

Ramsbottom Stubbins Primary School

Bolton Road North, Stubbins, Ramsbottom, Bury, Lancashire BL0 0NA

Inspection dates

12–13 February 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and leadership team share their high aspirations for pupils effectively with staff, parents and carers. Together, they endeavour to live up to the school motto 'learning and growing together'.
- Although there have been considerable changes in leadership and staffing since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils remain good overall.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school is accurate and honest. They have correctly identified the priorities for further improvement.
- Subject leaders for writing and mathematics do not routinely check the impact of the actions taken to improve outcomes for pupils.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective in most year groups. However, opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding to solve challenging problems vary between different year groups, particularly in key stage 2.
- Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught effectively. However, in some key stage 2 classes, these skills are not fully promoted in pupils' own writing.
- Pupils in key stage 1 use their phonics knowledge effectively. They are becoming confident and competent readers.
- Leaders in the early years have a good understanding of how young children learn. Children settle quickly into well-established routines. Positive relationships fostered by adults contribute to the good progress children make. They are well prepared for the start of key stage 1.
- Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding further in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics are starting to improve.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well by skilled staff. As a result, they make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the opportunities leaders provide. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Positive relationships fostered by adults contribute to pupils' positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils' behaviour is good.
- Parents comment positively about the school. They appreciate the effective care their children receive from staff. The majority would recommend the school to others.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop the curriculum so that pupils have the opportunity to improve their specific knowledge and understanding further in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics.
- Further develop the impact of subject leaders for English and mathematics by ensuring that they:
 - routinely check the quality of teaching, particularly in writing in key stage 2
 - evaluate the impact of leaders' actions on pupils' progress, including the application of knowledge and skills in mathematics.
- Further improve teaching and progress in writing and mathematics by:
 - further promoting pupils' accurate use of grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing
 - ensuring that writing is taught systematically and consistently across the school so that pupils make the progress of which they are capable
 - improving pupils' application of their mathematical knowledge and understanding to solve increasingly challenging problems.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- There have been significant changes in the school since the last inspection, particularly to the leadership team and teaching staff. The headteacher leads the school effectively. Successful appointments have enabled him to develop a knowledgeable leadership team which shares his drive and enthusiasm.
- Staff morale is high, and staff feel valued and well supported by leaders. Staff new to teaching appreciate the opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills. Staff are committed to providing the very best education for pupils.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths. Actions are in place to resolve weaker aspects. Training for leaders has enabled them to accurately identify the reasons for the dip in progress for pupils in key stage 2 over recent years. They have a good understanding of where pupils need to be at each stage of their education.
- Leaders have actively brought about the changes necessary to improve the teaching of mathematics. The new leader for mathematics has provided training for staff which has had a positive impact on improving teachers' subject knowledge. Leaders are developing opportunities to share teachers' expertise and skills to develop good practice further. However, leaders do not routinely check the impact of the actions taken to improve mathematics. Consequently, pupils' opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge vary, particularly in some year groups in key stage 2.
- Leaders' evaluation of pupils' writing accurately identified gaps in pupils' knowledge in spelling, grammar and punctuation, particularly in key stage 2. These gaps had an impact on pupils' ability to write at the higher standard. Training for staff has improved their subject knowledge. Changes to the way in which grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught have improved pupils' vocabulary and spelling. However, the leader for English does not routinely check how effectively writing is taught. As a result, in some year groups in key stage 2, writing is not taught systematically. This hinders progress for some pupils.
- A dip in the results of the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2018 led to a review of the teaching of phonics. Leaders have ensured that phonics is now consistently and systematically taught from Reception. Training for staff has led to stronger progress for current pupils. Leaders ensure that pupils who are struggling are given the additional support they need to catch up quickly. Pupils are becoming confident and competent readers.
- The special educational needs coordinator shares her expertise effectively. As a result, staff have the skills to identify quickly pupils who are struggling. Leaders evaluate the impact of the help that pupils receive and make changes when necessary. Programmes of support are put in place to help pupils to catch up. Leaders work effectively with outside agencies and other professionals to provide training and additional guidance so that pupils and their families have the help and support that they need. The additional funding for SEND is used effectively. The small proportion of pupils with SEND, including pupils who are supported by an education, health and care (EHC) plan, make

good progress from their individual starting points.

