

Washacre Primary School

Clough Avenue, Westhoughton, Bolton, Lancashire BL5 2NJ

Inspection dates

28–29 September 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	Good
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

- Since the last inspection, the school has experienced turbulence in leadership and staffing, which have led to inconsistencies in teaching.
- Pupils in all year groups do not make consistently strong progress across different subjects.
- Some teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Some teachers do not insist that pupils present their work to the highest standard.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils are given appropriate work that challenges them.
- Some middle leaders are new to post. They have not had sufficient opportunity and training to monitor their subjects effectively.
- Leaders do not have a clear enough system to assess and track pupils' progress.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills on extended pieces of writing across the curriculum.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has established a caring and inclusive school. She has secured stability in staffing and leadership and has begun to make improvements in the school.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective. Pupils feel safe and are happy in school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and make good progress.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are welcoming, respectful and polite.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- Pupils' attendance is above average because pupils enjoy coming to school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - accurately assessing and carefully tracking pupils' progress, so that leaders have a clear view of the standards reached by pupils
 - providing middle leaders with the necessary training to monitor their subject areas effectively and ensure high-quality provision across the curriculum.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make good progress by ensuring that teachers:
 - raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly of the most able pupils, so that they can achieve highly
 - set work for pupils which is suitably challenging for pupils of all abilities
 - provide pupils with more opportunities to practise and develop their skills in writing at greater length across the curriculum
 - insist on the highest standards of presentation so that pupils present their work neatly and accurately.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of leadership turbulence. During the last two academic years there have been senior leadership absences and changes in staffing. This has had a detrimental impact on teaching, learning and pupils' progress. However, the headteacher has tackled some underperformance effectively. Governors provided good support to the headteacher during this time.
- The headteacher has secured stability in staffing. Staff work well as a team and morale is high. All staff who responded to the online survey said that they are proud to work in the school. Leaders and staff are committed to improving the standard of education for pupils in the school.
- Leaders welcome the support and challenge from the local authority. The local authority takes an active role in helping the headteacher to improve the school through delivering staff training and reviewing the quality of leaders' work.
- Leaders do not have a systematic approach to assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Consequently, they do not have a clear picture of standards or know if there is an improving trajectory.
- Subject leaders have not had training to help them to monitor their areas of responsibility. Some leaders are new in post and have little experience in reviewing the work of their department.
- Leaders check the performance of teachers regularly. Leaders set and review teachers' targets. Staff and school leaders are eligible for pay progression only if these targets are met. Leaders provide appropriate training for staff to enhance their teaching skills.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted by all staff and discrimination is not tolerated. The school is inclusive and all pupils are valued. More pupils than usual join the school after Reception, many from other countries. They are supported effectively to help them to settle in and learn alongside their peers.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils are offered many additional opportunities that broaden their experiences and enrich their learning. Pupils' learning is enhanced by visitors to the school and clubs such as arts and sports. Pupils are also involved in charity work and have the opportunity to participate in trips and residential visits.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is promoted effectively. Pupils learn about other cultures and faiths and different religious festivals are celebrated in school. The school places a strong emphasis on learning about and respecting differences. Pupils develop a good understanding of fundamental British values such as democracy and respect through the personal, social, health and economic education programme. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent on appropriate initiatives such as extra teaching sessions to remove barriers to learning and to help these pupils to catch up.
- Leaders use additional funding effectively to support pupils who have special

educational needs and/or disabilities. They provide extra help through, for example, one-to-one support or extra help in small groups. The headteacher is also the special educational needs coordinator. She manages the provision of support well.

- Leaders use the sports funding effectively to broaden pupils' experience and participation in physical activities including swimming and tag rugby. Specialist coaches support the teaching of physical education and this benefits both pupils and teachers.
- All parents who spoke to inspectors were positive about the school. The many positive comments include: 'It's a fantastic school, my child loves learning here' and 'Teachers are brilliant. They are approachable and any issues are sorted quickly.' However, a minority of parents who responded to the Ofsted free-text service expressed concerns about communication and leadership.

Governance of the school

- Governors are committed to the school and want the best for their pupils. As one governor commented: 'We want the children to enjoy learning and have high aspirations.'
- Governors are aware of the school's strengths and also areas which could be improved. They visit the school to find out things for themselves. Governors have become more robust in holding leaders to account because they ask leaders searching questions.
- Governors know how the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent and the impact it has on pupils' progress. They have attended a range of training courses to improve their skills. A recent review by the local authority has strengthened governors' knowledge and understanding of their roles.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a culture of safety around the school. The headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding leader, carries out her role well. The single central record is kept up to date and all required checks are in place.
- All staff and governors have received up-to-date safeguarding training. Staff are aware of their responsibility to protect pupils from harm and understand the procedures for informing others that a pupil might be at risk. Leaders maintain good communication with parents and external agencies to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. Records indicate that, when concerns are raised, they are followed up swiftly and robustly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching varies across year groups and subjects.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly among the most able pupils. Teachers do not plan activities that challenge pupils well enough. Consequently, the work set is sometimes too easy and pupils do not make good progress from their starting points.

