

# St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Heys Lane, Heywood, Lancashire OL10 3RD

## Inspection dates

18–19 September 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong and effective leadership. They have the full support of the staff team and the governing body.
- Leaders and staff have acted with determination to improve teaching, learning and assessment in the last year. Provisional results, at the end of key stage 2 in 2018, show that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics rose significantly. The work of current pupils indicates that improvements continue.
- Teachers and teaching assistants give good support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils make strong progress in their learning and development.
- Some pupils do not write well at length in English or other subject areas.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress in English and mathematics.
- In some mathematics activities, staff do not challenge pupils consistently well to use and apply their knowledge when attempting to solve problems.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. Phonics teaching is effective, and most pupils quickly develop into confident and competent readers. Older pupils read widely and often.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve pupils' attendance. As a result, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school has reduced and overall attendance is around the national average.
- Teachers make the curriculum worthwhile through well-chosen topics that capture pupils' interests. However, some pupils do not develop their knowledge and skills well in geography, history, or science.
- Leaders manage the early years well. Children develop good attitudes and make good progress in their learning. They are prepared for the next stage of their education when they move into Year 1.
- Parents are fully supportive of the school. All of those who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire would recommend the school to another parent.
- Pupils are well behaved, considerate of each other and respectful to adults. Their behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes is good.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils are protected and kept safe at school.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon the recent improvements in pupils' writing, particularly for the most able pupils, so they can write fluently at length, and for different purposes and audiences, in English and other subject areas.
- Further improve pupils' skills in applying their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and explain their thinking.
- Further develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in geography, history and science.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- In the years following the previous inspection, a high turnover of staff affected the quality of education at the school. Pupils' progress was weak. Leaders and staff have since worked with clarity and determination to improve this situation. Leaders have made sure that staffing arrangements are more settled, and that teaching is effective. Once again pupils at the school are learning successfully.
- Leaders ensure that St Margaret's is a happy and vibrant place to learn. Pupils say they feel safe and secure. The school's atmosphere is friendly and inclusive. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school. One parental comment included, 'This school not only provides an education for my child, it provides a loving, caring and nurturing environment.'
- The headteacher and other leaders know the school's strengths and fully understand which areas need further development. Their improved work with staff has strengthened teaching and sharply improved the standard of pupils' reading, writing and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2. These vital steps forward show that the school is well placed to improve further.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and the importance of respect towards those who are different from themselves. Older pupils explore specific British values in detail, including democracy, respect and the rule of law. Pupils are well prepared for their lives in modern Britain.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils, supplemented by enrichment activities and extra-curricular clubs. Pupils learn much from a range of sport activities and have valuable opportunities to explore art and music. However, leaders do not make certain that all pupils' work in science, geography and history develops their skills and understanding well.
- Leaders make careful checks on the quality of teaching, and teachers value the support that they receive. Teachers said that they have worthwhile opportunities to attend training. They value opportunities to work alongside other teachers and learn from partnership schools in the local area. All members of staff who responded to the Ofsted survey said that leaders do all they can to ensure the school has a motivated, respected and effective teaching staff.
- Leaders spend the pupil premium funding effectively. They ensure that staff give careful, targeted support for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders regularly evaluate this support for its impact on pupils' learning.
- Leaders make good use of the physical education (PE) and sports funding. They have bought more resources to enhance PE lessons. The funding has also been used to promote healthy lifestyles and give opportunities for pupils to engage in a range of competitive sport.
- Leaders use the added funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities carefully. The SEN leader works closely with class teachers to ensure that the right support is

