

Quernmore Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Postern Gate Road, Quernmore, Lancaster, Lancashire LA2 9EL

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
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 deputy headteacher are highly effective in ensuring that the school has a clear vision which is shared by all staff.
- Governors offer challenge and support in a wide range of areas. However, they have not ensured that leaders' development planning, to advance key aspects of school work, is effective enough in ensuring improvement in some areas.
- The school's curriculum is designed well to enrich pupils' learning across many subjects, including geography, history, religious education (RE) and English, by providing opportunities to work beyond the classroom.
- Teachers make highly effective use of the school's well-designed outdoor spaces to develop pupils' well-being and promote their academic development.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. As a result, attendance for all groups of pupils is above that seen nationally.
- Pupils demonstrate admirable views on equality due to the high-quality teaching that they receive.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Pupils, including the small number who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs/disabilities (SEND), make good progress throughout the school.
- Pupils' progress in key stage 2 in mathematics is weaker than it is in English. New strategies to develop the teaching of mathematics are beginning to bring about improvement.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding. Pupils demonstrate a high regard for the views of others. They debate issues in a highly thoughtful manner.
- Pupils' progress and attainment in writing has improved significantly over time. However, teachers do not consistently encourage pupils to present their work to a high standard.
- Pupils are well prepared for each stage of their learning because leaders ensure that movement from one year to the next is well managed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further strengthen leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that efforts to plan, monitor and refine actions to develop key aspects of school work, such as the teaching of a modern foreign language in key stage 2, are detailed enough to bring about significant improvement.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - providing pupils with the support they need to develop their handwriting and presentation skills
 - further embedding strategies to develop the teaching of mathematics so that progress increases further for pupils by the end of key stage 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads with passion and commitment. This contributes to the creation of a learning environment which caters for the needs of the whole child and where pupils thrive.
- Leaders, including governors, work together to develop provision for pupils. However, the evaluation of key aspects of the school's work and subsequent improvement planning are not always detailed enough to ensure improvement. For example, the teaching of French is not secure in key stage 2, but this has not formed part of leaders' improvement planning.
- Senior leaders ensure that staff have regular opportunities to debate the curriculum and pupils' learning. As a result, staff feel engaged and motivated. They seek regular opportunities to plan learning that excites and challenges pupils' thinking.
- Teachers benefit from professional development which is improving their skills. For example, training in phonics has supported teachers in their understanding of teaching letters and sounds. Additionally, support from a local university develops teachers' skills in questioning, especially during reading lessons. Training to support the teaching of mathematics has begun to make a positive impact on the teaching of problem solving and mastery. However, this is not yet fully embedded throughout all classes, resulting in progress that is less strong than in English.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum which is deeply rooted in the location of the school. Outdoor learning is a strength of the school's provision. Leaders have developed the school grounds in an effective manner to ensure that learning across many areas of the curriculum can take place here.
- Pupils develop their understanding of many subjects, such as reading, writing, history, geography and RE, by studying their local environment and exploring how this links to the world beyond. As part of their curriculum, leaders ensure that pupils receive regular opportunities to develop their understanding through educational visits locally and nationally and through special events in school, such as science weeks.
- Pupils enjoy a selection of extra-curricular activities which further enhance their learning in areas such as sport and music. For example, pupils have opportunities to learn musical instruments, such as guitar, ukulele, violin and piano.
- The physical education and sport premium funding is used effectively to improve pupils' skills and enjoyment of sport. Pupils have regular opportunities to access lunchtime sporting activities in their 'Good Sportsmanship' club. As a result of the positive promotion of sport in school, pupils are attending a wider selection of inter-school sporting events.
- Leaders ensure that fundamental British values are woven through the school's curriculum. For example, pupils' understanding of the process of democracy is developed through visits to the Houses of Parliament and by electing their own school councillors.
- Leaders use government funding for the small number of disadvantaged pupils in an

effective manner, providing them with additional support from staff within school and pastoral care. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their starting points.

- Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is threaded effectively through curriculum subjects and through the school's vision. Pupils enjoy regular opportunities to develop their understanding of a range of faiths. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 visited a local Buddhist temple. Pupils noted that they removed their shoes as a sign of respect. Additionally, outdoor spaces in school are used for 'stilling exercises', where pupils are encouraged to relax and listen to the sounds of nature.
- Leaders ensure that pupils receive effective support to make sure that they move from one stage of their education to the next with confidence and understanding. Additional support is provided for pupils with SEND to ensure that they receive all the additional support they require.
- Leaders are outward looking and act effectively on support provided by the local authority and from other schools. This ensures that their school continues to develop in terms of leadership and management and teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders, including the headteacher, also provide support to other schools, for example in the effective use of outdoor learning.
- Leaders have developed the way in which they communicate to parents and carers since the last inspection. They ensure that information about the management of pupils' behaviour and the way in which the curriculum is taught is outlined on the school's website. The vast majority of parents are very positive about the quality of education provided by the school. All parents spoken to during the inspection spoke highly about the school, including pupils' behaviour and exciting opportunities in the curriculum. One parent, reflecting the views of many others spoken to, noted, 'It is a great place to learn, to develop and mature.'

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is effective. Governors share a clear vision for their school and work in an effective manner with leaders. Governors know the school well. This is because they visit regularly and speak with staff and pupils.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures and receives appropriate training and updates. This enables governors to provide appropriate support and challenge, particularly in areas such as safeguarding and SEND where there are nominated governors to oversee provision.
- Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher about school performance. As a result, they have been effective in challenging leaders in areas such as the development of reading. However, they have not ensured that evaluation and improvement planning is detailed enough to address all key priorities in the school, such as the progress that pupils make by the end of key stage 2 in mathematics and in modern foreign languages.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school building is secure and visitors are checked carefully on arrival to school.
- The single central record of checks on staff is up to date and compliant. Staff receive regular training relating to safeguarding and those with responsibility for safeguarding ensure that they, and others, carry out their roles effectively.
- The chair of governors works effectively with leaders in charge of safeguarding to ensure that procedures are in place and are effective in keeping pupils safe. Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from visitors who come into school to support their understanding of personal safety and well-being.
- Parents are confident in the ability of leaders to keep their children safe and free from harm. Almost all parents who responded to Parent View and all parents spoken to during the inspection said that their children are happy in school, well looked after and feel safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Effective teaching across the school supports pupils' learning and progress. Teachers plan for a range of experiences to excite and enthuse pupils. Teachers weave opportunities to practise mathematics and English skills through other curriculum areas, most notably science, geography, history and RE.
- Teachers have worked well with leaders to develop the way in which they teach phonics. They ensure that phonics skills are regularly reinforced in reading and writing lessons and that books pupils take home reflect the sounds that they are learning in school. As a result, pupils are making good progress in this area. Pupils who read to the inspector used their skills in phonics effectively to decode unknown words that they came across in their reading books.
- Teachers ensure that there is a strong focus on reading in school. Classrooms have dedicated areas for pupils to read books and the school library is bright, engaging and stocked well with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction. An increased focus on pupils' vocabulary development and inference and deduction skills has been effective in supporting the development of pupils' skills and challenging more effectively the most able.
- The teaching of writing has improved to address historically lower progress in this subject. Pupils receive regular opportunities to write at length, developing their skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling. However, work in pupils' books shows that their overall presentation and handwriting are often untidy.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and are valued by the pupils. As a result, pupils' behaviour in lessons is typically strong and supports their learning. Pupils work successfully alone and with partners. They enjoy their lessons and are determined to achieve well.
- Teachers are making effective use of training received in mathematics. They are beginning to provide pupils with more opportunities to undertake problem-solving and reasoning activities. During the inspection, pupils in Year 5 were using a broad range of

strategies and using percentages to act as detectives to 'solve a crime'. Such work develops pupils' thinking. However, further time is required to ensure that this new focus in mathematics is fully embedded so that pupils make even stronger progress by the end of key stage 2.

