

Lord Street Primary School

Lord Street, Horwich, Bolton, Lancashire BL6 7AL

Inspection dates

29–30 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have not sustained good teaching and learning or halted the decline in pupils' outcomes.
- Governors have not held leaders to account for the decline in the school's performance. They do not have the necessary skills.
- Currently, leadership is too reliant on external support to overcome weaknesses in the school.
- The interim leadership team has not had enough time to embed improvements in teaching or to many of the school's systems and procedures.
- Subject leaders are at an early stage in developing the skills necessary to lead improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders have not used the pupil premium funding effectively. Disadvantaged pupils are not achieving as well as they should. Too many do not attend school regularly.
- Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is too slow. Pupils' standards in key stage 1 and key stage 2 are lower than those expected for their age.
- Teaching does not consistently meet pupils' needs. Expectations of what pupils, including the most able pupils, can and should achieve are not high enough.
- Teachers do not develop pupils' reasoning skills sufficiently well in mathematics.
- Assessment of subjects such as history and geography, in the recently introduced curriculum, is at an early stage. As a result, leaders do not have an accurate picture of pupils' performance in all subjects.
- Pupils who are still working on the early learning goals in Year 1 are not catching up quickly enough.
- Teachers' subject knowledge and use of assessment are not consistently strong. Teachers do not check on pupils' progress and identify any misconceptions in their learning.
- Children in the early years do not have sufficient opportunity to develop early writing skills.

The school has the following strengths

- Interim senior leaders hold a very accurate picture of the school's weaknesses and are beginning to bring about improvements.
- Teaching in Year 6 is a strength of the school.
- Pupils are polite and friendly. Personal development and welfare are good and pupils are kept safe.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes by:
 - rapidly increasing the number of pupils who make good or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics so that pupils reach at least the standards expected for their age.
- Rapidly improve teaching, learning and assessment to accelerate progress and raise standards for pupils in all subjects by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of what can be achieved in lessons and provide work that enables all pupils, including the most able, to make good progress
 - teachers use the information that they have about pupils to check on pupils' progress and identify any misconceptions in their learning
 - disadvantaged pupils are challenged effectively to make consistently good progress and reach at least the standards expected for their age
 - children in the early years are provided with opportunities to develop early writing skills when they work independently
 - teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics
 - the provision in Year 1 matches the developmental needs of pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - weaknesses in teaching are eliminated rapidly
 - the skills of subject leaders are developed to enable them to have a greater impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning
 - teachers' subject knowledge is good in all areas of the curriculum
 - the curriculum is embedded and assessment systems developed to provide an accurate overview of pupils' outcomes in all subjects.
- Improve governance by ensuring that:
 - the governing body has the skills necessary to challenge and support school leaders effectively
 - governors hold leaders to account robustly for all aspects of the school's performance
 - leaders are securely held to account for the effective use of the pupil premium

funding

- governors secure a timely, permanent leadership structure for senior leaders and the early years.

- Reduce persistence absence, particularly of disadvantaged pupils.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Over time, the school's performance has declined significantly in all areas. Leaders have not done enough to tackle poor teaching, learning and assessment. Consequently, pupils have suffered weak teaching, resulting in high levels of underachievement.
- The interim senior leaders know exactly what needs to be done. They have a successful track record in supporting other schools and are determined to improve this school quickly. However, the current leadership structure is vulnerable and capacity is extremely weak. The interim leaders are in school for only part of each week and their tenure as headteachers is a temporary arrangement. Much of the school's improvement rests on this and other external support.
- Little information about pupils' in-year attainment and the progress made since the previous inspection is available. The interim leaders have established an assessment system to check regularly on pupils' progress. A new tracking system has been introduced and senior leaders carefully analyse how well individuals and groups of pupils are doing. Demanding progress targets have been set for teachers to close gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Regular and robust checks on the quality of teaching have been introduced by the interim senior leaders. They have created a cohesive staff team that is committed to working together to improve outcomes for pupils. Well-focused support and training have been provided to improve teaching and leadership skills. Responses to the inspection questionnaire show that staff value this support and recognise the improvements being made.
- This term, the interim leaders have established robust performance management processes for all staff. Teachers' targets are clearly linked to pupils' outcomes. However, it is too early to track progress towards these targets.
- Over time, middle and subject leaders have not received the guidance, training or time required to develop their leadership skills. This has had a negative effect on pupils' outcomes. The development of leadership skills is a school priority as many subject leaders are new to their roles. This term, senior leaders have redistributed responsibilities to meet the current priorities of the school. As a result, subject leaders are beginning to support improvements in colleagues' subject knowledge and make checks on the quality of learning taking place. However, much of this work is at an early stage and the impact on pupils' outcomes has not been fully realised.
- The use of the pupil premium funding has not been effective. Until recently, leaders and governors have not robustly evaluated the impact of previous expenditure to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make the best possible progress and attend school regularly. Plans are now in place with clear targets for improvement, but it is too soon to see the effect of these plans.
- At the start of this term, leaders launched a new curriculum that reflects the 2014 changes to the national curriculum. The newly developed curriculum provides a broader and more balanced range of subjects than offered previously. The curriculum sets out how basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics are to be developed