- The small proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged are supported well by skilled staff. Leaders accurately identify pupils' barriers to learning, particularly their social and emotional needs. Leaders know pupils and their families well. They ensure that they receive the help and guidance that they need. The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Such pupils currently in school are making good progress.
- Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum. They have identified the knowledge, skills and vocabulary they want pupils to learn in each subject. Middle leaders check to ensure that the curriculum content is covered. However, the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills systematically and in depth in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics is in the early stages and is not yet fully embedded.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' personal development is enriched through the opportunities they provide. The curriculum is enriched through trips and visitors to school. For example, in history, pupils visited a museum and experienced what it was like to live as an Anglo-Saxon for the day. A range of extra-curricular activities, for example learning to play a musical instrument, add to broadening opportunities for pupils.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. For example, the school band and choir have performed for local residents and parents. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain through the opportunities they have to be buddies for younger pupils and as members of committees. Leaders provide a range of experiences to broaden pupils' horizons. For example, pupils enjoy a range of enterprise challenges and recently had the opportunity to talk to a range of visitors about different careers and the qualifications they may need in the future.
- The additional funding for physical education and sport is used effectively. Coaches develop teachers' skills in a variety of sports. Pupils benefit from the high-quality training that they receive to hone their own skills. The trophies displayed in the school foyer are a testament to pupils' success in local competitions. The girls' football team has been particularly successful as league champions for the past two years.

Governance of the school

- Experienced governors have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths of the school and its areas for further improvement. Following a review of the knowledge and skills required after the retirement of a long-serving governor, they have actively recruited new governors. Governors have the experience and knowledge that allow them to challenge leaders and hold them to account. Training ensures that governors keep up to date with new initiatives.
- Governors are kept well informed through the detailed reports they receive from leaders. They understand clearly how well pupils are doing compared to other pupils nationally. Governors check the accuracy of information they are given by regular visits to school. They review the impact of actions taken by leaders by talking to staff and pupils about their learning. Governors are ambitious for the school. They have high

expectations of themselves, staff and pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Checks are in place to ensure that adults are suitable to work with children, including volunteers who help in school regularly.
- Training for staff ensures that they are kept up to date with issues relating to safeguarding. Procedures in place for the protection of pupils are understood by staff. They have a good awareness of how to identify potential signs of abuse. Any concerns are acted upon appropriately. All records relating to safeguarding are maintained thoroughly.
- Leaders know families well. They work closely with external agencies to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils and their families receive appropriate help and guidance.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers create a calm and focused atmosphere that enables pupils to concentrate on their learning. Positive relationships fostered by staff contribute to pupils' good attitudes to learning. Teachers make learning interesting and pupils enjoy school. The good teaching provided ensures that pupils take pride in their work and in their achievements.
- Training for staff ensures that they have the knowledge and understanding they need to support pupils' learning effectively. Most teachers use accurate assessment information to plan activities that meet pupils' needs well, especially in key stage 1.
- Staff use questions skilfully during lessons to encourage pupils to expand on their ideas and explanations. Pupils respond positively. In most year groups, pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. For example, in a guided reading session, pupils were successfully tackling challenging comprehension questions and using their understanding of the vocabulary used by the author to answer accurately.
- Skilled support staff are deployed effectively. Pupils who are struggling get the help they need to catch up quickly, including disadvantaged pupils. Pupils with SEND are supported effectively by staff. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- Teachers plan mathematical activities that accurately meet the needs of most pupils. However, opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding to solve challenging problems in greater depth are less frequent in some classes in key stage 2 than in others.
- The teaching of writing is good in most year groups. Teachers use assessment information to plan opportunities for pupils to apply their improving knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately in their writing. Pupils have the opportunity to write in a variety of genres. For example, older pupils write their own play scripts linked to their work on Macbeth. However, in some year groups in key stage 2, writing is not taught systematically. This hinders progress for some pupils.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge contributes positively to the effective teaching of

phonics. Pupils tackle unfamiliar words in their reading successfully. Pupils are confident when reading and talking to each other and adults about their books.

- Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and mathematical knowledge in other curriculum subjects. Opportunities to develop subject-specific knowledge and skills in depth are improving.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- Leaders' work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Positive relationships fostered between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils feel safe and valued. They are confident that adults will listen to them if they have any worries. Pupils said that there is always someone to talk with. The school's learning mentor is based in the school's 'Blue Room'. Pupils said, 'The Blue Room is a safe place to be.'
- Pupils appreciate the many responsibilities they have in school, for example the opportunity to be members of committees or classroom monitors. As members of the school council, they contribute to decisions leaders make. During 'enterprise challenge week', pupils successfully raised funds to buy a reading hut for the playground. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously, such as being playtime buddies for the younger pupils.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when online and when crossing the busy road outside school. Pupils understand the importance of keeping fit. They enjoy the range of sporting activities available, particularly cheerleading, athletics and football.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They are confident that, if bullying did happen, it would be dealt with quickly. Pupils play together in a well-designed outdoor area, which includes space to read and reflect, as well as space to explore and play together.
- Leaders broaden pupils' horizons and raise aspirations for the future. During the recent careers week, visitors were invited into school to talk about the roles they have as teachers, airline pilots and members of the emergency services. Pupils shared their own aspirations with inspectors to be scientists, doctors and firefighters.
- The positive can-do attitude nurtured within the school contributes to pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Pupils enjoy the many clubs that they can be part of during lunchtime and after school, including choir, relaxation sessions and opportunities to play a musical instrument. Opportunities to try out new challenges during residential trips contribute towards developing a resilience that will prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils have a sense of their place in the local community. Pupils who spoke to the inspector proudly explained the importance of the tree in the school grounds: 'It was planted by a previous headteacher and was the inspiration for our school badge. The tree symbolises our history.' Pupils enjoy coming to school and wear their uniform with pride.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite, courteous and well mannered. They conduct themselves sensibly. Pupils show respect for each other and understand how their behaviour can have an impact on the feelings of others.
- Pupils' good behaviour in classrooms supports their learning. They are attentive, respond well to instructions and work hard. This contributes to the good progress they make.
- Very few pupils are persistently absent from school. Staff take swift action to follow up when pupils are absent, particularly the most vulnerable pupils. Pupils' attendance is consistently above the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The progress pupils make overall has fluctuated historically but remained broadly in line with the national average for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. The evidence seen in pupils' work shows that progress for current pupils is good overall.
- The results of national tests show that pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 has remained consistently above the national average in reading, including the proportion of pupils working at the higher standard.
- In 2018, results of the national tests show that, although attainment has remained above the national average in writing, only a small proportion of Year 6 pupils were working at a greater depth. Pupils' attainment in grammar, punctuation and spelling dipped below the national averages in 2018.
- Work in pupils' books highlights the improvements pupils have made in their knowledge and understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Pupils make good progress in their writing. However, in some year groups in key stage 2, the opportunity to apply their knowledge in greater depth in their writing varies.
- Pupils' attainment for mathematics in key stage 2 has improved over the last three years and was above the national average in 2018, including at the higher standard. This improvement was confirmed by work in pupils' books seen during the inspection, including pupils' work in both key stage 1 and key stage 2. These also show that pupils use their knowledge and understanding of mathematical operations accurately, particularly multiplication. Pupils who spoke to the inspector explained how using the online multiplications programme at home had helped them to improve their fluency and accuracy.
- Detailed assessment information for pupils with SEND indicates that they are making good progress. This is because of the help that they receive. This successfully responds to their individual needs.
- The small proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged receive support individually or in small groups, particularly for their social and emotional development. This is having a positive impact on the good progress they make academically.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check

in Year 1 dipped in 2018. Pupils who are struggling are given the help that they need to catch up quickly in Year 2. Pupils apply their phonics knowledge effectively in their reading and writing. This is having a positive impact on good progress for pupils in key stage 1.

