

St Joseph's RC Primary School, Todmorden

Wellington Road, Todmorden, Lancashire OL14 5HP

Inspection dates

5–6 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Across key stage 1 and 2 the progress of all groups of pupils in mathematics, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is weak.
- The standard pupils reach in mathematics is too low. This means they are not properly prepared for their next stage of learning in mathematics.
- Standards in reading are not good enough, and pupils' progress requires improvement.
- Teaching in mathematics is inadequate. This is because work lacks challenge, which slows progress and inhibits pupils' ability to reach the appropriate standards. The teaching of reading is more effective but not good.
- Pupils have poor attitudes to learning in mathematics. They often do not complete work that has been set, or use teachers' feedback to correct or improve this work. This can go unchallenged by staff.
- The attendance of pupils has declined since the last inspection and remains below average.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching lacks rigour and poor teaching has been allowed to persist, meaning pupils have not achieved in mathematics and do not make good progress in reading.
- Leaders have not developed a precise assessment system which accurately identifies underachievement so leaders and teachers cannot respond to pupils' individual needs.
- Governors are not fully aware of the poor progress and teaching in mathematics, due to poor use of assessment systems. This means they are in no position to challenge leaders.
- External leadership from the local authority and the diocese has not responded to the urgent needs of the school and has not provided adequate support to help leaders in school bring about improvement.
- Provision in the early years requires further improvement as children do not make rapid progress in their reading, writing and mathematics skills.

The school has the following strengths

- The progress of pupils in writing is good, meaning they reach high standards in this area. Teaching of writing meets pupils' needs well; pupils are highly engaged in this learning.
- Leaders have implemented a new writing system and provided strong training for teachers, who plan engaging and challenging activities.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - ensuring that the assessment system is well understood by all staff and governors and that pupils' progress and attainment in all subjects, especially mathematics, is measured accurately
 - using the improved information to promptly identify underachievement
 - making sure that teachers make full use of the improved information to plan and deliver activities that fully meet pupils' needs
 - ensuring that there are far more rigorous and regular checks on the quality and impact of teaching so that bespoke training can be put in place to improve the teaching of mathematics and reading
 - developing the curriculum so that it offers pupils regular opportunities to practise and reinforce key mathematical skills so that pupils can see the way in which mathematics applies to all aspects of life
 - evaluating the effectiveness of the different areas of the provision and planning for improvement in a way that provides leaders, governors and staff with the key priorities so that everyone knows what needs to be improved quickly and can identify where the school is improving and where further improvement is needed.
- Urgently improve the quality of teaching across the school in mathematics and in reading, so as to rapidly improve the outcomes for all groups of pupils, and especially those of the disadvantaged pupils, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should be able to do
 - providing work that challenges all abilities of pupils so that they are more able to make rapid progress
 - insisting that pupils correct inaccurate work and respond to feedback provided by teachers so that pupils can make immediate improvements and overcome apparent misunderstandings
 - quickly improving the quality of checks that teachers make on pupils' understanding, so that they can plan activities which match pupils' needs closely, and help pupils to overcome misconceptions in a timely way
 - ensuring that feedback provided is relevant to the individual pupils' needs and easily understood by pupils so that they can respond appropriately and with increasing independence.
- Improve the behaviour, personal development and welfare of pupils, as well as attitudes to learning by:

