

St Anne's Roman Catholic Primary School Blackburn

Feilden Street, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 1LQ

Inspection dates

21–22 February 2018

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

- Many staff changes have slowed the pace of school improvement. Leaders have not ensured that teaching in key stages 1 and 2 is good.
- Between Years 1 and 6 pupils' progress requires improvement, particularly in reading. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below average.
- Teachers do not give sufficient emphasis to reading. Teaching assistants do not consistently support pupils effectively. This limits progress in some lessons.
- While the pupils enjoy the curriculum, teaching does not sufficiently provide for the needs of the most able pupils in either key stage 1 or 2.
- Middle leaders have strategies for improving the quality of teaching but current arrangements do not enable them to implement these plans effectively with staff.
- Reading is not given sufficient emphasis. Many pupils lack confidence in tackling comprehension activities. Leaders have yet to ensure that pupils read widely and for a variety of purposes.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, supported by effective governors, has introduced systems and procedures that are resulting in better teaching in writing and mathematics.
- In the early years, good teaching and leadership result in children's good progress from starting points which are often low.
- The progress of disadvantaged groups is improving and is now closer to the national average.
- Pupils behave well around the school and show consideration and respect to each other and to adults.
- A wide range of experiences, including those beyond lessons, helps to ensure that pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Attendance has improved considerably over the last academic year.
- Pastoral care and safeguarding systems are effective. The school works well with parents and carers.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make rapid progress by ensuring that:
 - all staff have high expectations and provide a curriculum that challenges the most able pupils to do their best in all lessons
 - all pupils are allowed to work on challenging tasks and encouraged to learn from their own mistakes
 - teaching assistants are skilled in their questioning strategies to enable them to support the progress of pupils under their direct supervision
 - teachers consistently check on the progress of pupils in lessons, including those working under the supervision of teaching assistants.
- Improve teaching and learning to accelerate pupils' progress in reading, particularly for middle and most-able pupils, by:
 - ensuring that reading activities are specifically matched to pupils' prior attainment and capabilities
 - providing pupils with a range of opportunities to practise and develop their reading comprehension skills.
- Enhance the effectiveness of leadership and management by developing the skills of all leaders in checking on the provision for and progress of pupils in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have worked closely with local authority partners to develop expertise and address areas for improvement. Improvement plans are in place to address key priorities and these have secured improvements in pupils' attendance. However, leaders have not been quick enough to take action to improve the school. Leaders have not yet secured consistent improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes, particularly in reading and for the most able pupils.
- The headteacher has implemented clear systems to manage the performance of teachers. He and the deputy headteacher have challenged weaker teaching. This has resulted in significant changes in staffing. Judgements on teachers' performance are now linked to nationally accepted standards. As a result, staff are set challenging targets which are regularly reviewed by senior leaders. This ensures that staff are held to account and any underperformance is quickly identified. Training and professional development opportunities are arranged to strengthen teaching and this is appreciated by staff. Despite some improvement, the impact of performance management has not secured consistently good teaching and learning.
- There have been recent changes to the way in which the school leaders check pupils' attainment and progress. Leaders have a sound grasp of attainment at each key stage. However, this information is not used consistently by teachers to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils, particularly the most able.
- Phase and subject leaders are developing in their roles. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects and areas of responsibility. They are passionate and determined to bring about improvements. Nonetheless, the monitoring, evaluation and development of the quality of teaching and learning, with specific emphasis on pupils' achievement, is not fully effective.
- Leaders have reacted to a decline in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils by evaluating the use of the pupil premium funding. They have increased the accountability of class teachers for the progress of these pupils and they are checking the impact of interventions more closely. The funding has been used well to develop significant pastoral support. This includes appointing a family-support worker to ensure high-quality engagement and links with parents. This initiative has secured improved attendance and an improvement in the performance of these pupils. They are now achieving outcomes that are closer to the national average.
- Leaders provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils gain access to a range of experiences that enhance their learning and provide exciting and meaningful contexts for it. Regular visits to external venues and visitors to the school enliven learning. A cohesive personal, social and health education programme enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils develop social responsibility by providing support for younger pupils and they regularly explore different faiths and cultures.
- The curriculum is developing pupils' understanding of what is required to be a good citizen and promotes tolerance and respect. The older pupils take on a number of

