

Padiham St Leonard's Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Moor Lane, Padiham, Burnley, Lancashire BB12 8HT

Inspection dates

20–21 June 2017

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	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils receive a good and improving education. Leaders have responded positively to the dip in standards last year and have driven far-reaching improvements that are helping pupils throughout the school to make faster progress.
- Leaders have established an inclusive ethos based upon respect, tolerance and compassion. Opportunities for pupils' personal development are exemplary.
- The headteacher's open and meticulous leadership inspires the confidence of staff, parents and governors. Staff morale is high.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad, balanced and exciting. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for transition between key stages.
- Pupils benefit from an extensive range of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities.
- The school's work to promote healthy lifestyles is varied and impressive, as is the school's work to advance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- The early years provision ensures that pupils make a good start to life at the school, often from very low starting points.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and other adults question pupils skilfully. They also provide work that is well matched to pupils' individual starting points. However, not all teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly boys in key stage 1.
- Improvements to the teaching of English are more embedded than improvements in mathematics. Leaders have identified the need to develop pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills further.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school from their relative starting points.
- Governors support the school enthusiastically. However, they do not hold leaders to account rigorously for the school's performance.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to others. However, leaders' use of the pupil premium does not focus consistently on removing identified barriers to learning.
- Pupils are considerate of others and their behaviour is excellent.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils feel safe and are well looked after.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - governors hold leaders to account rigorously for the school's performance
 - use of the pupil premium focuses directly on removing identified barriers to achievement.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that more pupils make rapid progress, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to apply their mathematical understanding in different contexts
 - ensuring that teachers have the highest expectations of what all pupils can achieve, particularly boys in key stage 1.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of the leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school is no longer outstanding and is now good. Over the last three years, pupils have not maintained excellent rates of progress throughout the school. There was a marked decline in academic standards during the last academic year due to a number of factors, some of which were beyond the control of leaders. Leaders' response to this disappointment has been determined, far-reaching and effective. Leaders have reflected deeply on all aspects of the school's provision. They are driving improvements that are having an immediate impact on improving the progress of all pupils across the curriculum and throughout the school.
- Leaders have created an ambitious culture of high expectations. Members of staff share a common desire for pupils to be the best they can be, in both an academic and social sense. Pupils respond positively to these high expectations and they subscribe enthusiastically to the tolerant and respectful values promoted across the school.
- Underpinning recent improvements is a shared commitment to ensuring that pupils get the best deal possible. Leaders have established an ethos in which everyone, pupils and staff alike, are encouraged to develop resilience and take responsibility.
- Leaders know the school well. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and its areas of relative weakness. They have appropriate plans in place to drive improvements across the school. They have ensured that all staff share a common understanding of what the school needs to do to improve.
- Pupils enjoy positive and supportive relationships with members of staff and each other. Pupils speak highly of their teachers and are keen to express their gratitude to staff. One group of pupils, for example, spent break and lunchtime collating a book of positive comments that were to be given to their class teacher as part of his birthday present.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers and other staff are motivated and keen to develop their skills. Leaders set members of staff ambitious and varied targets for developing their performance. These align closely with the school's overarching priorities for improvement. Leaders have high expectations of the contribution that every member of staff can make to the development of the school.
- Members of staff appreciate the varied training opportunities that they have access to. Teachers speak positively about the opportunities they receive for sharing ideas about effective teaching.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are thorough and pay close to attention to the impact that teaching has on the progress made by different groups of pupils. Middle leaders, including subject coordinators, play a central role in reviewing the quality and impact of teaching in different areas of the curriculum. Leaders use the information they collate to refocus their plans to improve teaching. For example, leaders have recently decided to reprioritise the focus on developing pupils' ability to reason and solve problems in mathematics.
- Leaders have established a curriculum that is broad, balanced and inspires the interest

of pupils. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum focuses rigorously on developing pupils' knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects. At the same time, a cross-curricular approach is maintained, based upon intriguing enquiry questions. Leaders use information on pupils' attainment to tweak and develop the curriculum to ensure that it facilitates strong achievement across a range of subjects.