through other subjects. Pupils say they enjoy the way much of their learning is now linked in topics and that they have regular opportunities to study all subjects. However, it is too early to see the effect of this work on pupils' outcomes.

- The additional primary school physical education and sports funding is used to good effect. Pupils benefit from specialist tuition to develop their skills and the opportunity to participate more frequently in competitive activities. Leaders place great emphasis on ensuring that as many pupils as possible learn to swim.
- The school environment is well organised, bright and attractive, with many displays of pupils' work in art, religious education and writing. Pupils learn about democracy, tolerance, respect and care for others in class and in assemblies. The school is contributing well to pupils' understanding of British values and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The local authority raised concerns about the school in the autumn term 2016. They subsequently brokered the support of the interim senior leaders, including a national leader of education, and established a collaborative group to regularly review the school's performance. This external support is providing a strong steer for bringing about improvements in the school.

Governance of the school

- Over time, the impact of governance has been ineffective. Governors have not held school leaders to account for poor-quality teaching and weaknesses in pupils' learning and progress. They have not been diligent enough in ensuring that the information received from leaders accurately reflected pupils' outcomes.
- For some time, governors were not aware of the full extent of the decline in the school's performance. Until recently, they did not challenge leaders about the lack of accurate assessment information for all subjects and the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Governors have not checked the impact of the additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils on their outcomes. Consequently, these pupils have made inadequate progress as a result. Too many of these pupils do not attend school regularly.
- The interim senior leaders are working very closely with the governing body. Recent governing body meetings show a stronger focus on pupils' achievement. Challenge and support for school leaders is increasing but there is much more to do.
- Current leadership capacity for improvement is limited. Governors have lacked the skills required to stem the decline in outcomes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have reviewed all safeguarding policies and procedures recently to ensure that they are suitable for their purpose. Checks on staff recruitment and on visitors to the site are thorough and well managed. Staff are well trained and vigilant. They understand and discharge their responsibilities well.

- Leaders and staff work cooperatively with parents and carers and outside agencies to support the needs of all pupils, including those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The impact of teaching over time is inadequate. This had led to a significant number of pupils underachieving, particularly in key stages 1 and 2. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has not been consistently good or better to ensure that all groups of pupils reach their full potential and achieve well.
- Overall, teaching remains very weak. Although inspectors found that teaching and learning are improving in some year groups, and checks on how well pupils are doing are becoming more accurate, pupils' outcomes are not improving quickly enough across the school. Where weaknesses in teaching remain, teachers' subject knowledge is not strong enough to address misconceptions or move pupils on in their learning.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve in a lesson are not high enough. Teaching does not consistently challenge pupils, particularly the most able. Pupils are sometimes given work that is not hard enough. They either finish it quickly or take too long on tasks which do not contribute well to their learning. On occasion, the most able pupils have to wait for others to catch up when they have finished their work.
- The teaching of reading and writing is becoming more systematic. This work is most effective when it builds on pupils' phonic knowledge. However, at times, teachers do not make this link and pupils' ability to read and spell unfamiliar words is limited. In addition, teachers sometimes accept careless spelling and punctuation in pupils' written work rather than expecting accuracy.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved under the leadership of the subject leader and training has begun to improve teachers' subject knowledge. However, the progress made by pupils still varies considerably. Some teachers do not move learning on quickly once a concept has been grasped and opportunities for pupils to apply reasoning when solving problems are not provided regularly in line with the school's policy.
- Pockets of stronger teaching do exist. Some teachers have high expectations and are steadfast in making sure that pupils achieve the non-negotiable standards established by the interim senior leaders. In the current Year 6, teaching is strong so that most pupils make accelerated progress. Standards are beginning to rise and gaps in learning caused by previous weaknesses in teaching are being overcome. Effective teaching is typically characterised by stronger subject knowledge, a clearer understanding of what is expected of pupils of this age and a greater level of challenge.
- Teachers' expectations are not high enough. At times, pupils show little pride in their work and some teachers fail to tackle this. Pupils' spelling can be careless and again teachers do not demand work that is tidy and free from errors.
- Topic books reflect a widening of the curriculum. Increasingly, the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are applied and practised in other subjects. Pupils are becoming more involved in learning. In science, for example, some year groups

now typically involve pupils in planning, carrying out and evaluating experiments. Pupils' learning is more effective as a result.

