

Inspection of a good school: Padiham St Leonard's Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Padiham St Leonard's Primary, Moor Lane, Padiham, Burnley, Lancashire BB12 8HT

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being part of this warm and caring school community. They are happy and respectful of each other. They benefit from the strong and supportive relationships that staff forge with them.

Pupils appreciate that staff listen to them when they have problems or are upset. They know that their teachers will always help them to resolve any harmful behaviour. Leaders deal effectively with any incidents of bullying. Pupils trust adults in the school. They feel safe.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and pupils rise to these. In lessons, pupils focus and work hard. Leaders are increasing their expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. However, some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not achieve as highly as they could. This is because the curriculum is not as well thought out and delivered across all subjects as well as it could be. The design and delivery of the curriculum in the unit for pupils with SEND lacks ambition.

Leaders support pupils' wider development to ensure that they become well-rounded and responsible young people. Pupils take on roles in school life, for example by becoming a sports ambassador, eco-representative or school librarian. This helps them to develop their social skills and a sense of independence.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are in the process of improving the curriculum across the school so that it is ambitious for all pupils. This journey is well under way. However, leaders have only recently begun to implement many actions. They have not ensured that some changes, such as those made to the phonics programme, have had an impact quickly enough to help all pupils. The impact of some other changes remains to be seen. As a result, the achievement of pupils across year groups and subjects is uneven.

Leaders prioritise and encourage pupils to read for pleasure. They carefully select interesting and diverse books that pupils read as part of their curriculum. Teachers dedicate time each day to read to pupils and children in the early years. Leaders have taken steps to remedy weaknesses that existed in the phonics curriculum. They introduced the new phonics programme without success at first. They are now addressing this situation. All staff have been trained to teach the revised approach and they do so with increasing confidence. This includes those pupils in the specially resourced provision. Catch-up sessions are provided for those pupils who are behind. In Reception, where the programme is followed with fidelity, pupils are building their phonics knowledge effectively. They sound and blend unfamiliar words with confidence. However, in older year groups, leaders do not ensure that all pupils benefit from the full phonics programme. Parents and carers have access to online books that match the sounds that pupils are learning. However, some do not find this format helpful and so do not use them. Some pupils have large gaps in their knowledge, despite the catch-up sessions that they receive. These pupils struggle to read with fluency and confidence.

In many subjects, subject leaders have decided what the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn is and the order in which they should learn it. In a few subjects, they are still finalising this curriculum design, but the work has begun. Teachers explain new learning clearly and they make good use of resources to help pupils understand new ideas. In English and mathematics, leaders ensure that teachers regularly identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge. However, across other subjects, leaders' assessment strategies do not enable them to pinpoint clearly and address the precise gaps in pupils' learning. This hinders some pupils from building on and remembering their learning as well as they could.

Leaders are quick to identify the additional needs that pupils with SEND may have. In most subjects, teachers and staff are well trained to adapt the delivery of the curriculum. This means that pupils with SEND experience the same level of ambition in the curriculum as other pupils. They achieve in line with their peers. Conversely, leaders have not ensured that pupils in the SEND unit benefit from a well-designed and implemented curriculum. Expectations of what these pupils can and should achieve are not high enough. However, pupils who are part of the SEND unit respond well to the great deal of attention that leaders and staff pay to their social and emotional needs. Teachers and staff work well with a range of external agencies to meet the health and care needs of these pupils.

Most pupils behave well. Leaders reinforce strong school policies for behaviour. These are based on building and restoring strong relationships. Classrooms are generally calm and

productive. When pupils struggle to regulate their own behaviour, they are supported in a kind and consistent manner. This enables them to flourish socially and emotionally.

Pupils benefit from the many opportunities that leaders provide to promote their personal development. Through the curriculum, leaders ensure that pupils are well prepared to live healthy and safe lives. They are taught to understand diversity and celebrate difference. More broadly, leaders ensure that pupils develop a sense of character and responsibility. For example, they have opportunities to take part in residential visits, trips and clubs. In addition, older pupils are paired up with children in the Reception Year to guide them through school and help them as they grow.

Staff appreciate the actions that leaders take to support their well-being and help with their workload. Governors are committed and know the school well. They are keen to provide support. They challenge leaders to some extent on important issues. Nevertheless, although their oversight of leaders' actions is increasing, they have not challenged them enough to ensure that the quality and impact of the curriculum, including in the SEND unit, is as effective as it could be.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained to spot any signs of abuse or potential harm. Staff know the procedures to follow when reporting concerns. These concerns are recorded and acted on appropriately. Staff take the time to get to know pupils well. There is a strong culture of care and support.

Leaders make appropriate and timely referrals to safeguard pupils when necessary. They work extensively with a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the help that they need.

Through the curriculum, leaders ensure that pupils receive important information about how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about online safety and age-appropriate relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders do not ensure that teachers accurately identify and address the gaps in pupils' knowledge. This means that teachers do not help pupils as well as they could to build on what they already know. Some pupils struggle to recall essential aspects of their learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers regularly check what pupils know and remember. This is so that they can fill any gaps in their knowledge and help them build on their prior learning.
- Leaders have not ensured that all pupils benefit from the full phonics programme. This means that some pupils, including those with SEND, have gaps in their phonics

knowledge that are not being addressed quickly enough. Leaders should ensure that the phonics programme is implemented consistently well for all pupils so that they learn to read with confidence, accuracy and fluency.

- Leaders and governors have not ensured that the quality or delivery of the curriculum for pupils in the SEND unit is ambitious enough. The curriculum these pupils receive does not meet their academic needs as well as it should. Leaders should ensure that pupils in the SEND unit benefit from a well-thought-out and effectively implemented curriculum so that they achieve well.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	119425
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10240670
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	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Simon Butterworth
Headteacher	Beverly Holmes
Website	www.st-leonards.lancs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 June 2017

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes to the senior leadership team and the governing body, including the appointment of a new chair of governors.
- School leaders make use of one registered alternative provider for one pupil.
- The school hosts a SEND unit on behalf of the local authority for up to eight pupils with speech, language and communication needs and autism spectrum disorder. There are currently eight pupils who are part of the SEND unit.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and a range of staff.
- The inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke with a representative of the diocese of Blackburn.

- The inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair.
- The inspector spoke to a school adviser who works with school leaders.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, she met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. She observed pupils reading with a familiar adult. She also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. This included the free-text comments.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. She also spoke with staff to discuss the support they receive from leaders.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils. The inspector spoke with a range of pupils about school life.
- The inspector viewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. She also spoke with staff to understand how they keep children safe.

Inspection team

Amanda Downing, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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