

Whalley Church of England Primary School

Church Lane, Whalley, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 9SY

Inspection dates

9–10 November 2016

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

- Leaders know the school well. They have brought about rapid improvements since the last inspection. Leaders of English and mathematics have a good understanding of the needs of the pupils and tackle with urgency any issues that might arise.
- Governors are ambitious for the school and are committed to continued improvement. They have used their wide range of relevant skills to tackle previous weaknesses in leadership and teaching. They have the pupils' interests at the heart of all they do.
- The curriculum is well planned. In a wide range of subjects, pupils receive appropriate challenges matched to their age and ability.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress from their starting points and as a result are prepared well for the demands of Year 1.
- Pupils in the school achieve well, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. They make good progress across a range of subjects because of the good-quality teaching they receive.
- Adults know the pupils well and this is reflected in the positive relationships seen. As a result, pupils thrive in a safe environment.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use to develop pupils' learning. They make good use of ongoing assessment to adapt lessons and take account of what pupils know and can already do.
- The most able pupils deepen their understanding of writing because of the opportunities they receive. However, the most able pupils are not always challenged in mathematics.
- Attendance is consistently above average and is continuing to improve.
- Behaviour is good around school and at playtimes. Children are safe and say they feel safe.
- The majority of parents are very supportive of the school.
- While pupils' use of spelling, punctuation and grammar in English lessons is generally accurate, this is not the case when writing in other subjects.
- Leaders of some subjects other than English and mathematics do not yet have a clear view of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve outcomes for pupils, by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are challenged consistently in mathematics
 - ensuring that pupils apply their skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation when writing in subjects other than English.
- Improve the ability of leaders in subjects other than English and mathematics to more keenly focus on strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility by developing their use of assessment to evaluate pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have a clear and accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development because of the clear monitoring and evaluation they undertake. As a result, weaknesses identified in 2014 have been tackled successfully.
- The headteacher shows determination and commitment to improving the outcomes for pupils, not just academically but as future citizens. He has worked effectively with a relatively inexperienced but skilled senior leadership team to make improvements. On appointment, he quickly identified the barriers to improvement and took some difficult decisions in the interests of the school and its pupils, who he knows well. While recognising that the school is 'on a journey', he is clear about what the school is doing well and is building on this. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and standards have risen.
- The leadership of English, mathematics and the early years are strong. English and mathematics leaders have a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further and this is feeding through into the urgency with which issues are tackled.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics are relatively new to their roles. Under the direction of the curriculum leader, they have been given the skills and confidence to develop their roles. As a result, systems are in place to track pupils' progress and monitor the effectiveness of teaching across a wide range of subjects. However, these systems and leaders' use of them are at an early stage, meaning that the impact on pupils' achievement is yet to be seen.
- Due to careful, targeted use of the funding which the school receives for disadvantaged pupils, the low numbers of disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their starting points. The difference between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally is diminishing.
- The good use that leaders make of the sport premium has increased participation in sport. There is a wide range of additional sporting activities which children participate in after school.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) knows pupils well. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and make good progress from their starting points. The learning mentor works closely with the SENCo to support pupils with social and emotional needs. The pupils say that they value the work of the learning mentor.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and equips pupils well for the next stages in their education.

Governance of the school

- Governance is a strength of this school.
- Governors have worked constructively with the leadership team since the last inspection. They responded well to the review of governance. They have a clear

overview of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Much of the school's improvement has come about because the governors have tackled previous weaknesses in leadership and teaching.

