

St Barnabas and St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Oakenhurst Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 1SN

Inspection dates

8–9 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The school is very effectively led and managed by the headteacher, senior leaders, governors and a team of staff who lead their specific areas of responsibility extremely well.
- The school has a clear and strong vision, defined by its Christian ethos and commitment to serve the needs of its pupils and families. As a result, all pupils have equal opportunities to excel.
- There are excellent relationships between staff, parents and pupils. These positive relationships give pupils the confidence they need to do their best and to keep trying when their work is challenging.
- The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection and is outstanding. Teachers and other staff value the training and support which is provided.
- Teachers work very well with support staff to plan learning carefully. They plan imaginative and creative lessons which engage pupils.
- The curriculum provides rich opportunities for pupils' learning. Reading, writing and mathematics are incorporated seamlessly across different subjects of the curriculum.
- Pupils in all year groups make substantial and sustained progress. The majority of pupils start school with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. They leave Year 6 with outcomes that are above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who are disadvantaged is of very good quality. As a result, these pupils make consistently very good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of high quality. Within this richly diverse community, pupils respect and learn from each other.
- Pupils' personal development is outstanding; they are safe and their behaviour is impeccable.
- The early years provision is led well and children have a good start to their education. Leaders are successfully building a new team of staff and the early years provision is rapidly improving to match the outstanding provision elsewhere in the school. However, the impact of this new team is not yet fully established and boys do not make the same very good rates of progress as girls.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the work already begun to strengthen the early years staff team to further improve the early years provision by:
 - increasing the rate of progress of boys so that it matches that of girls
 - developing further opportunities for parents to contribute to their child's learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leadership and management at all levels are exceptionally strong. The headteacher is a dynamic leader who works hard to ensure that pupils are at the centre of everything the school does. As she said: 'Everything is for the children. They only get one chance at this.' The headteacher and governors have made strategic and sometimes difficult decisions since the previous inspection in order to successfully improve teaching.
- Senior leaders share the headteacher's passion for every child to succeed. The special educational needs coordinator and middle leaders are highly effective. There are clear and effective structures in place and leaders ensure that staff have the necessary time and skills to carry out their work effectively. As a result, subject leaders monitor the standards in their subjects rigorously and put actions in place which provide continuous improvements to teaching and learning. This contributes well to the strong rates of progress that pupils make across the curriculum.
- Leaders provide very good support for staff who are new to their roles, including newly qualified teachers and teaching assistants. The culture in the school enables all staff to excel. Adults value the professional development that they receive and appreciate the fact that leaders further develop and utilise staff strengths. Staff are well motivated and happy in their work.
- The school works with other local schools to share ideas and expertise and the local authority call on the school to offer support in the local area.
- Parents appreciate the work of the school. They greatly value the support given to the whole family and the high-quality communications that they receive from staff. Teachers take time to explain pupils' reports to parents so that parents can better help their children at home.
- The carefully planned, ambitious curriculum is a strength of the school. Teachers provide a wide range of experiences which enable pupils to immerse themselves in their learning. These experiences are further enhanced through innovative uses of technology, including regular access to a four-dimensional tent, where pupils can experience the sights, sounds and smells of their topic. For example, pupils in Year 4 developed their understanding of the wider world by 'visiting' an airport in the tent. They experienced the check-in area, the departure lounge, boarding the plane, taking off and the arrival of the plane in China. They used this experience to develop the language they would need in order to write about this. Such experiences are used as a springboard to writing, and outcomes in writing have improved as a result.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to visit the local area and to take part in cultural experiences. As a result, pupils have visited museums, galleries, farms and different places of worship. 'Wow' days, where the whole school takes part in cultural activities, further enhance these experiences.