- Pupils enjoy reading and are confident and competent readers. Pupils' good vocabulary knowledge, comprehension and inference skills have a positive impact on the good progress that they make in reading.
- Pupils' work in other curriculum subjects demonstrates clearly that they are beginning to develop their knowledge and understanding further, and strengths are emerging. For example, in art, activities build progressively on pupils' prior knowledge. Their understanding of how to use pencils with increasing accuracy to highlight shade and light develops well. Pupils' sketches of skulls from their topic on the plague create a very evocative display.
- Pupils who spoke to the inspector about their learning in history confidently explained that the Romans were able to defeat the barbarians easily in battle because they were such skilled tacticians and used battle formations, such as the turtle, very effectively; whereas the barbarians had no strategies, and simply ran at their enemies shouting loudly.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have a good understanding of how young children learn. Most children enter school with skills and knowledge typical for their age. The majority of children attend one of a number of local nursery providers before starting school. Leaders work closely with the largest private provider throughout the year with a well-thought-through programme of visits and activities.
- The weekly session for under-fives is well attended. Staff establish good relationships with parents before children start school. Children meet the Reception staff, join in with activities and listen to stories. Positive relationships are modelled effectively by adults, and children settle well. Children are happy in each other's company, play amiably together and help each other. Parents who spoke to inspectors commented positively about how happy their children are coming to school every day.
- Leaders effectively gather assessment information from a range of activities to accurately identify the next steps in children's learning. Technology is used effectively, and parents know what their children are doing and how they can help them at home.
- Teaching is good. Teachers quickly identify children who are struggling. Skilled support staff work with them individually, or in small groups, to give them the help that they need to catch up.
- Leaders work effectively with other agencies and professionals to support pupils with SEND. Training for staff ensures that they have the knowledge and understanding to meet children's individual needs well. Children with SEND make good progress because of the help they receive.
- Leaders have created an environment that is shaped well to support purposeful learning effectively. Staff promote high levels of cooperation and communication. Children are happy and engaged in their learning. Behaviour is good as a result of the

calm and nurturing atmosphere that leaders have created. This contributes effectively to children's positive attitudes to learning.

- Phonics is taught effectively. Teachers model vocabulary and sensitively correct any mispronunciation. Children apply their phonics knowledge with increasing accuracy in their own writing. Leaders provide opportunities for children to practise and refine their writing in a range of areas, for example writing lists of ingredients to make pizza from using natural materials found outside.
- Books are carefully selected to match children's skills and meet their interests. Workshops help parents to understand how reading is taught. Parents know how to help their children with their reading at home.
- Teachers design activities that ignite children's curiosity. The appearance of a large piece of ice in the water tray stimulated lots of discussion and speculation. Staff used questions effectively to encourage children to describe what they could see and feel. Children who spoke with the inspector explained, 'The ice is actually water that's very, very cold and when it warms up, it melts into water again.'
- Children are safe and risk assessments are carried out daily. Staff have all received the appropriate training.
- Teachers' high expectations have ensured that the proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of Reception has remained consistently above the national average for the past three years. Children make good progress and are prepared well for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	119196
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10090523

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Philip McKennell
Headteacher	Mr Jonathan Danson
Telephone number	01706 822 063
Website	www.stubbins.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	head@stubbins.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	May 2007

Information about this school

- This school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage, with a very small number of pupils from a range of minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by an EHC plan is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning and behaviour. The headteacher and assistant headteacher joined inspectors on these classroom visits.
- Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils during lessons and at playtimes. They met formally with a group of pupils and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and other members of staff. Inspectors also met with four members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books and on display jointly with leaders. They also looked at a range of documentation, including those about the arrangements for safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the 71 responses to Parent View, including eight free-text comments.

Inspection team

Amanda Stringer, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mandy Dodd	Ofsted Inspector
Gaynor Rennie	Ofsted Inspector

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