- The governors receive detailed and accurate reports from the headteacher. This, along with the fact that governors know the school well through their first-hand knowledge, enables them to appropriately challenge leaders at all levels. Recent appointments to the governing body have further widened the range of relevant skills. Governors believe that, 'every child here deserves the best' and therefore decisions taken are for the benefit of the pupils.
- The governing body ensures that the school's performance management policy is applied effectively.
- Owing to amendments made during the inspection, the website meets statutory requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The governing body ensures that the school meets all its statutory requirements for safeguarding. This includes the robust checking of the suitability of adults to work with children.
- All staff are vigilant and well trained and leaders ensure that staff keep their knowledge up to date, including how to prevent pupils from radicalisation and extremism.
- The procedures around safeguarding are having a positive impact. Staff know to report, and act on, any concern without fear or favour. Leaders record and manage any concerns, which are tracked through to a satisfactory conclusion. The headteacher demonstrates a high level of professionalism and a passion to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers know the pupils well and this is reflected in the positive relationships seen. Teachers and teaching assistants work in partnership to support pupils' learning. Adults use their good subject knowledge to ask skilful questions which enable pupils to develop their own thinking. The pupils value this with one pupil telling me, 'When you don't know what to do, they don't tell you the answer, they give you clues.' Ongoing assessment within lessons enables teachers to adapt lessons to take account of what pupils know and can already do. Consequently, pupils are supported well in their learning.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics has improved greatly due to the focus which leaders have placed on this. The appointment of a mathematics expert has enabled pupils to develop their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills. Where teaching is most effective pupils are given additional challenge to deepen their understanding. In Year 5 and Year 6, for example, pupils are given opportunities to explain thinking, consolidate what they know works and then are challenged further. In Year 6, the most able pupils say they like this and feel they are making good progress.

However, this level of challenge in mathematics for the most able pupils is not fully developed in all classes.

- The curriculum is well planned and matched to the needs of the pupils. The curriculum is brought to life for pupils in an imaginative and stimulating way. For example, pupils have worked to produce three-dimensional imaginative artwork on their ideas of a fantasy land.
- The marking policy is applied consistently across the school. However, pupils do not always act on the marking in subsequent work as the school's policy requires. This is something that leaders are aware of and is being addressed.
- The systematic teaching of writing skills and the high-quality modelling of their application ensures that pupils achieve well in writing. Teachers plan writing lessons which give pupils a purpose to write. As a result, even the most reluctant writers are enthusiastic about their work. For example, in a key stage 2 class, pupils were writing a short book which they were eager to see published and share with younger children.
- In English, pupils write for a range of different purposes. Teachers structure the writing lessons well and as a result, pupils from a range of starting points make good progress. The most able pupils use imaginative vocabulary and structure their writing well. For example, in Year 5, one pupil wrote, 'Slowly emerging out of the entrancing mist, a glorious rainforest concealed a secret waterfall which appeared to have never been seen before.'
- Pupils use their knowledge of spelling, grammar and punctuation in their English lessons; however, these skills are not always applied in other subject areas.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils take pride in their work, school and behaviour. Pupils are articulate and confident as a result of the opportunities they are given to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas. Pupils say that teachers make learning enjoyable and that they enjoy being challenged in their work.
- Attendance is above the national average and improving because leaders continually strive to improve attendance. Attendance of all pupils is tracked and monitored. Leaders follow up absences robustly with a first day call and subsequent checks.
- Spiritual development is strong. Pupils refer to spirituality as being 'about your emotions and who you are inside' and can talk about this in their class scrapbooks.
- There is an active school council where pupils say their views are listened to. Through the school council, pupils raise money for several charities. Older pupils value the opportunities they are given to take on additional responsibilities, such as librarians and playground leaders. These responsibilities have a positive impact on pupils in the wider school including the youngest pupils who say that they find having play leaders helpful.
- Pupils develop an effective understanding of fundamental British values. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain, particularly due to the work done in Year 6, where

pupils discuss role models, democracy and the rule of law.

