their learning and share ideas.
- The teaching of phonics is brisk, highly engaging and multisensory. Activities are carefully selected and pupils are actively involved in blending letter sounds and spelling activities.

- The effectiveness of teaching assistants is variable. In some classes, additional adults work well with pupils, questioning to check their understanding and develop their learning. In other classes, additional adults lack subject knowledge and are not provided with sufficient direction. Consequently, pupils, particularly the lower-attaining pupils, do not always make good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school and take pride in their appearance. They are polite, courteous, smile and greet visitors. Pupils eagerly hold doors open without being asked and are confident when sharing and talking about their work.
- With the introduction of the new behaviour policy, there is an increased emphasis on pupils developing perseverance, resilience and self-belief. Pupils told inspectors that they thoroughly enjoyed the new 'ready, steady, go, and go faster approach' towards tasks set in lessons. This allows them to assess their own learning, decide on the task that is appropriate to their level and strive higher in lessons.
- Pupils feel safe and happy at school. They speak very positively about their lessons and the staff who look after them. They trust the adults and feel comfortable sharing any concerns with them. Pupils generally show respect and care for one another. They told inspectors that adults are always on the school yard and keep an eye on them. They regularly practise fire drills and have good knowledge of road safety and healthy eating and lifestyle. Through whole-school events, pupils have developed a good understanding of online safety. Pupils understand that they should not give away personal details online.
- Pupils have a good awareness of bullying and confirm that incidents are rare and dealt with effectively by the school. Pupils told inspectors that there have been some incidents of racist and derogatory language but leaders dealt effectively with them.
- Pupils are keen to take on a variety of leadership roles. The Year 6 pupils are good role models and ambassadors for the rest of the school. The older pupils take on roles such as 'chaplain' and 'play leader'. The chaplains lead prayers and organise hymns in assemblies. The play leaders enjoy organising play equipment at lunchtime, supporting younger pupils with play activities, and give out rewards for good behaviour. This helps pupils to develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and others.
- A well-attended breakfast club provides a warm and friendly start to the day for pupils who take part. Pupils were seen enjoying their breakfast, playing games and interacting with adults. Pupils are provided with opportunities to attend a range of after-school clubs.
- Pupils have a strong moral code. They understand what is right and wrong. Pupils of different faiths and cultures get along well together. They show respect and tolerance towards each other. They spoke about recent visits to a mosque and temple where they learned how people from different religions worship.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. When teaching is less effective, low-level disruption is common. Pupils become distracted, lose interest and noise levels rise. Teachers spend a lot of time refocusing pupils and this affects the flow of learning.
- In contrast, when teaching is strong, pupils develop positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils are eager to learn, contribute their ideas and work hard in lessons. They work sensibly in pairs, discussing and learning from each other.
- Behaviour at breaktimes can sometimes be loud and a little boisterous. Adults ensure that they deal with any incidents promptly and effectively.
- Teachers have specific programmes in place to support pupils who have complex behavioural needs which are having a positive impact in some classes. Where necessary, pupils have access to programmes such as counselling and play therapy to help them improve their behaviour and attitudes. Teachers record behaviour incidents but information is not regularly analysed by leaders to evaluate provision and improve support for specific pupils.
- Attendance is below the national average and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is high. However, attendance overall and for most groups has improved this year. The school works closely with parents and external agencies and there is an increased emphasis on rewards.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 was broadly in line with the national average in mathematics and reading but below the national average in writing.
- In 2016, attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 was broadly in line with national averages in writing but below for reading and mathematics.
- An extensive book scrutiny conducted by inspectors confirmed that current pupils' progress was good in some, but not all, year groups.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 dropped in 2016 to below the national average. Better-quality teaching and additional tailored intervention has improved standards for current pupils.
- Pupils generally read with fluency, expression and understanding. Pupils are developing an enjoyment for reading and can make predictions and formulate opinions about events. However, some lower-ability pupils are less confident in using their phonic skills to break down words.
- Recently, leaders have introduced initiatives to extend the vocabulary of pupils. Consequently, pupils have started to use imaginative and varied language to enliven their written work, and better understand the meaning of the words that they read.