Governance of the school

- Governance is highly effective. Governors are ambitious for the school. They have confidence in the leadership team to further drive improvements, particularly in the early years. Governors receive high-quality information from all leaders about the work of the school and in particular about pupils' achievements. They challenge leaders to ensure the best outcomes for pupils. Governors have undertaken training to further enhance their role.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for further improvement. They use their skills to challenge leaders to ensure the best outcomes for pupils.
- The additional support that disadvantaged pupils receive to help them to catch up with their peers is very effective. The adults who support these pupils have high expectations, excellent subject knowledge and a good understanding of the needs of these pupils. As a result, the pupil premium spending on this support is highly effective and disadvantaged pupils of all abilities make outstanding progress. Governors have a good understanding of the impact of this spending.
- Governors have ensured that the primary school sports funding has been used well. A specialist provider contributes to the very good progress seen in physical education and sports. Teachers use this expertise to further develop their own teaching.
- The additional funding the school receives for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used judiciously. Consequently, these pupils are supported very well and make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is central to the school's work. The school supports families extremely well and leaders work hard to successfully engage with the local community.
- Governors ensure that all robust policies and procedures are in place, including checks on teachers and governors. The designated safeguarding leads have a thorough knowledge of individual pupils and of their families. They work effectively with external agencies to ensure that potentially vulnerable pupils receive appropriate support or protection. The exceptional support the school provides is valued by parents, with one telling me that, 'They go that extra step to help the children.'
- Staff receive up-to-date training and are ever-vigilant. Leaders ensure that staff, pupils and parents receive ongoing education and support about safeguarding issues. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have received information about stereotyping, bullying, grooming, internet safety and radicalisation. Pupils say that they feel safe and are safe.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality. As a result, safeguarding is highly effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching is consistently very effective for all groups of pupils in key stages 1 and 2, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress. Adults work well together and this teamwork is seamless in lessons. Teaching is characterised by a sense of energy to which pupils respond well.
- There is a 'can do' culture in the school. All adults have high expectations and are aspirational for pupils. This is consistent across school for different groups of pupils and across all subjects. Teaching is clear and precise; adults ask skilful questions, which enable pupils to develop their own thinking. There is a strong emphasis on language and vocabulary, with younger pupils confidently using words such as 'succulent'. The pupils are taught about feeling challenged and persevering with tasks. This results in happy, confident learners.
- Pupils relish the opportunities given to them and want to learn. They confidently ask questions of adults when they are unsure of something. They use the feedback which teachers give to make improvements to their work.
- Teachers look for innovative and creative ways to deliver the exciting and rich curriculum. They understand the requirements and specialist knowledge of subjects well. Teachers use this knowledge to plan highly engaging lessons which contribute to pupils' outstanding progress. Little learning time is lost during lessons, including between sessions.
- Regular assessments ensure that the headteacher has a good understanding of pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects. Leaders have made sure these assessments are checked to ensure that they are in line with those of other schools. Staff use ongoing assessments to understand where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and then plan carefully to ensure that these gaps are filled.
- Teachers know their pupils well and plan lessons which build quickly on pupils' previous knowledge. Adults constantly check on what pupils know and understand during lessons and challenge mistakes before these become embedded. As a result, pupils learn quickly and mistakes are rarely repeated. Teachers consistently challenge pupils of all abilities to extend their thinking. For example, in Year 1 mathematics, the most able pupils were challenged to find new ways of sorting the shapes they had been given.
- Regular routines give opportunities for reinforcement of key learning. Pupils have opportunities to practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, the teacher worked with pupils to identify and correct grammatical errors in their report writing.
- Phonics teaching is highly effective, adults take every opportunity to reinforce pupils' understanding of phonics in all subjects.
- Lower-attaining pupils receive additional support of a high quality, which enables them to rapidly catch up with their peers. Independence is encouraged and promoted from the earliest stages.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured learners. They are proud of their achievements. They enjoy school and one said, 'We absolutely love being here.'
- Older pupils take on additional responsibilities, including being play leaders who support younger pupils at playtime. Pupils have opportunities to represent the school in sporting competitions. They particularly value the fact that they are all given this opportunity if they want it.
- Leaders have made adjustments to the end of the school day to enable all pupils to take part in an activity of their choice from the broad variety on offer. A range of visits is planned as part of the curriculum and whole-school events, such as a circus visit, bring the whole community together.
- Pupils are supported very well by adults and have high aspirations for their future lives. Adults show a high level of respect for pupils. They develop warm and positive relationships. As a result, pupils trust and respect the adults in school. Pupils feel that they can go to an adult if they are worried about anything and know help will be available. Pupils say adults support them well with their work but 'adults don't tell us the answer, they help us to work it out for ourselves'.
- Leaders are passionate about preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. British values are promoted very well and there is a 'British values citizen of the week award', which further enhances this. Pupils study a range of different faiths and cultures in Britain and the wider world. Pupils discuss each other's cultures and accept the differences as a matter of course.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe online, how to prevent bullying and about grooming and radicalisation. In computing, Year 6 pupils design applications using the skills taught in computing lessons. They are encouraged to work out whether it would be better to sell the application or give it free and take revenue from advertising. As a result of activities such as this, along with those that develop their ethical awareness, pupils are prepared extremely well for life in modern Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. There is almost no low-level disruption in lessons and pupils have a strong desire to learn. Behaviour, in and around school, is excellent and reflects the school's effective and consistent strategies.
- Pupils consistently demonstrate respect for each other and for adults in the school. They regularly help each other in lessons and they asked inspectors whether they were well and if they had travelled far.
- Pupils have a high level of respect for individual differences and recognise that not everyone wants to be treated in the same way. For example, when pupils want to play on their own, other pupils check on them and invite them to play, but respect this

decision. One pupil told inspectors, 'We look after each other and if someone is on their own, we see if they want to join in. But if they want to be on their own, we keep an eye on them to make sure they don't get lonely.'