- Pupils are developing an understanding of their own and other communities through opportunities to work beyond the school. The 'three fishes' award in Year 6 recognises pupils' contributions at home, school and in their wider community. The school has also set up links with a school project in Tanzania, and Reception children have reciprocal visits with their 'friends' school in Blackburn.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in and out of school because of the guidance they receive. They understand how to stay safe online and the school actively supports parents to continue this at home.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The new behaviour policy, linked to the 'Whalley way' of caring, speaking and listening, moving and learning is having a positive impact, particularly at break and lunchtimes. Pupils say they feel safe and that they are treated fairly by teachers and other adults who make sure everyone is behaving and respond quickly when they are not. This view is shared by the majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire or spoke with inspectors. One parent said that pupils are 'buzzing' about the new behaviour policy.
- Pupils say they feel safe. This is because they know who to go to if they are worried and any instances of poor or silly behaviour are dealt with quickly. They say that bullying happens rarely and name-calling is swiftly dealt with.
- Generally, attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are attentive and focus on their work. However, on a few occasions a small number of pupils disengage from their learning because routines are sometimes not constantly reinforced.
- In classes and around school, pupils are polite and respectful to each other and to adults. 'Please' and 'thank you' are a constant part of pupils' interactions.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection.
- In the 2016 key stage 2 statutory assessment tests, middle-ability pupils achieved significantly better than other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics. A higher proportion of pupils than the national average exceeded expectations to reach the higher standards in reading and mathematics.
- In mathematics, pupils from a range of starting points, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieved well.
- Nearly all pupils reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. This is well above the national average.
- Current pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are making good progress across a range of subjects from their different starting points.
- Current pupils, including lower-ability pupils, are given the skills needed to read

effectively. They confidently talk about their favourite authors and types of books and can use the text to talk about characters and events. They enjoy reading. Pupils are encouraged to read widely both in school and at home. The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are given the opportunity to read a wide variety of challenging books both in school and when reading for pleasure. There is a systematic and consistent approach to the teaching of reading and, as a result, pupils make good progress.

- Pupils who did not meet the expected standards at the end of key stage 1 are receiving additional support. Consequently, they are making rapid progress towards meeting these standards.
- The most able pupils in writing and reading are working at greater depth. Middle-ability pupils in reading, writing and mathematics are working at expected standards for their age. Where pupils are working below expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, progress is good due to careful structuring of learning and high expectations from teachers.
- Pupils' use of spelling, punctuation and grammar in their writing is less well developed and, as a result of this, writing in subject areas other than English is not always of the same standard as it is in English.
- In mathematics, a focus on basic calculations ensures that all pupils make good progress in this area. Lower-ability pupils are given additional opportunities to consolidate their learning and as a result are making rapid progress. Due to high expectations and good-quality teaching in mathematics, pupils from all starting points achieve well and a high percentage is working at higher levels. Outcomes for the most able pupils are not as strong where the pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

Early years provision

Good

- Children in the early years get a good start to their education. They settle quickly due to the care and attention which individual children receive. Staff know the children well and parents are very supportive, saying that staff are approachable. One parent talked about how quickly their child had settled and said that he had now 'found his groove'.
- Leaders have ensured that the Reception children in the mixed-age class have full access to the early years foundation stage curriculum through careful class organisation and curriculum design.
- Children's attainment on entry is broadly typical. Children, including the most able, make good progress and, as a result, they enter Year 1 with attainment which is above the expected level.
- Leaders have an accurate picture of strengths and areas for development within the provision. They have worked to develop the use of the outdoor space to ensure that it is easily accessible.
- Teachers plan activities to engage boys in their learning. As a result of this careful planning, the difference in attainment between boys and girls is diminishing.
- Children are safe and well cared for in a stimulating environment. There is a wide variety of activities which are planned around children's developing interests. However,

children are not always encouraged to access all areas of provision to ensure that learning needs are met.

- Statutory welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	119429
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10019811

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Borland
Headteacher	Richard Blackburn
Telephone number	01254 823348
Website	www.whalleyceprimary.co.uk
Email address	head@whalley.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is low compared with the national average
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school provides full-time early years provision in a Reception class and a mixed-aged class of Reception children and Year 1 pupils.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- There has been a change of headteacher since the last inspection. The current headteacher, who was acting headteacher at the time of the last inspection, took up the permanent post in April 2015.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons. Some of these lessons were carried out jointly with the headteacher. They looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils reading and talked with pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- The inspectors spoke with parents and staff and took account of the 71 responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Tanya Hughes, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Saeeda Ishaq	Ofsted Inspector
John Shutt	Ofsted Inspector

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