- The curriculum supports pupils particularly effectively as they move from one key stage to the next. Teachers and other adults gradually introduce pupils to new ways of learning that provide strong preparation for the next stage in their education.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils benefit from an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities that enhance their enjoyment of school and further broaden their skills. Sporting provision has been prioritised by leaders. Pupils participate in a range of activities, from football to fencing and gymnastics to boccia. Pupils also benefit from opportunities in other areas, such as clubs for arts, cookery and engineering. Leaders' records indicate that the vast majority of pupils have taken part in at least one extra-curricular club during the course of the academic year.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils benefit from a rich and diverse programme of opportunities to enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) understanding. Leaders have prioritised the need to extend pupils' awareness of other faiths. Pupils of all ages can demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of different world religions. For example, younger pupils spoke enthusiastically about the work they have recently undertaken with another local school where most of the pupils are of Muslim faith. Pupils in key stage 2 indicated that they found a talk by a visitor to the school on Judaism to be particularly informative. The school's work on SMSC is complemented effectively with a range of trips and visits. For example, pupils have been to Manchester to visit Chinatown and a synagogue.
- The school's work to promote fundamental British values ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Recently, the school has undertaken a great deal of work to improve pupils' understanding of democracy. This has included a mock general election and further development of the vibrant school council. The school has also initiated the creation of a local youth parliament for schools in the local area. As a result, pupils are developing a sound understanding of the importance of democracy.
- Leaders have used a large part of the pupil premium grant to ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive additional teaching that addresses gaps in their understanding. This has ensured that disadvantaged pupils make progress that is at least as fast as others with similar starting points. Despite this, leaders' use of the pupil premium grant is not consistently focused on removing identified barriers to achievement. Furthermore, leaders do not evaluate precisely the impact that pupil premium spending has on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders use the additional physical education (PE) and sport funding well to increase pupils' participation in PE clubs and competitive sports.
- Leaders use the funding for special educational needs effectively. They ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the precise support needed to make good progress across the curriculum and to access the full range of opportunities alongside their peers.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide the school with enthusiastic support. They work in tandem with the headteacher and other leaders to ensure that the school's character and ethos is preserved. When appointing a new headteacher, they demonstrated an unswerving commitment to recruiting a leader who would keep the school's work firmly rooted in the school's values.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account robustly for the school's performance. They did not challenge the school's declining outcomes with sufficient rigour and they have been too accepting of information they have been provided by leaders. As a result, leaders have not been challenged to improve outcomes decisively and quickly enough in the past.
- Governors are aware that no member of the governing body has substantial experience of working in schools. Although they have ensured that the governing body contains members with skills and experience in other areas, they do feel that the lack of direct educational experience has impeded their ability to challenge leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff have a clear understanding of procedures and know how to respond if they have concerns about an individual pupil. Training is up to date and induction arrangements for new staff raises their awareness of the school's vigilant approach to keeping pupils safe.
- The strong culture of safeguarding keeps pupils safe. The school's work to keep pupils safe when online is particularly thorough and innovative. The school's digital leaders educate their peers on the potential dangers connected with the internet. This complements the thorough work on e-safety that threads through different parts of the curriculum.
- Staff share a clear understanding of the safeguarding issues that are prevalent in the local area. Staff work effectively with other agencies to keep pupils safe. Regular opportunities are exploited to raise parents' awareness of how to keep their children safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good across the school. Teachers make use of lively and interesting contexts to ensure that learning is enjoyable. Teachers and teaching assistants have strong subject knowledge and most have high expectations for pupils' learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants question pupils skilfully to assess their understanding and to clarify and extend their thinking. Teachers manage learning well and introduce new and more challenging concepts progressively. Teachers model skills and new ideas clearly and thoughtfully to pre-empt pupils' potential misconceptions.
- Systems for assessing pupils across the curriculum are robust. Teachers and other

adults track pupils' progress carefully against a range of challenging criteria, to ensure that learning is secure. Where gaps in understanding appear, these are filled effectively through a range of opportunities for additional teaching.

- The teaching of reading and writing are particularly effective. Evidence from pupils' books indicates clearly that pupils with different starting points are making fast progress with their writing. Over the course of the current academic year, pupils have made great strides in relation to the depth and fluency of their extended writing. This is because teachers have high expectations of pupils' writing. Pupils are provided with regular and varied opportunities to write for a variety of audiences and purposes. Leaders have rightly prioritised the development of the technical aspects of pupils' writing. There is clear evidence to indicate that pupils are making good progress with their spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- The teaching of mathematics is less consistent throughout the school. Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils of different abilities can achieve. Teachers provide pupils with challenging and stimulating opportunities to apply their mathematical understanding in different contexts. However, some teachers provide less systematic challenge. Leaders have identified the need to reinvigorate the school's efforts to embed mathematical reasoning and problem-solving throughout the curriculum.
- Overall, teachers have high expectations of pupils. However, expectations of boys' achievement in key stage 1 are not consistently high. Furthermore, teachers do not do enough to ensure that pupils focus on the development of their handwriting throughout the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to their learning. They concentrate well and are keen to do their best.
- Pupils are exceptionally well mannered and polite. They are keen to help others and exhibit great pride in their school. They are friendly, appreciative and supportive of each other.
- The school's work to promote healthy lifestyles is exemplary. The school places great emphasis on helping pupils to develop a lifelong commitment to leading healthy and active lives. Examples of this include the 'daily mile challenge' where pupils are encouraged to run a mile each day and the school displays that highlight the stark reality of the amount of sugar in different drinks.
- The school places a similarly strong emphasis on maintaining pupils' emotional well-being. Leaders work closely with a number of external agencies to ensure that pupils are supported to maintain their mental health. A number of teaching assistants provide pupils with anger management support and other therapeutic interventions, such as Lego therapy, which support pupils to overcome specific challenges in their lives.

