

Castle Hill Primary School

Castle Hill Street, Tonge Moor, Bolton, Lancashire BL2 2JT

Inspection dates	17–18 November 2015
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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a good and improving school. Ambitious leadership sets high expectations for all pupils and staff. Everyone is encouraged and helped to do their best and achieve well.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that the quality of teaching has improved and is now consistently good. As a result, from very low starting points pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and work very well with class teachers to plan activities which meet the needs of pupils precisely.
- The support that the school provides for vulnerable pupils to help develop key skills is superb.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection. The school works closely with parents to reduce the number of pupils absent from school.
- Outcomes in the early years are good. From very low starting points children make good progress.
- Standards of behaviour in the classroom and around the school are good. This is a happy school where pupils feel safe and are well cared for.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school's work.
- Governors support the school well and ensure that school leaders are held accountable. They have contributed strongly to its continuous improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' questioning does not always challenge and deepen pupils' understanding.
- At times, the quality of marking in some classes at Key Stage 2 is not as good as it is at Key Stage 1.
- Pupils' progress in other subjects is not tracked as effectively as it is in English and mathematics.
- There are no systematic procedures in place to allow teachers to observe best practice at other schools in the locality.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make rapid progress and achieve even higher standards by:
 - developing consistency in the use of questioning so that all teachers use questioning which challenges pupils' thinking and deepens their understanding
 - developing consistently high-quality marking in all classes at Key Stage 2 so that pupils are given more detailed information on how to improve their work
 - ensuring that marking in all classes at Key Stage 2 challenges the most-able pupils to stretch them further in line with the school's assessment and marking policy.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - strengthening systems to monitor pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics as they move through the school
 - implementing a targeted approach to allow teachers to observe best practice at other schools.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- There is a strong commitment by all leaders and governors to improve the school. Working together they have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Leaders are clear-sighted about the school and the areas that can be further improved. Based on accurate self-analysis, their plans for future improvements are robust and accurate. Their ultimate aim for the future is for the school to be judged outstanding.
- Staff morale is high and newly qualified teachers feel nurtured and well supported by the school. Comments from staff, and their responses to the survey of their views, show that they overwhelmingly share the aims of leaders and governors. Teachers talked to inspectors about the headteacher being an 'inspirational' leader. Another typical comment from staff was, 'I enjoy coming to work every day making a difference to children's lives.'
- Frequent checks on the quality of teaching ensure that strengths and areas for improvement are accurately identified. As a result, leaders are able to tailor training to support the improvements in teaching.
- There is a strong commitment to ongoing professional development throughout the school which is open to all staff. Teachers have opportunities to observe best practice within the school to help develop their knowledge and skills. However, there are no clear systems in place to allow teachers to observe best practice at other schools in the locality.
- A carefully planned, broad and balanced curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. Subjects are either taught discretely or as part of a topic. Pupils' learning is further enriched by numerous trips, visitors to the school, after-school clubs and special events. British values are strongly embedded in the curriculum. For example, pupils learn about democracy and individual liberty as they celebrate the life of Martin Luther King. Learning about different faiths and cultures helps pupils to understand the diversity of the world in which they live and the importance of mutual tolerance and respect.
- A central part of this curriculum is the dedication and support given by the school to help vulnerable pupils develop a number of key life-skills, such as perseverance, concentration and working hard. With the support of outside specialists, these key skills are embedded through a wide range of varied and exciting opportunities, including boxing, fishing, orienteering, photography, dance and creative writing. These activities are timetabled for the whole school on a Wednesday afternoon. Such wonderful experiences help to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and for the next stage of their education.
- English and mathematics leaders are passionate about the subjects they lead. They carefully monitor and track pupils' progress as they move through the school. However, systems in place for other subjects such as history and geography are not as effective in giving the school a view of pupils' progress over time.
- Sports funding is used well by school leaders. Specialist sports coaches enhance the teaching of physical education, thereby supporting teachers in developing their skills. Resources have also been purchased to further enhance the provision available. Pupils now take part in more competitive sports, such as rugby, netball and athletics, which helps them to develop a healthier lifestyle.
- Senior leaders are acutely aware of the importance of spending the pupil premium money wisely to support disadvantaged pupils. The money has been used to provide pupils with targeted support to overcome barriers to learning and to ensure that they have the same chances as everyone else. Such good practice demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Since the last inspection, the local authority has provided effective support to help move the school forward and improve outcomes for all groups of pupils.
- Relationships with parents are developing well. They are very supportive of the school and all that it does to support their children. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and find teachers very approachable. They believe that the school is well led and managed and that their children are safe and well looked after. Parents agree that their children made good progress during their time at the school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors take an active part in school life and have a clear understanding of their role in supporting school improvement, including the quality of teaching and its impact on progress and achievement.
 - Finances are well managed and governors are knowledgeable about how the pupil premium and