- Science is a strength of the school and pupils achieve highly in this area. Pupils are given regular opportunities to develop their thinking across a range of scientific topics and take part in science weeks, where their understanding and interests are further developed. The leader for science invites 'external ambassadors' into school. For example, an engineer spoke to the pupils about how to extract DNA from apples. Such activities excite pupils' thinking and encourage them to question and to think deeply.
- Teachers make excellent use of the locality to develop pupils' skills in geography and history. During the inspection, for example, pupils in key stage 1 went out on a walk around the village where they highlighted features on a map. On their return to school the pupils created a range of increasingly challenging keys to add to their maps. Teaching assistants were used very effectively to provide some pupils with additional support in re-creating their map using tape and large symbols on the floor of the school hall. Such well-crafted teaching, with focused, well-directed questioning, ensures that the pupils' learning develops very effectively.
- The teaching of French in key stage 2 is inconsistent between year groups. While pupils have opportunities to undertake aspects of learning in this area, such as through the singing of songs in French, their learning is not sequenced well. This is because leaders have not ensured that improvement planning to support areas such as the curriculum design is clear enough to support teachers in this area.
- Classrooms are bright and engaging. Pupils' work and curriculum information displayed on walls are used effectively to support learning. In the Year 3 and 4 classroom, pupils' learning around the topic of birds was greatly enhanced by information posters, high-quality information books on birds and the pupils' own 3D models of birds that they had made.
- Teachers liaise closely with leaders to discuss pupils' attainment and progress. Leaders use their own assessment system to monitor the developments in pupils' learning. This is used well to ensure that leaders can monitor the work set by teachers to challenge pupils' thinking further. As a result, good progress is being made by pupils.
- Teachers make effective use of the large grounds of the school for learning. They ensure that the curriculum they teach has, where appropriate, an environmental focus. Teachers make use of the woodland areas, the nature garden and orchard to enable pupils to learn to respect and develop an understanding of nature. Additionally, opportunities to develop mathematics through measuring, and to write adventure stories and undertake role play are enhanced in this space. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils are encouraged to identify birds and squirrels by looking out of their large window on to the fields. Such observation is used effectively as part of teaching on subjects such as poetry and art.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils thrive at Quernmore Church of England Primary School. They benefit from the learning that regularly moves beyond the classroom into the school grounds, the local village, the fields and fells, and to places such as London.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection and those who contributed to discussions in lessons communicated with confidence and understanding. They were able to debate issues such as disability with remarkable maturity. Pupils raised the subject of homelessness when debating what they could do to contribute as good citizens, listening with interest to the views of others, particularly when these differed from their own.
- The central focus on the environment in the curriculum promotes pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles. Pupils spoke with confidence and understanding about the links between keeping fit, eating well and having a healthy body. Pupils understand how to keep themselves healthy, both in the real world and online.
- Pupils understand what makes a good learner and greatly value their learning. They demonstrate great ambition for the future in terms of further education and jobs. One pupil, reflecting the views of others, noted, 'Our school helps us to know what skills we need for later life.'
- The school's breakfast and after-school clubs greatly support pupils' well-being, providing them with a space to explore their interests and engage in conversation and games. Additionally, pupils enjoy opportunities to lead collective worship in school. On such occasions, they are able to promote the welfare of others through prayer and hymns.
- Relationships are strong. Pupils are caring of each other and greatly value the support they receive from staff. Such work helps pupils to gain empathy for people in the wider world. For example, following a visit to a museum in Manchester to learn about 'courageous people', typical comments in their written work included the following information about a well-known anti-slavery activist: 'she was courageous because she escaped slavery. She went back, risking her own life to save other slaves.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are respectful, friendly and polite to adults and to each other. They engage well with adults, opening doors for them and taking part in conversation.
- As learners, pupils are reflective. They greatly enjoy the opportunities provided for them to discuss issues around relationships, and this has a positive impact on the way in which they treat each other.
- Pupils value their education. Attendance levels are high for all groups of pupils and they rarely miss a day at school. Pupils have a clear understanding of the link between good attendance and achieving their ambitions.
- Pupils conduct themselves very well in class. They listen with interest to the views of

others and have the confidence to offer their own opinions. They listen to their teachers and act well on guidance given. Pupils demonstrate a clear enjoyment and interest in learning.

- Pupils spoken to during the inspection were confident that bullying rarely happens and where it does, teachers take appropriate action to deal with it.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The relatively small number of pupils in each year group means that analysis of published performance data must be undertaken with caution.
- Pupils in Year 1 make good progress in their understanding of phonics. Over time, the proportion of pupils attaining the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check remains close to the national average. Nearly all pupils who do not attain the required standard in Year 1 do so by the time they leave the key stage. This is because of the good support that they receive from teachers.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils in Year 2 who achieved at the expected standard in writing and mathematics was higher than that seen nationally. In reading, it was broadly in line with national performance. Following a focus on developing pupils' vocabulary and reading skills, leaders' current performance information shows an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving at greater depth in reading.
- Work in current pupils' books, together with the school's own current performance information, shows that pupils with SEND and the small number who are disadvantaged are making good progress across the curriculum.
- Pupils' work in subjects such as RE, history and geography demonstrates strong progress over time, with clear development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. However, progress is weaker in modern foreign languages where a lack of sequencing of pupils' learning has prevented them from gaining subject-specific knowledge.
- Pupils perform particularly well in science. Work in current pupils' books shows strong progress in their understanding of scientific concepts. Over time, the proportion of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 who achieved at the expected standard has been above that seen nationally.
- Leaders and teachers are working hard to ensure that the most able pupils receive the challenge they need to achieve at the higher levels. Much success has been achieved in this area. For example, the proportion reaching the higher levels in writing at Year 6 in 2018 was above that seen nationally following increased work to develop pupils' vocabulary and writing structure skills. Work in pupils' books in reading, writing and mathematics shows that this challenge is contributing to stronger progress.
- While the attainment of pupils by the end of Year 6 has typically been strong over time, there have been fluctuations in the progress that pupils make, particularly in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Leaders have been effective in addressing a decline identified in writing and progress is showing marked improvement. In mathematics, however, while progress by the end of Year 6 is in line with that seen nationally at the average standard, improvement is not consistent