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 happy and feel safe and well cared for. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and respectful.
- Pupils understand how to use modern technology safely. They are aware of the different types of bullying and know that the school takes any incidents of bullying seriously. Adults act promptly to sort out any issues that arise.
- Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. Pupils enjoy physical activities and sporting events. They are very active at playtime. This helps improve their health and general well-being.
- There are a number of opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths and beliefs. Pupils are tolerant and respectful towards each other.
- Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children are well cared for. Staff are approachable and welcoming if parents have any concerns.
- The needs of pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable are met well. School staff are vigilant in checking the safety of pupils who are absent.
- The breakfast club gets the day off to a healthy and positive start. Pupils of all ages play together happily in the after-school club.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils generally behave well around school. Break and lunchtimes are generally busy times on the bustling playground and pupils get along well together. The range of resources provided to keep pupils active and engaged are especially popular and contribute well to their health and general well-being. Pupils who join the school at other than the usual time are made very welcome and settle quickly.
- Leaders have strengthened systems to manage pupils' behaviour. Records are thorough and incidents are followed up diligently. The above average number of exclusions experienced previously has reduced.
- Pupils' pride in their work is not consistently good and work is not always presented neatly with clear handwriting and accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- At times, pupils' attention drifts, especially when the work set does not provide enough challenge. Pupils' progress is also weak when pupils do not complete as much work as possible in the time provided.
- The school's work to improve attendance from the previous low levels has proved effective. However, the high rates of persistent absence of some pupils continue to

adversely affect outcomes for pupils. Too many disadvantaged pupils fall into this group.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Improvements seen in pupils' outcomes at the time of the last inspection have not been maintained. Currently, far too few pupils across the school are working at the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress is not consistently fast enough to overcome gaps in learning caused by weaknesses in teaching. As a result, pupils are poorly prepared for the next stage of their education.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, the proportion of pupils making the progress expected of them in reading and writing was in the bottom 10% of schools nationally. Mathematics was in the bottom 20%. Standards, although showing some improvement, remained well below national figures. Fewer pupils than seen nationally exceeded the standard for their age in mathematics and in writing. None achieved this standard in reading.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the standard expected for their age at the end of key stage 1 in 2017 was weak. No pupils exceeded the standard for their age in any subject. The progress made by pupils from their starting points was poor.
- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 made below-average progress in mathematics and particularly poor progress in reading and writing. Although standards in reading and mathematics have improved from the very low levels seen in 2016, they remain much lower than that of other pupils nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been in line with the national average for several years. However, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard dipped to well below the national average in 2017.
- The progress of pupils who have special education needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is starting to speed up because of more precise identification of need and focused teaching. However, inconsistencies still remain in pupils' progress.
- Pupils who enter Year 1 below age-related expectations are not catching up quickly enough. Teaching is not meeting their needs and outcomes are too low.
- While there are signs of recent improvement in some current year groups it is clear that pupils' progress has been adversely affected by serious weaknesses in teaching over time. Extra work to help pupils overcome underachievement takes place in small groups before, during and after school hours. These sessions are helping pupils to gain ground but sometimes this work is not built on well enough in class. This prevents pupils making faster progress.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not make the progress they are capable of in any subject. This is because they are not challenged sufficiently to achieve their full potential.
- Assessments undertaken across key stage 1 and key stage 2 at the end of the summer term indicated just how low standards had fallen. Prompt actions taken by the interim senior leaders to bring about improvements in teaching, learning and assessment have led to some improvement in the progress of current learners. However, there has not