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong. They talk about this and demonstrate it through their outstanding behaviour. Their very positive attitudes to learning lead to a focused, calm environment, which in turn impacts positively on their outcomes. When children speak, others listen.
- Bullying is rare but is dealt with well so that there are no re-occurrences.
- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection. Leaders constantly work to engage with families. A system of support and education is in place to try to show parents the value of education and how important it is that children attend regularly. Despite this, a small minority of parents take their children out of school for extended holidays.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Although children make good progress in the early years, many start Year 1 with skills and abilities still below those typical for their age. Due to the outstanding teaching they receive in key stages 1 and 2, pupils leave the school with attainment which is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, they are prepared exceptionally well for the next stages in their education.
- Pupils make substantial progress in key stage 1 to further build on the skills developed in the Reception classes. As a result, although attainment was slightly below that seen nationally at key stage 1 in 2016, pupils have the building blocks for further rapid progress in key stage 2. Current work in books shows that most pupils are working at the expected standards and that many are working beyond this.
- Pupils make rapid progress in key stage 2. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make better progress than other pupils nationally from the same starting points. Work seen in books shows that this rapid rate of progress is being maintained in all subject areas.
- Outcomes in science in 2016 do not reflect the high standards of current pupils' work. Pupils are working beyond the expected standards across the school.
- Pupils' attainment in phonics at the end of Year 1 continues to rise as a result of the consistent teaching and constant reinforcement in all lessons.
- Pupils make exceptional progress in mathematics. Outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 6 in mathematics are well above the national average. Pupils are given opportunities to think logically about what they are learning and to prove whether calculations are correct or not; they do so with confidence. A significant proportion of middle-ability pupils go on to reach the higher standards in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. This is as a result of a secure understanding of calculations and consistently rapid progress in mathematics across school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make much better progress than other pupils nationally from their starting points.

- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported very well. Pupils who are new to the school are assessed quickly and additional support is put in place. This enables these pupils to work alongside other pupils in all areas of the curriculum. As a result, these pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points.
- The boys who did not reach the expected standards at the end of the Reception Year receive additional help to develop their language skills in Year 1. The positive impact of this can be seen in their rapid progress with phonics and reading.
- Pupils use their growing knowledge effectively in their writing. They write at length across a wide range of subjects, and teachers help pupils to correct mistakes in their writing, no matter what the subject is. Consequently, pupils make substantial progress in writing from their different starting points. By the time they are in Year 6, the most able pupils are beginning to write with flair. One pupil wrote, 'His colossal wings lifted him up from the ground and he made his way to the scorching red hot sun. A ragged black shape sprawled across the sun...'
- Pupils of all ages and abilities, including disadvantaged pupils, read effectively. Many read at standards higher than those expected for their age. When they come across unfamiliar words, pupils use their secure knowledge of letter sounds to help them. They persevere when the text is challenging. Pupils choose to read a variety of books for pleasure, including plays and biographies.
- Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to explore and learn across the curriculum. They make consistently good progress in all the subjects they study.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start school with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. Many speak English as an additional language and are not proficient in either the language they use at home or English. Children make good progress in the Reception Year. There has been a significant improvement in the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year in the past three years. However, this proportion remains below the national average. There is a continued focus on this area of the school's work and leaders have made strategic changes to staffing in order to further improve outcomes in the early years.
- Children make strong progress in writing due to the many opportunities they are given to write. Early assessment is used to identify children who would benefit from extra support. This support is put in place swiftly and, as a result, these children make good progress. Outcomes at the end of the Reception Year are improving towards the national average. However, boys' progress lags behind that of girls and a lower proportion of boys are ready for the demands of Year 1.
- All statutory welfare requirements are met and clearly established routines contribute to the smooth running of the classrooms. All adults in the Reception classes have developed good relationships with the children and keep them safe. They know the children well and have high expectations of behaviour. As a result, behaviour is outstanding and children work together very well.
- The curriculum is carefully planned to develop general knowledge and language skills.

Adults use skilful questioning to develop children's language. For example, two children were planting potatoes and carrots in the soil and the adult used good questioning to enable the children to think about what might happen. Consequently, when the adult moved away, the children continued the discussion, with one exclaiming that 'My carrot will fall over if I don't give it more soil.'

- The environment, both indoors and outside, is stimulating. Adults provide exciting activities which capture the children's interests. Teachers plan with the interests of the children in mind. They provide opportunities to write and to explore numbers. However, leaders recognise that the outdoor area could be further developed to help children learn.
- Leaders strive to engage parents in their children's learning. Regular 'stay and play' sessions and homework activities contribute to this. However, opportunities for parents to share in their child's learning and development are not maximised.

School details

Unique reference number	119499
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10024245

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	337
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Prowse
Headteacher	Carla Martini
Telephone number	01254 698413
Website	www.stbarnabas-stpauls.co.uk
Email address	office@sbsp.blackburn.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 September 2011

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- St Barnabas and St Paul's is a larger-than-average size primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is much higher than that found nationally.
- There are high numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and a high proportion of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than that seen nationally.
- There have been some significant changes in staffing since the previous inspection,

including the establishment of a new senior leadership team.

- The chair of governors is a national leader of governance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors 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 leaders, teachers, 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 the school's management, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Inspectors considered seven parents' responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day and considered the school's own surveys of parents' views. They also took account of the responses of 26 members of staff and 37 pupils to questionnaires.

Inspection team

Tanya Hughes, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Pamela Potter	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Heather Mensah	Ofsted Inspector

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