additional roles. They are elected by their friends to the school council, as prefects and play leaders. Pupils demonstrate and convey well-balanced and thoughtful views on a range of issues, so that they are, in this respect, well prepared for life in modern Britain. This means that the school promotes equalities and British values effectively.

- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is catered for very well. Pupils benefit from a curriculum that helps them learn about 'good to be me' to develop self-esteem. They gain an appreciation of, and respect for, the differences between people through the school's work. This was apparent through discussions with pupils. They learn also to deal with disagreements in socially acceptable ways.
- Leaders have used additional funding to increase participation in a wider variety of sports and physical activity, including dodgeball, gymnastics, netball and football. The work of the sports coach is of a very high quality. During the inspection, while working with children in the nursery to develop ball control, he demonstrated exemplary practice, which was greatly appreciated by the staff working alongside him.
- Funding to support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is well managed. Effective work with individuals or small groups means that these pupils generally achieve well.
- The school has good links with a range of partners, including a local cluster of Catholic primary schools. It also has close links with St Anne's Parish and its staff and pupils are regular attenders at masses and events. The local authority has played a key role in supporting the school's improvement. Relationships and communication with parents are positive.

Governance of the school

- Governors have good levels of educational expertise that they use to challenge leaders. This is contributing to a stronger focus on improvement. Additional insights from the local authority and partners help them to gain objective insights into the school's effectiveness.
- Governors receive updates on pupils' progress. They understand the performance of different groups of learners and are committed to ensuring that the current underperforming groups are targeted for improvement.
- Governors show a clear understanding of strategic priorities and of strengths and areas for improvement. They have used performance management processes more stringently to address aspects of underachievement. They know how the pupil premium is spent and are aware of the impact that it is having on outcomes.
- The safeguarding governor checks the school's policies and procedures regularly. Governors have received training in child protection and safer recruitment.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and governors take their responsibilities for pupils' safety very seriously. They carry out appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of adults working on site.

- Senior leaders ensure that all adults working with children are kept up to date with training on how to keep children safe. Staff are trained regularly to an appropriate level and understand the procedures to follow should they have any concerns. They are able to articulate clearly the signs and symptoms to look out for to ensure that pupils are safe. The leadership of the school has invested significant time and resources into ensuring that all within the school, including the pupils, share the commitment to a culture of safeguarding. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe through a variety of curriculum opportunities. They know how to stay safe outside the school and what to do if they have any worries. Pupils say that there is always a 'trusted adult' to whom they can talk and that teachers act upon any concerns swiftly. Pupils are adamant that they feel safe in the school.
- Records show that vulnerable pupils and their families are supported well. Leaders are quick to follow up any concerns in order to put appropriate early help in place. Referrals to social care and other professional services are thorough and timely. This ensures that pupils and their families receive the support they need quickly. The parent-support worker provides effective support for vulnerable pupils and families in challenging circumstances. She has developed effective relationships with families to secure positive interaction between school and home. Parents value the support that they receive from the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable across key stages 1 and 2 and therefore requires improvement. Pupils make inconsistent progress as a result.
- Sometimes teachers do not pitch tasks at the right level for different groups of learners. Work for most-able pupils lacks challenge. A group of them said that work was often 'quite easy'. Sometimes teachers miss opportunities to extend the learning of these pupils.
- School leaders have targeted the improvement of reading. The teaching of phonics is increasingly effective. Adults pronounce letters and words clearly and pupils respond enthusiastically to their questions. Leaders are keen to encourage pupils to read more widely and for a variety of purposes. There is more work to do in this respect because a culture of reading regularly for pleasure does not yet exist for many pupils. They engage in their guided reading sessions but the development of key comprehension skills, including retrieving information, is weak.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons and this is resulting in improved outcomes. They are systematically taught about key mathematical concepts and are then asked to apply their learning in tackling practical problems. A strong focus on mental arithmetic skills and technical vocabulary is starting to pay dividends. Year 6 pupils were challenged by their teacher to use correct vocabulary in learning about fractions. They then made some good progress in tackling practical problems to check their understanding.
- Writing is now taught effectively across the school. This was evident in Year 5 when pupils were engaged in writing a diary extract as Hugo Cablet. They worked with care to ensure that sentences were correct and their teacher constantly reminded them of grammar points. They wrote at length and made good progress.