given and is having the desired impact.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors give effective support and challenge to leaders. They share the passion and commitment of the headteacher and senior leaders to further improve the school. Governors have a thorough understanding of what the school is doing well and the challenges that it is currently facing. They have given beneficial support for the headteacher in managing recent changes to the staffing structure. Governors visit the school regularly to see for themselves if agreed policies and procedures are working properly.
- Documentation shows governors' thorough scrutiny of the school's work. For example, governors regularly hold leaders to account for the progress made against the school's targets for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Governors make the necessary checks to ensure that any funding that the school receives is spent wisely. They ask searching questions of the headteacher and help to ensure that the strategies employed, for example those used to support disadvantaged pupils, are effective.
- The governing body takes its safeguarding role very seriously and helps to make certain that every pupil is safe. The chair of governors visits the school regularly and checks on the school's safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that they meet requirements.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture at St Margaret's. They ensure that the suitability of all adults who work with pupils is checked properly. Leaders make certain that all staff are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. Leaders give regular child protection updates and training for staff. Members of staff, with whom inspectors spoke, were fully aware about how to respond to any safeguarding issues that they might have.
- Leaders keep detailed records of any safeguarding concerns raised by staff, and the steps that they take to resolve matters. Where necessary, leaders share concerns with external agencies to support and protect those involved.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in school. All the parents who spoke to inspectors, and those who made their views known through Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, believe strongly that their children are safe and secure in school.

**Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teaching at St Margaret’s is effective and underpinned by the warm and caring relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers use questioning well in lessons. They give pupils helpful opportunities to share their own ideas and observations. As a result, pupils engage well in activities and develop very positive attitudes to learning.
- The teaching of reading is a strength. Staff introduce children and pupils to a wide range of books and stories to develop their interest and love of reading. The teaching of phonics is highly effective, and pupils soon develop into confident readers. Pupils value the reading opportunities available to them and read regularly for pleasure both in school and at home.
- Teachers give close attention to teaching the skills that pupils need to become skilful, confident writers. Pupils now have a better grasp of grammatical structure, punctuation, and spelling. On occasion, teachers do not challenge some pupils enough to write at length or for different purposes or audiences.
- Leaders and staff are successfully improving the teaching of mathematics. Staff training on the importance of developing pupils’ reasoning skills is having a positive impact on pupils’ learning in many classes. Staff now make good use of different resources to support pupils’ learning in mathematics. Pupils’ improved attainment and progress at the end of Year 6 in 2018 are the result of better teaching. On occasion, the work set for pupils does not challenge them to apply their knowledge and skills in different contexts.
- Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to pupils’ learning. They have a good understanding of individual pupils’ needs. Teaching assistants work effectively, under the direction of the class teachers, to close gaps in pupils’ learning.
- Teachers capture pupils’ enthusiasm by using interesting topics in science, history, and geography. However, some activities do not build enough on pupils’ existing understanding.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is good.
- The school’s nurturing and welcoming environment is at the heart of its success. Parents told inspectors that staff and pupils are always respectful towards each other. One parent commented on pupils’ positive attitudes and good behaviour by saying, ‘To me this is a sign that they are happy in the school environment and a happy school will promote good learning.’
- Many pupils attend the school’s breakfast club, where staff looked after them well. Staff provide them with a healthy breakfast, and pupils can play games with their friends or sit and read a book.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school. Staff teach pupils how to stay safe; for example, Year 6 pupils showed a good awareness of the potential dangers associated with using the internet. Pupils share their concerns with staff, confident in the

knowledge that their views will be taken seriously.

- Staff ensure that pupils make full use of the school's many outdoor resources, including climbing frames, sports pitches and a woodland area. Pupils have a clear understanding of eating healthily and the importance of physical exercise.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors showed a good understanding about the different forms of bullying. They told inspectors that bullying is extremely rare at the school and that, on the few occasions it does happen, staff resolve issues quickly.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave sensibly, both in class and during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils get on well with one another. They are polite to staff and visitors.
- Staff and parents share the view that behaviour is good at St Margaret's. Although a small proportion of pupils sometimes find it difficult to behave in the right way, staff are skilled in supporting these pupils and helping them to make the right choices.
- Pupils are attentive in lessons and enthusiastic to learn. They show pride in their work, ensuring that it is neat and well presented. Pupils are also proud of their school. They help to keep it tidy and they wear their uniforms with pride.
- School leaders have worked successfully with a small number of families whose children were regularly absent from school in previous years. As a result, during the last school year, the proportion of pupils who were persistently absent reduced significantly and overall attendance is around the national average.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- The turbulence in staffing arrangements and variability in the quality of teaching affected pupils' attainment and progress in key stages 1 and 2 in recent years. Some pupils were poorly prepared for the next stage of their education. Leaders and staff have halted the decline and turned this situation around. Provisional results for pupils in key stage 2 in 2018 show much improvement compared to 2017. Current pupils throughout the school are making strong gains in their learning, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils now get off to a good start with their reading. Over the past three years, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been around the national average. Standards in reading at the end of key stage 1 are improving and pupils made good progress across key stage 2 in 2018. Older pupils, who met with one of the inspectors to discuss reading, showed a good knowledge of children's authors and read fluently. Current pupils are making good progress in reading.
- Pupils' progress is improving in writing. Pupils show accuracy in the structure of language. They are confident in their skills, and the proportion achieving and exceeding the expected standard in grammar, punctuation and spelling was exceptionally high in