throughout the school and further time is needed to embed changes which leaders have made to the teaching of this subject.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership of the early years is good. In this small school, the headteacher and deputy headteacher work effectively with teaching staff to create an environment where the children thrive. Leaders have ensured that training for new members of staff and support from the local authority in areas such as assessment, phonics, reading and writing have contributed to a rise in standards of provision for children in the early years.
- Children in the Reception Year are polite and courteous. They greatly enjoy their learning and collaborate well when undertaking tasks.
- Leaders and teachers ensure that safeguarding is effective and that children are kept safe and happy. Staff are vigilant, appropriate policies and procedures are adhered to and the indoor and outdoor environments are maintained to a high standard. The children have a clear understanding of their role in keeping themselves safe. Children explained to the inspector how they keep themselves safe in the classroom, the playground and when they are at home.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff provide children with exciting and engaging activities which challenge their thinking. For example, in a phonics lesson, children picked up phonic sounds from the sparkly river to reinforce their understanding of sounds such as 'ear' and 'air'. Children then went on a hunt around the classroom to discover where these sounds were hidden.
- The vast majority of children enter the Reception Year with skills that are typical for their age. From this point, they make good progress. In 2018, the proportion achieving a good level of development increased to above that seen nationally, with children performing highly in the early learning goals for reading, writing and mathematics.
- The small amount of additional funding received to support disadvantaged children and those with SEND is used effectively to provide the children with additional support from teaching assistants. As a result, these children make strong progress from their starting points.
- Teachers provide parents with regular opportunities to share their children's learning. For example, the 'Family Friday' event enables parents to come into school and work alongside their children. Parents attend workshops in reading, phonics and mathematics to help them to provide effective support to their children's learning at home. Parents spoken to during the inspection were very positive about the early years and felt that their children were happy and making good progress.
- Leaders ensure that children have increased opportunities to develop their reading, writing, mathematics and scientific skills outside. During the inspection, a group of children built a ramp for cars in the outdoor area. They explained to the inspector that the steeper the ramp, the faster the cars will run down it.
- Transitions into the Reception Year and on into Year 1 are well managed. Teachers are working hard to provide children with work that develops their level of independence.

Additionally, children spend time each week learning alongside older children. As a result, they are well prepared for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	119378
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10090531

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Mr Alan Rainford
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Baines
Telephone number	01524 66628
Website	www.quernmore.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	head@quernmore.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 May 2012

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary. It was last subject to a statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools in February 2017.
- The school receives additional funding through the pupil premium funding for a lower than average proportion of disadvantaged pupils.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who leave or join the school during the school year is low.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club. Leaders also offer a range of

extra-curricular activities for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all year groups, including some observations with school leaders.
- The inspector examined a range of documents, including information about pupils' attendance, progress information, self-evaluation and school improvement information and safeguarding records.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day. She took account of the 55 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- The inspector spoke on the phone with a representative of the local authority who is the school's improvement partner.
- The inspector met with the chair of the governing body and five other governors.
- The inspector observed pupils' movement around the school. A formal meeting also took place with pupils.
- The inspector looked at behaviour at the start and end of the school day and during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspector observed the breakfast club and spoke to pupils who were attending.
- The inspector undertook a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work and talked with them about their learning. She listened to pupils read and talked to them about the books they enjoyed and those that they are currently reading.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders and teachers.
- The inspector carried out a detailed scrutiny of current progress and attendance information for all groups of pupils.
- The inspector analysed the school's website.

Inspection team

Gill Pritchard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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