been time to overcome previous underachievement and standards and progress remain fragile.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children generally enter the early years with skills below, and sometimes well below, those typical for their age, particularly in communication and language development. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen steadily to in line with the national average in 2016. However, in 2017, some of the ground made up previously in writing was lost. Nonetheless, outcomes in most other areas of learning remained broadly similar to national expectations.
- Expectations of what children can achieve have increased but are still not high enough, particularly for children who are disadvantaged. This group of children are not challenged sufficiently to gain skills that are at least in line with those expected for their age.
- Most children make typical progress by the end of Reception and they are increasingly well prepared for Year 1. However, the most able children, including the most able disadvantaged children, are not challenged enough to make the progress that they are capable of. However, leaders have secure plans in place to remedy this issue.
- There have been significant changes in the early years, some of them very recent. The local authority and interim senior leaders have secured the external support of a specialist teacher to strengthen leadership of the early years. The post of leader of the early years remains to be filled. As a result, all aspects of provision have begun to improve quickly but they are not as good as at the time of the previous inspection.
- The early years classes provide a safe, happy environment in which children can grow and develop. There are effective procedures to ensure that children are protected and kept safe. Children new to the setting, including the two-year-olds, settle quickly because of well-established routines and caring, attentive staff. Welfare requirements are met well and behaviour is good.
- Children cooperate well with each other and the adults. They learn to take turns and follow instructions. Children show good levels of concentration, particularly in Reception, but this is also the case for some two-year-old children. During the inspection, a number were learning to handle scissors, guided patiently by an adult who watched carefully and intervened sensitively to move learning on. Several children were delighted with their success in managing the tricky business of cutting with scissors.
- Early reading skills are developed well. Pupils in Reception are able to use their awareness of phonics to spell simple words. Basic number skills are coming along well too. The inspector saw a group of children having a great time tossing wet sponges to hit the 'right' number in a mathematics game outside.
- The curriculum is adapted well to respond to the interests of the children. During the inspection, the Reception class children were trying to solve a 'crime' that had taken place in their classroom. An area taped off with police crime scene tape was a real focus for all as they proudly wore their 'crime scene investigators' badges and hunted down Goldilocks, who most felt was the criminal they sought. All enjoyed the

opportunities offered to use their writing skills to make notes about their investigations.

- Overall though, teaching requires improvement. Expectations are not always high enough to ensure that children make consistently good progress. Too few disadvantaged children, in particular, do not reach the standards expected for their age. There are too few opportunities for children to write when they learn and play independently and, at times, adults do not intervene at the appropriate time to move learning on quickly enough. This is particularly the case for the most able children and, as a result, opportunities for this group to make faster progress are sometimes missed.
- Two-year-old provision is well organised. The care provided meets the needs well of these young children and they are well prepared for the move to the next stage of education in the older Nursery class.
- Parents are highly positive about the care provided for their children. The introduction of 'stay and play' sessions is enabling parents to become more involved in their child's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	105179
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10037749

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Olive Fairhurst
Interim executive headteacher	Kevan Naughton
Interim acting headteacher	Charlotte Bryant
Telephone number	01204 333 545
Website	www.lordstreetprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	head@lord-street.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 February 2013

Information about this school

- The substantive headteacher resigned at the end of the summer term in 2017 following a lengthy period of absence. Two local headteachers led the school for part of each week in February 2017. Currently, the school is being led by two interim headteachers. This support is for a period of one year. The early years was led by an experienced specialist leader of education for three days a week in the summer term 2017. This leadership has continued this term for a day each week.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about performance outcomes and curriculum information for each year group on its website. The child protection policy was brought up to date during the inspection.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. A higher proportion of girls than boys attend.
- Since September 2016, the school has admitted children to the Nursery from the age

of two. Children attend the Nursery provision part time. There is one Reception class in the early years which children attend full time.

- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is high.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- A much higher proportion of pupils than average join and leave the school at other than the usual time. More than 30% of Year 6 pupils in 2017 joined the school in upper key stage 2.
- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school club for its pupils.
- Significant staff changes have occurred since the previous inspection. Almost all of the teaching staff are new to the school. Due to staff absences, some classes have experienced a number of teachers each year.
- 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 gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. They observed learning in classes and in small groups, at times jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and talked to them about their learning. They listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of reading skills. Pupils talked to the inspectors about the books they have enjoyed and those they are currently reading.
- The 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 two groups of pupils and visited the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- An inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and two other governors.
- An inspector met with a representative of the local authority and two representatives of the Lever Hulme Academy Trust.
- The inspectors spoke with middle and subject leaders and other members of school staff.
- The inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. They took account of 14 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 13 responses to the staff inspection questionnaire.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including information about pupils' progress, school improvement plans, information about teachers' performance and external views of the school. They reviewed the contents of the school's website and scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding completed by school staff.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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