

# Inspection of Padiham St Leonard's Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Moor Lane, Padiham, Burnley, Lancashire BB12 8HT

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Inspection dates: 8 and 9 May 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils' school experiences are enriched through a variety of initiatives. For instance, older pupils take turns learning to fish during 'Fishing Fridays'. They learn how to play instruments such as the ukelele during their music lessons. Some pupils benefit from the sporting clubs on offer. The school also arranges clubs for pupils' families to participate in, such as pasta club, in which families learn to cook together. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoyed regularly using the school's woodland area as part of their learning activities.

Pupils are happy and safe at this school, and they generally behave well. However, the school does not consistently uphold its expectations for pupils' conduct, which leads to low-level disruption at points in the school day that sometimes goes unchecked.

The school is ambitious for what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), should achieve. However, at times, these ambitions are not fully realised. In part, this is because there is some variability in how consistently the school delivers its curriculum. In some cases, pupils do not achieve all that they could. For example, the proportion of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 who reached the expected standards of attainment in reading in 2023 was significantly below national averages.

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

The school has ensured that pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum. It has clarified what pupils are expected to learn in all subjects by the end of each year. The school has made great strides in redeveloping the curriculum used in the unit for pupils with SEND, which is now appropriately ambitious for what these pupils should learn.

There is some variability in how consistently subject curriculums are delivered in practice. Some learning activities are not well designed to help pupils acquire important knowledge. At times, content is not delivered in a logical, coherent manner to help pupils build their knowledge securely. Consequently, pupils' knowledge and understanding of key concepts in some subjects are superficial.

The school delivers the early years curriculum more effectively, and with greater consistency, than is the case elsewhere in the school. Staff design appropriate learning activities that help children to develop the fundamental knowledge and skills for future learning.

The school has some systems in place to evaluate the quality of curriculum delivery. However, the school's conclusions about the curriculum are not incisive enough. Consequently, the school, including governors, does not have a sufficient awareness of the weaknesses in curriculum delivery and the impact that such issues have on what pupils learn and remember over time.

Since the last inspection, the school has ensured that all pupils benefit from the same ambitious phonics programme. Staff adhere to the school's expectations for how this programme should be delivered. The school ensures that pupils learn phonics as soon as they join in the early years. However, for pupils in key stage 1 and beyond, the school does not provide them with books that match their current reading knowledge and abilities. These books are often too difficult for pupils to practise the sounds that they are learning. Consequently, pupils struggle unduly when at the early stages of learning to read. Those who need extra support to catch up in their reading receive extra help, but this sometimes lacks precision. As a result, pupils do not have ample opportunities to address their individual gaps in phonics knowledge. These pupils do not become fluent readers quickly enough.

As was found in the previous inspection, the school's checks on what pupils know and remember are not robust. Some of the strategies that the school uses to check on pupils' learning do not effectively identify and address the errors and misconceptions that pupils have.

The school ensures that pupils with SEND are identified early. It provides staff with appropriate information and guidance on how the delivery of the curriculum might need to be adapted in order to meet these pupils' additional needs.

The school has given careful thought to curriculum enhancements that broaden pupils' personal development. It works with community partners to teach pupils how to stay safe online. It has introduced an additional programme focused on helping pupils to manage their emotions in a positive way. Pupils learn about people's various cultures, beliefs and backgrounds. They have a positive appreciation for the differences of others. Pupils enjoy the residential visits that are arranged for them, during which they participate in outdoor confidence-building activities.

The school ensures that attendance is a high priority. It takes effective action to remove barriers that prevent pupils from attending regularly. The school has implemented behaviour-related policies and practices that are rooted in building positive relationships with pupils. In most lessons, pupils were observed by inspectors behaving well. However, pupils do not consistently adhere to the school's expectations of conduct, especially during unstructured times. For example, pupils were observed running along corridors and engaging in inappropriate play. Occasionally, these behaviours are not addressed effectively or in line with the school's policies. This conduct sometimes puts pupils at risk of potential harm.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They reported that leaders take responsive actions to help them to manage their workload. Early careers teachers are well supported by able mentors. Governors understand their duties and typically carry them out sufficiently well.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school, including governors, lacks sufficient insight into the delivery of the curriculum and how well it helps pupils to acquire new knowledge. As a result, the school is not addressing the deficiencies in curriculum design and delivery that are currently evident. These deficiencies prevent pupils from developing a secure body of knowledge. The school should review how it evaluates the effectiveness of subject curriculums so that it can identify and respond to the weaknesses in curriculum delivery.
- The school does not carry out effective checks on pupils' learning. This sometimes means that staff do not identify when pupils are struggling with their learning. In turn, pupils do not receive enough help and guidance to address their misconceptions and errors. The school should make sure that staff have sufficient strategies to identify and respond to pupils who need further guidance with their learning.
- The school's phonics catch-up support does not sharply focus on addressing pupils' individual knowledge gaps. Additionally, the books that pupils read are not well suited to their current knowledge of sounds. Consequently, pupils struggle at the early stages of learning to read for longer than they should. The school should ensure that pupils are provided with accessible books that match well to their current reading abilities and ensure that catch-up support helps pupils to close their individual knowledge gaps.
- The school does not consistently uphold high standards of behaviour and conduct throughout the school day. Particularly during social times, pupils do not behave as well as they should. This sometimes puts them at risk of harm. The school should ensure that its policies and procedures related to behaviour management are clearly understood and routinely upheld by staff and pupils.

## 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 and carers 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119425
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321365
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	336
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Simon Butterworth
<b>Headteacher</b>	Beverly Holmes
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-leonards.lancs.sch.uk">www.st-leonards.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There have been alterations to the senior leadership structure since the previous inspection. A deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have been appointed to substantive posts since the last inspection.
- Leaders do not currently make use of alternative provision.
- There is a SEND unit at the school for up to eight pupils with speech, language and communication needs and autistic spectrum disorder. There are currently seven pupils who are part of this unit.
- The school operates a before-school club at the school, which the governing body oversees.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England primary school. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in November 2017. The school is awaiting confirmation from the diocese about its next section 48 inspection.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design, history and geography. They met with subject leaders and teachers. They visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning. The lead inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum, spoke with pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector spoke with a group of governors. Inspectors also talked to staff about their workload and well-being.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their wider experience of school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

## Inspection team

David Spruce, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Elizabeth Travis	Ofsted Inspector
Rachael Alarcon	Ofsted Inspector

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