

# St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

Withers Street, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 1DF

**Inspection dates** 14–15 January 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The standards that pupils reach, especially at the age of seven, are not high enough. Not all pupils, particularly the most able, make as much progress as they could.
- Not all teaching is good and overall it requires improvement. Teachers do not always expect enough of pupils and make sure that they all do well in every subject. They do not question pupils closely enough to check that they understand what they are being taught. In marking work, they do not always make clear what pupils need to do to get better.
- Over time the headteacher and senior leaders have not been clear enough about what needs to be done to make the school better, including improving the quality of teaching. Leaders of subjects are not involved enough in checking on how well pupils are being taught. Plans for the future lack detail.
- The governors rely heavily on the headteacher to tell them how well pupils are doing. They are not involved enough in checking on the standards that pupils reach and the progress that they make from when they join the school to when they leave.

### The school has the following strengths

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are very polite and behave well around the school; they are very keen to work and concentrate in class.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils have good opportunities to learn about a range of religions and cultures, to contribute to the life of the school and the wider community, to visit museums, art galleries and other places of interest and to take part in a variety of sports.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons being taught by 10 teachers. One of the observations was conducted jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils reading and observed break and lunchtime activities.
- They held meetings with leaders and managers, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and a group of teachers. They also held a formal meeting with a group of pupils and spoke to pupils in lessons and around the school. In addition, the inspectors spoke to break-time supervisors, visiting staff and to parents as they brought their children to school.
- The range of documents examined included: the school's self-evaluation; the school development plan; documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils; minutes of governing body meetings; and records of pupils' attendance, exclusion and behaviour.
- Only one response was made to the online questionnaire Parent View. However, inspectors analysed 123 responses to a questionnaire distributed to parents by the school in October 2013. In addition, they analysed questionnaires completed by 35 members of staff.

## Inspection team

Aelwyn Pugh, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sheryl Farnworth

Additional Inspector

Jeremy Barnes

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average primary school.
- It was awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark in 2012 and the Church School Distinctiveness Award in 2014.
- The very large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and have a first language other than English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and supported by the pupil premium is higher than average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free schools meals, children from service families and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action stage is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is twice the national average.
- The school deprivation indicator is almost twice the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The current headteacher took up post in September 2013.

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

- Improve teaching, so that it is consistently good or better in each subject across the school, by:
  - making lessons interesting and challenging and helping pupils of all abilities to progress well
  - ensuring that all pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work
  - ensuring that all teachers ask probing questions to help pupils clarify their thinking, develop their ideas and correct any errors they are making.
- Raise achievement, particularly in Key Stage 1, so that more pupils reach the higher levels of performance and make better than the progress expected of them, by:
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of every pupil, particularly the most able
  - checking regularly on how pupils are progressing so that those who are falling behind can be identified and helped quickly.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - checking regularly on the quality of teaching and learning so that necessary improvements can be made quickly
  - training subject and key stage coordinators so that they can contribute to the process of checking
  - revising the anti-bullying policy so that it takes account of all types of bullying.