sports funding is used to support provision and achievement.

- Governors meet regularly with senior leaders whom they challenge and support in equal measure.
- Governors also undertake regular training to ensure they have the necessary skills to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All adults who work with the pupils are checked to ensure their suitability. Staff have a secure understanding of the indicators of abuse and neglect and procedures to follow should they be concerned about a child's welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The school has judged the quality of teaching to be good. Observations of teaching and learning and a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks across a range of subjects showed consistently good progress and achievement. As a result, the inspection team are in full agreement with the school's evaluation of the quality of teaching.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of all pupils. Lessons are well planned and tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils and groups. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and work very well with the class teachers to ensure that activities are pitched at the correct level for each pupil. Such effective practice contributes strongly to the good progress that pupils make.
- Pupils' progress is rigorously monitored during lessons and at pupil progress meetings with senior leaders. This ensures that any underperformance in reading, writing and mathematics is swiftly identified and addressed.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They read regularly at home and with staff in school. When reading a book, pupils confidently use their phonics (the sounds that letters make) skills to sound out unfamiliar words and are keen to predict what might happen next in the story.
- Writing skills are well promoted and pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences. Examples of pupils' writing are beautifully displayed throughout the school.
- Some teachers use questioning very well to challenge pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. This was the case during a geography lesson where the teacher used questioning effectively to challenge and deepen children's understanding of physical and human geographical features of towns and cities in England. However, such good practice is not consistent across the school.
- The quality of marking at Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils are given detailed information on how to improve their work and further challenges are set for the most-able pupils to stretch them further. This high-quality marking is evident in some classes at Key Stage 2, but not all.
- Homework is a popular activity enjoyed by most pupils and includes reading, spelling and topic-related work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils told inspectors that they are happy at school and are keen to learn. They feel safe, get on well with each other and have built up warm and trusting relationships with all adults who work in the school.
- The school ensures that pupils are taught about the different forms of bullying, including e-safety. Pupils are adamant that any instances of bullying at Castle Hill Primary School are rare. They are, however, confident that if it did occur staff would ensure that it would be stopped.
- Children are taught to manage risks and keep themselves safe. For example, they are made aware of the potential dangers of talking to strangers. During the inspection, pupils took part in a fire drill, vacating the school building in an orderly manner.
- Pupils take on a range of responsibilities which they clearly enjoy as members of the school council, library attendants and prefects.
- The importance of attending school and arriving punctually are given a high profile within the school. Attendance has improved since the last inspection. There are clearly defined procedures in place which are stringently followed to support pupils and families where attendance is an issue. As a result, the number of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced since the last inspection.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils went out of their way to make the inspectors welcome at their school. They confidently approached them and were keen to talk about aspects of school life. Pupils look smart in their school uniform and walk around the school in a sensible manner.
- There is a consistent approach to behaviour management throughout the school. Overall, behaviour in the playground, dining room and in the classroom is good. However, on occasions, when lessons are less well organised, low-level disruption may occur.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- There were a number of factors which added to the complexity of this inspection. A significant number of pupils enter the school part way through the year and into different year groups. Furthermore, the school has pupils on roll with cognitive and learning disabilities. Consequently, inspectors took greater account of the school's own information on pupils' outcomes than published data.
- Children come into early years with skills and knowledge that are significantly below those typical for their age. They face major challenges in their communication and language skills, and personal, social, emotional and physical development. In addition, for many children, this is the first time they have attended an educational setting. Children make good progress and achieve well in relation to their very low starting points. The number of children achieving a good level of development is increasing year on year. As a result, a greater proportion of children are now better prepared for their transition into Year 1.
- During their time at Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in all year groups and across different subjects. The results of the phonics screening check in 2015 show that the number of pupils meeting the expected standard is rising, equipping children with the skills to sound out unknown words. This is having a positive impact on their reading and writing skills.
- Pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well as they move through Key Stage 2. Published data show that the number of pupils making expected and more than expected progress is in line with the national average for reading and mathematics and above in writing.
- The achievement of the most-able pupils is good in relation to their starting points. This is because they are set challenging work which allows them to make good progress. Published data show that the standards in writing for the most able were above the national average in 2015.
- The school tracks closely the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. As a result of timely interventions and close working relationships with outside agencies, this group of pupils make good progress and achieve well, taking into consideration the complexity of their individual needs.
- The number of non-disadvantaged pupils is low, making a statistical comparison unreliable. However, the school's own information on pupils' outcomes shows that the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally is closing rapidly at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Outcomes for pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and for those who come into school part way through the year and in different year groups are also good. They make good progress from their different starting points.