- challenging pupils when they do not complete tasks or present work poorly, so that pupils understand there are high expectations of them and of their application to their work in all lessons, including mathematics
 - enhancing pupils' interest in learning by providing activities which are challenging and absorbing
 - working effectively with parents and pupils to improve the attendance of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.
 - An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have not done enough to develop successful teaching, especially in mathematics and reading. As a result, pupils' progress in mathematics is weak and the standards they reach in this subject are too low. Additionally, pupils' progress and standards in reading require further improvement.
- Teaching is not rigorously and regularly checked, which means teachers are given an overgenerous view of their practice. It also means that where teaching is not good enough, there has not been appropriate training and support given to improve classroom practice rapidly.
- The assessment system in place is not used well in school and the information it provides about pupils' achievements is inaccurate. This means pupils' failings in mathematics have not been understood and therefore not addressed. Furthermore, teachers have not had accurate information which they need to inform their planning. This has contributed to the weak outcomes in mathematics and to reading outcomes requiring further improvement.
- Overall, the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils are inadequate because leaders do not communicate high enough expectations to staff and pupils. This has meant that teachers do not push pupils to do their best in mathematics. Pupils do not make enough effort to correct and improve their work or to present their work carefully and neatly. These negative attitudes mean pupils are not well prepared for their mathematical learning as they move up the school or on to secondary school.
- The school does not provide equality of provision for pupils. This is seen in the gaps in progress and attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other groups of pupils in school. It is also seen in the inequality in provision between mathematics, where progress is weak, and writing, where outcomes are much stronger. This is because the expectations of pupils in mathematics are not high enough.
- The challenge of activities set for the most able pupils in mathematics is weak. The support for low-ability pupils in mathematics is not precise enough to ensure that these pupils can access learning successfully.
- The pupil premium funding has not been used well. Like all groups, disadvantaged pupils make weak progress in mathematics in key stages 1 and 2. They do not make good progress in reading, and too often they do not reach the required standard in these areas. In writing, the impact of the funding through various activities and support programmes has had a much stronger impact and this is a strength in the school.
- The leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is ineffective. These pupils make poor progress in mathematics. They also do not make good progress in reading. This is because leaders have not identified each pupil's specific needs and, therefore, used the funding in an appropriate way, to overcome their difficulties.
- The school has positive relationships with parents and has tried to use these to improve attendance. However, this approach has not yet been fully effective and attendance remains low. Nevertheless, parents feel well informed by the school and report that their children are safe, happy and well cared for by adults.

- The curriculum does not fully meet the needs of the pupils. Mathematics in the curriculum does not meet pupils' needs and this is partly because these key skills are not regularly reinforced throughout the curriculum. The curriculum is not planned to challenge pupils so that they can reach the highest standards. This slows pupils' progress in lessons.
- In the broader curriculum, pupils have regular opportunities to learn about and practise British values effectively, such as democracy, tolerance, respect and the rule of law. For example, pupils have elections to choose school counsellors in their class, who then take the views of their peers to discuss with school leaders.
- The provision to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fully secure. Pupils learn about their own faith and about other faiths. Similarly, they also take part in events and trips which enhance their understanding of other cultures and lifestyles, which means that they are respectful and knowledgeable about these. However, at times their behaviour in class and at social times does not demonstrate that they are always respectful of one another or of adults. Their conduct requires improvement.
- The additional physical education and sports funding for primary schools is used to good effect. Pupils enjoy sport and report that they have a lot of opportunities to do different sports and also to compete at a local level.
- Phonics is an area of the school which is well led. Adults are well trained and the systems for intervention are good. An average proportion of Year 1 pupils reach the required standard and this positive start is being used well to enhance pupils' writing skills, which is another area of strength in the leadership of the school.
- The school works with local authority and diocesan leaders. These leaders have been too slow to respond to what they have identified as an urgent concern around leadership in the school. External support has been delayed and reports to the school have been overly positive and have lacked clear direction to support improvement. This has led to the school's leadership, as well as the teaching, continuing to be weak in key areas and this has had a negative impact on pupils' outcomes.