- Teaching assistants have significant roles in teaching and learning. They are committed and work hard to support pupils. However, their questioning skills do not always support pupils' progress. Teachers do not consistently check how pupils working under the supervision of teaching assistants are progressing in lessons.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language receive good support to help them achieve as well as their classmates. Their progress is closely checked and carefully planned activities ensure that they are now making progress that is at least as good as that of other pupils in the school.
- Good learning attitudes are evident across the school and this means that learning time is generally used well. Pupils enjoy lessons and respond well to their teachers. Relationships are very positive. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. All classrooms are warm, welcoming and nurturing environments. Pupils show respect to their teachers and positive attitudes to their learning. They work hard and are eager to please their teachers. As a result, there is a good platform for future successful learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The curriculum provides regular opportunities for pupils to explore their thoughts and feelings through a well-established personal, social and health education programme.
- Pupils develop a sense of social responsibility in a school community that celebrates diversity and develops strong bonds between pupils. They learn about a variety of other faiths. They demonstrate good cultural awareness when talking about different religions and countries.
- Relationships across the school are harmonious. One pupil said, 'I like my school and we all play well together.' Play leaders provide regular support for Reception children at lunchtime, demonstrating friendliness and a sense of responsibility.
- Through their links with St Anne's RC Church the pupils have first-hand experience in supporting the welfare of others. They work with the church to prepare food hampers for the poor and needy of Blackburn.
- Pupils' physical welfare is promoted through access to a range of sports. Their wider fitness is developed through access to sports, outdoor pursuits and a range of sporting competitions.
- Pupils believe that bullying is rare and they are confident that, if it did occur, teachers would address their concerns effectively.
- The majority of parents value the cohesive nature of the school community and the care and support provided for their children.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Teachers and teaching assistants expect pupils to behave well. In lessons, pupils' attitudes to learning are typically positive. This is a result of effective relationships between adults and pupils, where mutual respect is an expectation. As a result, pupils are polite and confident and try their very best in all that they do. On a small number of occasions pupils do not take sufficient care and leave work incomplete.
- Pupils' views of behaviour across the school are highly positive and school information shows that incidents of poor behaviour are rare.
- Pupils move around the school sensibly. They come in from breaktimes ready to learn with positive and focused attitudes. At lunchtime, they show their good table manners as they enjoy eating lunch with their friends.
- Leaders have worked with parents and pupils to secure improvements in attendance. Through a mixture of support and challenge, leaders have secured improvements for pupils who previously had high rates of absence. Overall rates of attendance improved in 2017 and that pattern has accelerated this academic year, such that attendance is now close to that seen nationally.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because current pupils, particularly the most able, do not make consistently strong progress. Pupils' progress in reading is low compared with that of other pupils nationally.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 in 2017 were below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. There were no pupils who achieved at greater depth in any area. At key stage 2 the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined were significantly below those seen nationally in 2017 tests.
- Current work in pupils' books and assessments carried out by the school leadership team show that pupils' progress is accelerating. This is particularly the case in writing and mathematics. The school's leadership recognises that progress in reading needs attention to ensure that the pupils achieve their potential at the end of both key stages 1 and 2.
- The most able pupils, at both key stages 1 and 2, are not always adequately challenged in their lessons. As a result, pupils do not attain the higher standards seen nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 is improving when compared to that of other pupils nationally. However, progress in reading is not. More consistent teaching by a stable staff, coupled with closer checks on pupils' understanding, is beginning to move them on at a better pace. However, they are still adrift when their attainment is compared with that of other pupils nationally.
- While there is evidence of improved outcomes in phonics this is not consistently