- In 2016, at the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of disadvantaged pupils made progress that was broadly in line with national averages in reading and mathematics, and above the national average in writing. The current school data shows that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in most year groups, but this is not consistently the case across the whole school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils with low prior attainment, do not make enough progress. Teachers do not effectively tailor activities for their individual needs or provide effective support to secure and move their learning on in lessons.
- In 2016, at the end of key stage 2, attainment and progress of the most able pupils was below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The current progress of the most able pupils is improving across the school. Books show that in classes where teaching is strong, and the level of challenge is right, they make good progress. However, where teaching is weaker, their progress is not as rapid.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children enter school with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age, particularly in communication, language, literacy and mathematics. Children make good progress across all areas of learning, although their progress in writing is slower than that in other areas. The spending of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has led to good progress, so children are well prepared for Year 1. The leadership of the early years provision is effective.
- The early years setting provides a colourful, vibrant and engaging environment. Discrete areas of learning are well organised and resourced. The outdoor provision is exciting and provides a variety of practical and stimulating activities for children. Children practise their reading, writing and mathematics indoors and outdoors. Adults circulate well, supporting pupils to extend their learning and develop their creative thinking. Children show sustained concentration and independence in their own constructive play.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. Activities are well structured. Teachers have high expectations and provide detailed explanations of key teaching points. Questioning is used well to elicit children's understanding and deepen their knowledge. Teachers have a lively, positive manner and use a variety of interesting resources to engage children in tasks.
- Teachers assess children's learning regularly and in depth. Daily assessment is used effectively to identify next steps and inform planning. Teachers evaluate learning regularly, identify any underachievement and provide targeted support for pupils that are falling behind. Children's 'learning journeys' are well presented and provide a comprehensive record of progress for individual children from their starting points. However, some individual next steps in the learning journeys are not always followed up properly to secure learning points for children.
- Children's behaviour is good. They follow instructions well and are keen to settle down to tasks. Children show curiosity in their learning and ask questions. They share resources, take turns and play well with each other. Children are keen to share their

work and demonstrate a good understanding of the learning.

- Children are confident and feel safe. Children say that they enjoy school and attendance for this year group is well above the national average. Relationships between children and adults are strong and caring. Adults know pupils well and are proactive in picking up and dealing with any concerns that pupils may have. All statutory welfare requirements are fully met. Parents engage well with the school through home visits, parental workshops and home-learning projects.

School details

Unique reference number	105223
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10024389

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dave Mulligan
Headteacher	Nicola Rabbett
Telephone number	01204 333055
Website	www.st-josephrcp.bolton.sch.uk
Email address	office@st-josephrcp.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 October–1 November 2012

Information about this school

- This school is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is double the national average.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is broadly in line with the national average.
- The school provides a breakfast club, after-school clubs and a nurture group.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its

website.

- 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

- Inspectors observed a variety of lessons in all year groups in the school, some jointly with senior leaders.
- A sample of pupils' workbooks was scrutinised from all year groups, jointly by the inspection team and some class teachers.
- Inspectors heard pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 3.
- Inspectors observed pupils moving around school and at lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered the 17 pupil responses to the online pupil questionnaire. In addition, inspectors spoke to a group of pupils about their lessons and school life and spoke informally to pupils during lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, governors and local authority representatives.
- Inspectors spoke to some parents before and after school and took account of the eight responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Inspectors analysed published data and the school's information to determine the progress pupils are currently making across the school.
- Inspectors examined the 10 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and took account of staff views during informal discussions.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including: school self-evaluation and school improvement plans; safeguarding policies and case files; monitoring of teaching and learning; behaviour logs; local authority visit records; attendance records and minutes of governors' meetings.

Inspection team

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