An external review of both governance and the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress in all subjects, in all ability groups or across the age range. Progress in reading and writing has not been as good as in mathematics. Too few of the most able pupils make more progress than is expected of them. In 2013, boys' progress was less than that of girls, and far lower than the average for boys nationally.
- The school's figures show that children enter the school with knowledge and skills that are well below what is typical for their age. During the Early Years Foundation Stage, they make good progress. In 2013, the results for checks made on Year 1 pupils' knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) were better than the national average. However, for the last four years, results at the end of Key Stage 1 have been well below average because pupils have not been reaching the higher levels of attainment.
- During Key Stage 2, progress increases but at a variable rate. At the age of 11, the proportions attaining the higher levels in mathematics and writing are above average. However, in reading and the test on spelling, grammar and punctuation, they are just below average.
- Few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. The most able pupils make average progress in Key Stage 2 but the proportion that make better progress than expected of them is lower than average. In the lessons seen, the achievement of pupils in both key stages varied according to the quality of teaching. In both numeracy and literacy, the most able pupils tended to make less progress than other ability groups.
- The school uses the additional funding known as pupil premium on a range of appropriate activities. Pupils supported through this funding who left the school in the summer of 2013 were two terms behind other pupils in the school in writing and mathematics, and three terms behind in reading. The gap between the two groups was wider than the national average in reading but in line with the national average in the other subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities make similar progress to such pupils nationally.
- The lower-ability pupils in Key Stage 1 who were heard reading were making good progress. They could decipher simple words accurately and understand the basics of the stories they were reading. They could also identify elements such as speech marks and exclamation marks that they had learnt about in class. The pupils from Key Stage 2 were reading with increasing fluency. They enjoyed the books, particularly humorous ones, which they read in class. They borrowed books from the library and read to their families at home.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The school has limited information on the quality of teaching over time. Since his arrival, the headteacher has observed every teacher formally and also spent half a day in each classroom. The headteacher reports that, of the lessons he observed, one required improvement. The rest were good or better. Examination of pupils' work indicated variability in teaching and its impact on learning. This was borne out in the lessons seen by inspectors, which ranged from outstanding to inadequate.
- Where learning was good or better, the teachers had a firm command of the subject, made use of a wide variety of interesting activities to support learning and adapted these to suit the varying abilities of the pupils in the class. Pupils were given increasingly demanding challenges, such as having to conduct more and more complex mental calculations within shorter and shorter timescales. The teachers succeeded in conveying their enthusiasm to the pupils, who worked with high levels of concentration throughout the lesson. Careful use of questioning, adapted to the levels of understanding of individual pupils, enabled them to identify and correct errors for themselves. Teachers also made very effective use of information and communication

technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning.

- Learning of this quality was not widespread enough. Too often, teachers did not make sufficient use of questions to check on all pupils' understanding and to develop it further. They relied on volunteers to answer questions and were content with one-word answers. There were missed opportunities to extend pupils' thinking and vocabulary through asking further probing questions. The activities did not take sufficient account of the different abilities in the class, which means that the work was too hard for some and too easy for others. The most able pupils in a class were not always given enough challenges to progress and, in some classes, there was too heavy a reliance on teaching assistants to help the less able. Pupils throughout the school show high levels of enthusiasm and readiness to work hard but not all teachers expect enough of them.
- Examination of pupils' books shows that the great majority take pride in their work and the way that they present it. The quality of marking varies across the year groups. It is generally better in literacy than in mathematics. Some marking identifies clearly what the children have done well and what they need to do to improve further. Where a pupil has been asked to repeat a piece of work, checks are carried out to ensure that this has been done and that the required improvements have been made. However, too much of the marking tends to focus entirely on what the pupils have done well without indicating what they could do to make it even better. There is a lack of consistency in how spelling errors are tackled; moreover, there is insufficient indication of how well pupils are progressing in relation to their targets.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. When moving around the school and during break, lunchtime and assembly, pupils behave very sensibly, showing respect for one another and for the school building and equipment. Older pupils take care of younger pupils and show concern for them. Pupils of all ages are very respectful of their teachers and the adults whom they meet. They hold the door open for them and bid them a 'good morning' or 'good afternoon' in a spontaneous and natural way. In a meeting with an inspector, pupils from across Key Stage 2 conducted themselves very well. They listened carefully to one another, prompted each other when necessary and respected viewpoints which differed from their own.
- Pupils arrive promptly at the classroom, settle quickly and are very eager to learn. As they get older, they take increasing responsibility for organising themselves during lessons. They move quickly, quietly and without fuss from one activity to the next. They listen very carefully during lessons. Very occasionally, when pupils have to listen for a long time, some may lose concentration. Only very rarely does this lead to others being distracted and then only for a very short period of time. However, because of this, behaviour overall is good rather than outstanding, as at the time of the last inspection.
- The pupils respond well to incentives to work hard and behave well, such as the 'jar of joy'. However, these were not being used consistently in the classes observed.
- Attendance has improved dramatically since the last inspection. It is currently just below the national average and the indications are that it will be average by the end of the year. This improvement is due not only to changes to government policy on extended leave but also to the particular efforts made by the school. These include a weekly update on attendance in the headteacher's newsletter, advice to parents and the rewards for 100% attendance by specific classes and individual pupils.
- No pupil has been excluded from the school over the last four years.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The random sample of pupils who spoke to inspectors said that instances of bullying and name-calling were very rare and were dealt with very promptly. These pupils said that they felt safe in school and in the local community. Most of them walked to school, some doing so on their own. They understood the rules of the road and the dangers of railway lines. They knew how to keep themselves safe when using computers and how to report any inappropriate materials that they might encounter. They also knew whom to approach with any personal worries or concerns.