- Pupils' work in books shows improvements in the way that pupils apply their knowledge of punctuation. However, teachers do not have high enough expectations of the way pupils present their work.
- Some teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to practise writing at length, especially across different curriculum subjects.
- Strategies to improve the quality of teaching are having a positive impact. For example, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have improved ongoing training for staff on reasoning in mathematics and strengthened the moderation of pupils' work. As a result, current pupils are making better progress than they have in the past.
- Pupils' reading skills are improving. Inspectors heard the most able pupils reading with fluency and expression. The least able pupils use their knowledge of phonics well to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Pupils enjoy their lessons and speak positively about their experiences. One pupil commented: 'Teachers are helpful and give you another chance.'
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to explain things clearly to pupils. Teachers' questioning skills are well developed. Teachers ask probing questions to deepen pupils' thinking and to check on understanding.
- Teaching assistants are used extremely well and have the knowledge and skills to carry out their roles highly effectively. They make a strong contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils say that homework is set regularly and is effective. Pupils like it because it is interesting and meaningful.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders ensure that there is an ethos of care and mutual respect. All pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they feel safe. They understand the risks associated with social media and know whom to go to should they feel unsafe.
- Pupils are polite, cheerful and positive. They wear their uniform smartly. A typical comment from pupils is: 'Everyone is really kind. We learn lots.' Pupils' work is celebrated through vibrant and colourful wall displays.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures and religions. They are tolerant of individual and cultural differences. For example, during the inspection, pupils celebrated Yom Kippur.
- Pupils understand about the different types of bullying. They say that bullying is rare and they believe that if any occurs it is dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Pupils' leadership skills are developed well through their positions of responsibility on the school council and as prefects.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils mix together well and behave well during lunch and breaktimes. They arrive promptly to lessons and settle to their work quickly. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning in lessons.
- Instances of low-level disruption in class are very rare. Pupils are encouraged to behave well through a simple rewards system.
- Leaders monitor attendance rigorously. They provide rewards for good attendance. The pupil premium funding supports eligible pupils to attend the breakfast club. The employment of an education welfare officer to work with families has had a very positive impact on improving attendance and reducing persistent absence. As a result, attendance for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, has improved and is now above the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that pupils do not make consistently good progress. Improvements to the quality of teaching are beginning to have an impact on improvements in outcomes. However, there are still too many pupils who have gaps in their learning.
- Key stage 2 national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2016, and provisional assessment information for 2017, show that progress in reading, writing and mathematics was below that seen nationally.
- Key stage 1 results of national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 show that pupils' attainment was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Inspection evidence shows that there are signs of improvement across most year groups in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils are not fully challenged in their work and are not making the progress that they could.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress was below that of other pupils nationally in national assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Initiatives funded through the pupil premium, such as one-to-one tuition, are beginning to make a difference. Evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils typically make good progress in their learning from their different starting points when compared with other pupils nationally.
- The latest provisional results show that the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check improved this year. Pupils enjoy reading and are encouraged to read widely, both in school and at home.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points because teaching in class and in small groups supports their learning well.
- Pupils develop their scientific knowledge and skills well in Year 6. However, the work in

pupils' books shows that progress across the wider curriculum is inconsistent across subjects.

- Leaders ensure that pupils are prepared well for their transition to high school.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter Nursery and Reception with levels of skills and understanding that are below those typical for their age in most areas of learning. The early years provision is well led and children make good progress. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development increased in 2017. Inspection evidence shows that this is likely to continue. Pupils are well prepared to start Year 1.
- The early years leader has created a cohesive staff team. Leaders make sure that welfare requirements are met and children are safe.
- Staff are skilled at supporting and encouraging children. Their strong relationships with children promote a positive learning environment and ensure that children make good progress towards their planned learning targets.
- Assessments are accurate and used to plan what each child should do next. Staff ask good questions to deepen children's thinking and they monitor children's learning well.
- The indoor and outdoor learning environments across the Nursery and Reception areas are of high quality. The outdoor area provides a range of opportunities for children to explore and develop their physical skills. Children share resources and take turns. They are cooperative with each other.
- Children move around the classrooms and outdoor areas safely. They behave well and treat equipment with respect. Pupils' snack time arrangements are a pleasant, social experience. Children relax and enter into conversation with staff and one another.
- Children make good progress in developing their phonic skills in the early years.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have their needs supported well by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged children is spent wisely to support learning. For example, speech and language programmes help children to broaden their vocabulary.
- Leaders work well with parents to make the move into full-time education as smooth as possible. Parents are encouraged to get involved in children's learning, for example through parental workshops.

School details

Unique reference number	105199
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10036640

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	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ron Bell
Headteacher	Jenny Haunch
Telephone number	01942 634756
Website	www.washacre.bolton.sch.uk
Email address	office@washacre.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 February 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support in school for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

- The proportion of pupils who leave or join the school at times other than the start of the Reception Year is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a number of classes.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of pupils' books throughout the inspection to evaluate pupils' learning over time.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in classrooms and around the school at break and lunchtimes to seek their views. Inspectors met with pupils more formally to discuss many aspects of school life. Inspectors heard some pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, a group of middle leaders, and members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including: records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, safeguarding information, minutes of governing body meetings, information on the progress made by pupils, training arrangements for teachers and other staff, the school's checks on the quality of teaching, external reviews by local authority and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, taking into account 42 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 37 free-text responses received from parents. Parents' views were also gathered through discussions at the start of the day.
- Inspectors also considered the nine responses to the staff questionnaire and 13 responses to the questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Rigby	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Kelly	Ofsted Inspector

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