supporting improvement in pupils' progress in reading. Opportunities for pupils to read independently and to practise their comprehension skills are limited. This has a negative impact on the progress made by current pupils in reading, which needs to accelerate.

- There is a strong emphasis on SEN and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language. As a result, there are significant improvements to the way in which pupils' progress is being checked. Targeted small-group work and one-to-one activities ensure that these pupils achieve in line with their peers.
- Pupils are provided with some good opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in a broad range of subjects, including science and history. They make some good progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. It is very much a team approach and staff work together extremely well to provide children with stimulating experiences that keep them focused throughout the day.
- Children, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, typically join the school with starting points lower than those expected for their age. Because of the good teaching and assessment they receive, children achieve well and are well prepared for their learning in Year 1. Year on year more children are achieving a good level of development and are moving closer to the performance of other schools.
- Progress in pupils' personal, social and emotional development is a priority. Relationships between staff and children are very positive. Staff are kind and caring and are quick to intervene to support children who feel less confident. They promote children's self-esteem and personal development well. Teachers prepare children well by encouraging them to have the confidence to explore learning for themselves and with their friends.
- Leaders continually assess children to ensure that they are meeting their needs and they adapt the curriculum accordingly. Sharp assessments on entry to both the Nursery and Reception classes enable staff to prepare for children well. These initial assessments are built upon in 'learning journeys' which provide a useful description of each child's progress and are used by staff to plan the next steps in their learning.
- Activities are well planned and are relevant to children's ages and interests. The teachers make learning fun and highly stimulating and, as a result, inspire and challenge the children. The children show confidence in exploring learning with their friends in a rich and imaginative environment. They make good use of the outdoor and indoor learning environments to develop their curiosity and imagination.
- Children behave well in the early years because staff make their expectations clear and establish routines quickly. Where children are finding it difficult to maintain concentration staff are very skilled in the questions and commentary they use to re-engage the children.
- Additional funding is used well to provide resources and support for disadvantaged

children. Leaders have a very good understanding of the impact that this has on children's learning. Disadvantaged children make similarly good progress to that made by other children and they achieve equally well.

- Safeguarding practices in the early years are largely effective. There are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements. The ethos of care and support that defines much of the school's work extends to the early years.
- Leaders work hard to engage parents. There is a detailed induction process when the children start at the school. Parents appreciate this and feel confident that their children are well cared for in the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	119511
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10042482

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Glyn Hughes
Headteacher	Jeff Brown
Telephone number	01254 580 462
Website	www.stannesblackburn.co.uk
Email address	office@stannes.blackburn.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 October 2013

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of lessons, covering all classes in the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also met five members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair. They met a group of pupils at lunchtime on the first day of the inspection. They also met the local authority school improvement partner and an additional adviser supporting the school.
- Inspectors extensively examined the quality of work in a wide range of books. They discussed pupils' work and their learning with them in lessons. Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading during guided reading sessions and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors talked to parents as they dropped their children off at school on the first day of the inspection.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work and considered documents including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and information relating to pupils' achievement. They also considered documents outlining the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection, attendance and the arrangements for the use of the pupil premium funding and the primary physical education and sports funding.
- Inspectors took into account the school's own parental questionnaires. There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and six free-text responses from parents. Inspectors also took into account 10 responses to the staff questionnaire and 17 responses to the pupils' questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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