The governance of the school

- Governors are not well informed. The provision of inaccurate data has also led to governors being misinformed about the needs in the school and they have not been able to challenge leaders effectively. External support has also not helped them to improve their understanding. This means they have failed to challenge and hold leaders to account about the school's failings.
- Governors have not sufficiently ensured that pupil premium funding is well used because of inaccuracies in the information they receive.
- Governors understand the links between pay progression and pupils' outcomes and, due to the recent outcomes in summer 2016, they are now much more capable of making an accurate assessment of the impact of teaching and leadership on the outcomes of pupils. However, this has not been apparent before now.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school maintains up-to-date policies which protect pupils and which are adhered to. The school also works closely with families and outside agencies to support pupils. Governors and staff are trained regularly to ensure they are fully aware of how to raise concerns and how to ensure that pupils are safe in the school.
- Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- There are key weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; specifically, the teaching of mathematics for all pupils and the teaching of reading and mathematics for disadvantaged pupils. This means that all groups of pupils make poor progress in mathematics and that disadvantaged pupils also make too little progress in reading.
- In mathematics lessons, teachers do not check what pupils understand in order to see where learning is, or is not, secure. The lack of checking also means that pupils' misconceptions are not identified and addressed. Consequently, pupils can labour under misconceptions over extended periods of time and this inhibits their mathematical development considerably.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils, specifically disadvantaged pupils in reading and all groups of pupils in mathematics. In mathematics, the work set lacks challenge for pupils of different abilities. This is because of the lack of close checking and the inaccurate assessment information provided for these pupils. In turn, this means it is difficult for teachers to plan activities which meet pupils' needs well.
- Teachers sometimes offer pupils advice as to how to improve in mathematics. Often, this advice is not used by pupils and where teachers ask pupils to make corrections, they also do not always respond, which slows their learning and development in mathematics.
- Activities planned for the most able pupils are not challenging enough in mathematics. Even when activities are changed for different ability groups in classes, this work is not necessarily more challenging for the most able pupils. Pupils often work on work that is below or well below their capabilities. This is not the case in writing, where the most able pupils do well.
- The teaching of phonics is strong. Pupils work in small groups with well-trained staff who successfully implement the system to ensure phonics knowledge is quickly understood. This has led to consistently strong phonic skills for pupils at the end of Year 1 and 2.
- The quality of support given by teaching assistants varies. In phonics it is strong. It is also better in writing activities, where the training given to staff has also been thorough and effective. However, in mathematics and to an extent in reading, teaching assistants do not provide adequate guidance to support pupils' learning.
- The teaching of writing is strong and has improved significantly over the past academic year. Teachers carefully check pupils' work in this area and use these checks to plan activities which enhance pupils' understanding and improve their standard of writing.
- In writing, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and of how hard they are expected to work. This is seen in the advice teachers offer pupils in their books, which pupils use well and which has had a positive impact on their outcomes in writing, as well as in their positive attitudes to learning in writing lessons. However, in other areas, these high expectations are not consistently applied and pupils respond by having negative attitudes to learning, especially in mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils feel safe in the school and understand what it means to feel and be safe. They report that adults care for them and that the school is secure at all times. However, there are occasions where behaviour incidents such as fighting can take place. While pupils do not feel that this makes them unsafe, they feel uncomfortable about it.
- Parents agree that their children are safe; they have positive views about how the school provides for the welfare of their children and report they are happy in school.
- The school records behaviour and bullying incidents and leaders report any serious incidents to governors. However, the sanctions for pupils who have caused behaviour incidents are not always effective and this means some pupils can continue to behave negatively. The large majority of pupils are not involved in such incidents.
- Pupils know what constitutes bullying and the difference between being bullied and falling out with a friend. They believe bullying is very rare, and records would also demonstrate this. Procedures are followed and incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively, meaning there are no repeated incidents of bullying.
- A large proportion of pupils choose to have a school dinner because they say that the food is tasty and healthy. Pupils also enjoy lunchtimes because they are friendly with teachers, including the headteacher. They like spending time with them to have a chat.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. At social times, pupils can conduct themselves well although reported incidents of fighting mean this is not consistently true.
- In lessons, pupils do not always follow instructions and this is seen most clearly in mathematics. It is seen in pupils' books as well, where work is poorly presented, there is too much incomplete work and pupils do not do as they are asked in terms of correcting or improving their work. These poor attitudes have a negative impact on the progress pupils make in mathematics.
- Teachers do not challenge poor attitudes to learning in mathematics. They do not plan activities which challenge and motivate pupils in these lessons, which leads to some low-level disruption and to some pupils who are disengaged in their learning, rather than enthusiastic and well involved. This is not an issue in writing, where attitudes are far more positive and support much better outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils' attendance is below average and is not improving over time. This is the case for different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 do not make enough progress from their starting points in mathematics. This is reflected in low standards in mathematics. Similarly, disadvantaged pupils make too little progress in reading.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics check are positive but the strength in this area is not harnessed as pupils continue to develop their reading skills in later year groups, so

pupils do not achieve in reading as well as they should.