Early years provision

is good

- Leadership of early years is good. The early years leader has an accurate overview of the strengths and areas that need to be developed within the provision. Effective action is being taken to address areas of concern highlighted by published data, such as children's progress and attainment in reading and writing.
- Staff have a clear understanding of children's individual needs, and assessments are accurate. Personalised targets for each child ensure that provision is tailored to meet their individual needs. This results in all groups of children, including disadvantaged children, disabled children and those with special education needs, making good progress from their individual starting points.
- Children share warm relationships with staff and new children settle quickly. They are safe, well supervised and cared for in a secure environment. There are no breaches of the statutory welfare requirements.
- Teaching is good. Many children come into early years with speech and language difficulties. As a result of this, staff take great care to model the use of language correctly to enrich children's vocabulary and

develop their communication skills. Children's phonics skills are also well promoted. During the inspection, children were observed writing words in the sand tray, using pictures as prompts, while others were playing a lotto game and sounding out unfamiliar words

- The school is effective in supporting children who have emotional, social or behavioural issues. The school works closely with outside agencies to ensure these needs are met.
- Behaviour is good and children share and take turns as they play. For example, children re-enacted the story of *Little Red Riding Hood* and listened attentively while other children were speaking.
- Positive relationships have been established with parents, helping to promote security and consistency in children's lives. Parents contribute to children's assessments and attend 'Stay and play' which ensures that they take an active part in the children's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	105150
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10002276

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Shepherd
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Mrs Sarah Curley
Telephone number	01204 332766
Website	www.castle-hill.bolton.sch.uk
Email address	curleys@castle-hill.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 October 2013

Information about this school

- This school is an averaged-sized primary school and most of the pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils at the school is well above the national average. The term disadvantaged pupils is used to describe those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority. These pupils receive additional support from pupil premium funding.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is significantly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of educational needs or an EHC (Education, Health and Care plan) is above the national average.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average.
- Academic standards at the school meet the government's current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school offers full-time early years provision in the Reception class. Children attend the Nursery class on a part-time basis, either mornings or afternoons.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- Since the last inspection, a new Chair of Governors and deputy headteacher have been appointed. The new deputy headteacher took up his post in September 2015.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across a range of subjects in each class of the school. The headteacher took part in two joint observations with an inspector.
- They also visited the breakfast club run by the school.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of pupils, listened to them read and looked at samples of their work. An inspector also met with a group of pupils to see how they felt about the school.
- Observations were made of pupils' behaviour at the beginning of the day, at lunchtimes, breaktimes and when they were moving around the school. Pupils' behaviour was also observed in the classroom.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, the school's information on pupils' outcomes and reports on the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They also took account of two responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the school's own parent questionnaire.
- Inspectors also spoke to teachers and teaching assistants to get their views on the school and took account of 10 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire for school staff.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Pippa Jackson-Maitland

Her Majesty's Inspector

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