

Inspection of Castle Hill Primary School

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

Inspection dates: 11–12 September 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Senior leaders greet everyone with a smile as they arrive in the school playground each morning which reflects this friendly and welcoming school. Everyone is treated with respect and staff teach pupils to value differences.

Pupils enjoy school. They feel safe and know that staff really care about them and sort out any of their worries. Pupils appreciate the wide range of extra help that they get in learning, behaviour or for mental well-being. For example, one pupil said, 'If you need a little bit of help with your emotions, mentoring is available. It really helps.'

Pupils know that their teachers want them to do well in their learning. Pupils told us they like whole class reading time. They enjoy the many trips and visits they make which bring their learning to life, for example a history visit to a Tudor museum. Some pupils said that work is sometimes too difficult, for example in reading.

Pupils behave very well. Poor behaviour, such as racism, is quickly dealt with by staff. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying. They said that bullying is rare but staff always sort it out.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher and his new leadership team know that pupils do not achieve well enough in all subjects. Detailed plans are now in place to improve pupils' education. The plans set out what knowledge and understanding leaders want pupils to build in each subject. The plans are recent, but they are starting to make a difference. For example, in history, teachers make sure that pupils understand the order of events from the past. In science, teachers plan what scientific vocabulary pupils need to know in each topic.

Leaders have spent a lot of time working with staff to develop their understanding of the new curriculum plans. However, less time has been spent on improving teachers' knowledge of subjects and how to teach them. This means that middle leaders are not experts in the subjects that they lead and cannot support other teachers in the best way to teach that subject.

The checks that teachers make on how well pupils are learning are not always accurate. This means that in some lessons, including history and science, teachers give pupils work that is too difficult. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders are working hard to improve the teaching of reading. The school has bought lots of attractive new books for pupils to enjoy. Teachers share stories with pupils every day. Pupils enjoy reading for pleasure. However, younger pupils sometimes fall

behind in their reading. This is because the books that teachers give pupils to practise their reading are sometimes too difficult. In lessons, teachers use different ways to teach pupils new sounds and this is sometimes confusing. This means that some pupils struggle to read fluently and do not understand what they are reading.

The teaching of mathematics is improving. Leaders have written detailed plans which show that pupils will learn things in the right order. Most teachers check that pupils understand mathematical words and use them correctly. Through daily practice, pupils get better at their written calculations.

In the early years, children settle very quickly into school life. This is because staff are kind and caring. Children play well together and follow instructions quickly and carefully. Nursery children learn to be independent, for example by putting on their coats and shoes by themselves. Leaders want children to achieve more highly by the end of Reception. They have improved the learning areas, for example by giving children lots of interesting activities to help them get better at mathematics. These changes are new but are beginning to make a difference.

In classes across the school, pupils behave well and try their best. They are keen to answer questions and to join in class discussions.

Staff give pupils lots of experiences to help them develop spiritually, socially and personally. For example, older pupils take part in an enterprise topic by designing, making and selling goods such as healthy drinks. Pupils become confident and learn to care for others through their roles as prefects and school councillors.

Enthusiastic and hardworking staff are determined to improve pupils' learning. Senior leaders support teachers to improve their teaching. At the same time, leaders make sure staff can manage their workload. Staff appreciate this help. They feel valued and are keen to develop their skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training so that they know how to check for signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They act swiftly when they have any concerns. The school's safeguarding team makes sure staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Leaders work closely with other agencies and professionals. This means that pupils and their families get the support that they need. Staff teach pupils about the risks that they might face in their everyday lives and online. Pupils know that they should speak to a trusted adult if they are worried or upset.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While the school is improving, it does not provide a good quality of education, including in the early years. The improvements that leaders have made to the planning of the curriculum have only recently been implemented in some subjects, including history and science. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding in some subjects are not yet secure. Leaders need to ensure that teachers teach the content of the curricular plans as agreed.
- The school's approach to professional development has not focused enough on developing teachers' skills and knowledge in subjects across the curriculum. The responsibility for subjects has, until recently, rested with senior leaders. This means that staff have not been able to draw on the expertise of subject specialists across all areas of the curriculum. Leaders need to make sure that the newly appointed subject leaders receive the right training to develop their curriculum expertise to enable them to support their colleagues.
- The programme for teaching phonics is not good enough. The inability to decode words quickly and successfully slows some pupils' learning across the curriculum. At present, there is not a consistent method for teaching phonics. In addition, teachers give pupils reading books which are sometimes too difficult for them to practise their decoding skills. Therefore, leaders need to ensure that an effective and consistent phonics programme is put in place that enables pupils to learn to read accurately and fluently.
- Assessment across the school, including in the early years and for pupils with SEND, is not used effectively to plan learning. The work that pupils receive is sometimes too difficult. Teachers need to use assessment information accurately so that they plan work for all pupils, including pupils with SEND, which builds on what they know and can do.
- Children in the early years attain below similar aged children nationally. Staff are keen to improve children's outcomes and are in the process of planning an improved curriculum to set children's work at the right level. Staff need to develop a secure understanding of the steps needed in children's learning to achieve these ambitious end points.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	105150
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10110963
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Shepherd
Headteacher	Andrew Renwick
Website	www.castle-hill.bolton.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	17–18 November 2015

Information about this school

- A new headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school has breakfast provision.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and the early years leader. An inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- History, mathematics, reading and science were considered as part of this inspection. For each of these subjects, inspection activities included discussions with leaders, visits to lessons, discussions with teachers, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils about their learning. In reading, an inspector also observed a member of staff listening to pupils read.
- We held meetings with three governors including the chair of the governing body, the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND and the school's attendance

and behaviour lead.

- We checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in school.
- We met with parents at the school gate to seek their views.
- During the inspection, we met with groups of pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, observed lunchtimes and playtimes and met with a group of teaching assistants.
- We examined a range of documents. These included the school's development plans and self-evaluation documents, minutes of the governing body meetings, safeguarding documentation and various records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Steve Kirkpatrick

Ofsted Inspector

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