- Teachers are unclear about pupils' outcomes or abilities in mathematics and reading because the assessment information is inaccurate. They also do not make regular enough checks on pupils' understanding to support rapid improvements.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make enough progress in reading and make poor progress in mathematics.
- For all groups of pupils, writing outcomes are strong. This represents a significant improvement in the last academic year and has impacted on disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as much as on any other group of pupils.
- When disadvantaged pupils leave key stage 1 or key stage 2 they are ill-prepared for their next stage of learning because over time their progress in mathematics and reading has been weak. This means the funding the school receives for these pupils is not spent well. In writing, where funding is well spent, disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- The most able pupils make too little progress in mathematics. Their progress in reading, although better than in mathematics, is not good. The progress of the most able disadvantaged pupils in reading is poor. This is due to a lack of challenge in the work provided because teachers have too low expectations of what they can do. However, the most able pupils' progress in writing is very strong and teaching meets their needs well.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Most, but not all, children start school with the skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. A higher than average proportion of children have moved into key stage 1 with a good level of development in recent years. However, this proportion is declining and the progress children are currently making in the early years requires some improvement.
- The teaching in the early years is variable in quality. Some of the adults are not responding quickly enough to children's needs. For example, some children arrive with underdeveloped language and communication skills. It is clear that some of the teaching and activities meet the needs of these children well. However, there are also missed opportunities to ensure that speech is consistently a focus point and that children regularly get the chance to talk.
- The provision is improving and there are more opportunities available that are designed to develop children's reading, writing and mathematical skills. However, again there are missed opportunities to ensure that children regularly reinforce these skills and also talk through what they are doing so that teachers and other adults can check their understanding. This means children are not making rapid progress.
- Children enjoy the activities that are provided within the indoor and outdoor setting. However, there are times when children are not fully involved with learning and they do not always behave well. This is because routines are not well established and during the times when children are choosing activities for themselves some adults do not check regularly what children are doing. This means some children are not fully involved in activities and this slows their progress.

- Children trust the adults and they report that they feel safe. The environment is safe and where there are opportunities to develop their gross motor and other physical skills, such as on the climbing frame, children are well supervised. This in turn means children are willing to take calculated risks, because they feel safe, and this supports their physical development well.
- Parents are pleased with the provision and report that they feel they are well listened to and have a close relationship with the school staff, which they appreciate. They believe their children are happy and safe and have settled well into school life.
- The school's leaders, including the new leader in the early years, know that the early years provision is not as effective as it could be. They know the outdoor area could be used more effectively to provide greater opportunities for children to develop their speech, reading, writing and mathematical skills. Leaders are taking action to improve matters.
- Leaders also recognise that the teaching and support from some adults is not consistently strong, although more bespoke training is now in place. The recognition of areas of development and the accurate identification of the strengths suggest that there is the capacity for further improvement.
- The assessment of children's progress in the early years has lacked rigour. This has meant that the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has declined since the last inspection and is broadly average. However, this is understood by leaders and managers and the new system being implemented demonstrates better accuracy and regularity around the assessment of children. While the impact of this has not been fully embedded, it again demonstrates the leadership's drive for improvement.

School details

Unique reference number	107560
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10019720

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	125
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Jim Livesey
Headteacher	Maria Cooper
Telephone number	01706 812 948
Website	http://www.st-josephs-tod.org.uk
Email address	head@st-josephs-tod.calderdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 September 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is much smaller than the average primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils is disadvantaged. These pupils are supported through the pupil premium funding, which is additional government funding provided to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- Children enter the school in Nursery on a part-time basis and move into Reception on a full-time basis.
- The school is organised in mixed-year classes.

- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in a range of lessons.
- The inspector observed and spoke with pupils during lessons, at breaktime and at lunchtime. She also met formally with groups of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6.
- The inspector heard pupils read from Year 2 and Year 6.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders. Meetings also took place with members of the governing body, representatives from the local authority and a representative from the Salford Catholic Diocese.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at pupils' work and a range of documents, including the school's arrangements for safeguarding, performance management procedures, and pupils' attendance data. Inspectors also looked at information about pupils' progress and attainment.
- The inspector considered 13 parental responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). She also spoke with parents as they brought their children to school during the inspection.

Inspection team

Fiona McNally, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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