2018. However, some pupils, particularly the most able, do not write with confidence at length or for different purposes and audiences.

- Pupils make strong progress in most year groups across the school. Improvements are clear in current pupils' books and in pupils' rising attainment in key stage 2 in 2018. Although most pupils are benefiting from improved teaching, some still lack confidence in applying their mathematical knowledge and skills.
- Pupils benefit from their learning in other subjects across the curriculum. For example, inspectors saw some high-quality art work, including ceramic masks made by pupils as part of a recent topic about William Shakespeare. However, some pupils learn less well in science, geography or history.
- The school's current information and inspection evidence show that many disadvantaged pupils make strong progress. The provisional results for 2018 showed that the difference between them and all pupils nationally diminished significantly. Leaders ensure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively. It is helping to bring about strong improvements in pupils' achievement across the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress. Staff focus their support on those aspects of learning where pupils need greater practice or assistance.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years is led well. Leaders understand the strengths of their provision and are aware of what needs to improve further.
- Staff in the early years have developed successful links with parents and local nurseries. This helps children to make a smooth transition into school. Parents value the home visits that staff make, prior to their children starting at school. They say that this helps their children to get off to a flying start.
- Many children enter the early years with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. They settle quickly into school life, learning the school's routines and developing very good attitudes to learning. Strong and effective teaching ensures that children make good progress, and by the time they leave the Reception class they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Children quickly learn how to share and take turns. They generally show good levels of concentration and sustain their play well. For example, an inspector saw children spending a significant amount of time engrossed in creating model aliens with playdough, carefully counting the buttons used for eyes and decoration. Occasionally, however, staff do not help children to make best use of their time. For example, inspectors observed a group of children playing with computer tablets with little sense of purpose.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Staff regularly plan a broad range of activities based on the children's interests. Children enjoy the well-resourced learning environment. The indoor area is attractive and organised thoughtfully. The outdoor environment is spacious and stimulating and used well to support children's physical

development.

- The early years is a safe and caring place for children. The school's effective safeguarding culture is equally strong in the early years.



## School details

Unique reference number	105815
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10045800

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Laura Heslin
Headteacher	Maxine Beresford
Telephone number	01706 369 639
Website	<a href="http://www.stmargaretsce.rochdale.sch.uk/">www.stmargaretsce.rochdale.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@stmargaretsce.rochdale.sch.uk">head@stmargaretsce.rochdale.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	11–12 February 2014

## Information about this school

- St Margaret's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is almost twice the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The school recently received an award for its commitment to PE and sport.

- The school provides a breakfast club for its pupils.
- The distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school's religious character was inspected separately in May 2016 under section 48 of the relevant education act.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment in all classes, and conducted some observations jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, minutes of governing body meetings, the school improvement plan, attendance and behaviour data, and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books from both this term and the previous school year.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and middle leaders. The lead inspector also met with three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' conduct during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to listen to them read and discuss behaviour and other aspects of school life. They also spoke with many other pupils informally.
- Inspectors spoke with parents in the playground before school. Inspectors also considered the 18 responses to Parent View and the 27 responses from staff to an Ofsted questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Morley

Ofsted Inspector

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