- Of the 123 parents who responded to the questionnaire distributed by the school in October 2013, 99% agreed or strongly agreed that their child felt safe at school.

## The leadership and management

## require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because over time, leaders have not succeeded in bringing about sufficient improvement in the attainment and progress of pupils. Teaching is not consistently good and a small proportion of it is inadequate. Standards in Key Stage 1 particularly are not good enough. The school's review of its own performance does not give a sufficiently detailed analysis of performance and does not identify the areas that most require improvement. The school development plan does not include clear targets and timescales for improvement.
- In accordance with its policy for school improvement, a representative of the local authority has conducted a termly visit to the school. This has helped with the transition from one headteacher to the next. The support that the authority has provided for the newly qualified teacher in the school is valued by that member of staff.
- Since his arrival in September 2013, the headteacher has introduced a number of changes that have been well received by staff, parents and pupils. These include improvements to the building and equipment, upgrading of ICT equipment and establishing a weekly newsletter to communicate with parents. The headteacher has succeeded in maintaining a strong sense of community among the staff and the pupils in the school. He has also re-introduced class assemblies.
- Most significantly, the headteacher has had a clear impact on the dramatic improvement in attendance. This improvement, together with the other actions taken, indicates that the headteacher has the ability to bring about the necessary changes in the school.
- The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils respect one another and relate well to adults, including visitors to the school. They regularly attend services to celebrate significant events in the Christian calendar and learn about a range of religions through visits, for example to the local mosques and to the Manchester Jewish museum. They are given opportunities to contribute to the running of the school through performing roles, such as that of classroom monitors, or acting as representatives on the school's council. They also show consideration for the wider world through raising money for a number of charities and through their eco-work. Their cultural awareness is extended through attendance at concerts and theatrical events, as well as through visits to outdoor centres and places of historical interest. In addition, they regularly present class-led assemblies where they demonstrate their drama, dance and music skills and are able to take part in a number of activities outside the classroom, including the choir and the cookery club.
- Middle leaders in the school perform their roles diligently and enthusiastically and appreciate the training they receive to support them in developing their leadership skills. Subject leaders conduct scrutiny of work but have not yet been involved in observing their colleagues teaching. Therefore, they have a limited knowledge of the quality of teaching within their areas of responsibility.
- Middle leadership is currently being extended to include a temporary post of responsibility for revising provision in line with the most recent changes to the National Curriculum. The new curriculum will build on the current topic-work approach. This is enriched by a good range of carefully planned visits to relevant places of interest and by contributions from visitors from outside the school.
- All the staff in the school have been checked to ensure that they are suitable people to work with children and the school has clear policies to ensure that pupils are safe. The school's policies are up to date. However, the anti-bullying policy does not identify specific forms of bullying, including homophobic and transgender bullying. Therefore, it is difficult for the school to monitor bullying in detail.
- The allocation of the primary school sport funding is being used to provide additional training to

extend teachers' confidence in teaching gymnastics. There are also plans to provide pupils with free access to an extended range of extra-curricular activities that will include dance, gymnastics and dodge ball.

- Care is taken to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the activities in and outside the classroom. For example, boys and girls take part in cricket, the cookery club and in dodge ball. Good use of teaching assistants ensures that pupils with physical disabilities are able to take a full part in the classroom.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has an interim Chair who took up post in September 2013. There is currently one vacancy for a local authority governor.
- The governors have not been directly involved in the production of the school's review of its performance or in drawing up the development plan.
- Their analysis of the data on school performance has not been rigorous enough because they have not identified the areas that need most improvement. They rely very heavily on reports from the headteacher on the quality of teaching.
- They are directly involved in the performance management of the headteacher but receive reports on the performance management of the rest of the staff, as they do on the quality of teaching.
- Where necessary, the governors have tackled underperformance by staff. Resources are used appropriately; there are plans to improve the buildings and also to extend the range of additional activities to enrich the curriculum.
- The governors have been closely involved in deciding on how to use the pupil premium funding but they rely on the headteacher to tell them how effective it has been.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119505
<b>Local authority</b>	Blackburn with Darwen
<b>Inspection number</b>	433166

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	265
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Canon Andrew Raynes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Julian Rogers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 291250
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