- The curriculum directly addresses issues that are of central importance to pupils' emotional well-being. In one lesson on body image, for example, one pupil summed up the impact of the school's work when he commented, 'I'm happy and can't actually think of anything I want to change about myself.'
- Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills. For example, some pupils promote internet safety in their role as 'digi-leaders' while others promote healthy living as 'change for life' ambassadors.
- Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The school's personal, social and health education curriculum supports pupils to develop an age-appropriate understanding of matters relating to their own safety. This work is complemented by a range of initiatives such as 'bikeability', which teaches pupils to cycle on the roads in a safe and responsible manner.
- Pupils can explain clearly what bullying is and are aware of the different forms that bullying can take, including cyber bullying. Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare. This is confirmed by leaders' records.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave impeccably at break and lunchtimes and around the school site. They respond positively to established routines and are considerate of others.
- Pupil behaviour is good during lessons. Low-level disruption is rare and managed effectively by teachers and other adults.
- Rates of absence are in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is below the national average and has declined further this academic year. This is as a result of leaders' work to support the small number of families whose children are either regularly late or absent from school. Rates of absence for disadvantaged pupils have reduced, but remain higher than others.
- The use of derogatory language is extremely rare.
- The school has a strong record of improving the behaviour of pupils who have previously exhibited challenging behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress from their different starting points. The school's assessments are reliable. Information provided by leaders indicates that standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally. Given that a high proportion of pupils join the school at levels that are typically below those expected for their age, this represents good progress.
- Pupils' achievement in the 2016 national tests was disappointing and represented a significant decline on previous results. The standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 were particularly low given the prior attainment of this group. Furthermore, results in Year 6 indicated that pupils made less progress than previous cohorts, particularly in

mathematics. Historic results indicate that the standards achieved by the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 are broadly in line with national averages. The low 2016 results were unexpected. Since then, leaders have undertaken a great deal of work to ensure that pupils make far quicker progress. Current assessment data and work in pupils' books confirms that the 2016 results were an anomaly.

- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to others nationally. Although differences in attainment are wide on entry, they diminish as pupils move through the school. This is because the progress of these pupils is tracked carefully and appropriate additional teaching is provided to ensure that gaps in understanding are filled. The school's use of the pupil premium provides pupils with opportunities to catch up with their peers. Despite this, the impact of different strategies is not carefully measured. Moreover, not all of the pupil premium is used to remove identified barriers to achievement.
- The most able pupils are making faster progress throughout the school. This is leading to a higher proportion of pupils reaching standards above those expected for their age by the end of key stage 2. Scrutiny of pupils' work confirmed that the most able are being challenged in their learning and make good progress.
- Boys join the school at levels that lag behind the girls and with levels that are typically low for their age. Throughout the school, differences in attainment diminish. However, it is not until key stage 2 that the attainment of boys begins to align with that of the girls. As a result, gender differences remain broad during the early years and key stage 1.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress relative to their starting points. This is because leaders deploy resources effectively to support these pupils. However, additional teaching currently has greater impact in English than in mathematics.
- Leaders have created a positive reading culture. Pupils told the inspectors that they love reading and read widely and often. Great care is taken to ensure that pupils read texts that provide appropriate challenge. Teachers and other adults monitor pupils' reading closely. The very small number of reluctant readers are supported to develop positive reading habits.

Early years provision

Good

- Children generally enter Nursery and Reception at levels that are typically below those expected for their age. From these low starting points, children make good progress throughout the early years. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased significantly this year. As a result, the majority of children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Across the Nursery and Reception, the early years team has established an inviting and stimulating environment for children to learn. Well-planned activities in a broad range of areas engage children's interests and enable them to acquire early skills in many areas, including reading, writing and number skills.
- Children respond positively to adult-led sessions. Teachers and other adults question children skilfully. Children are well supported to develop their ability to communicate

their ideas and opinions. In one session, for example, children were challenged to consider whether 'scary things are good or bad'. As a result, children make good progress with their speech and communication skills and most are able to explain their thoughts and feelings confidently.

- Children thoroughly enjoy their self-initiated activities. Leaders have created a provision where great attention is paid to firing children's imagination. Children respond enthusiastically to the range of opportunities on offer.
- Phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is taught effectively. Teachers and other adults have become more ambitious with their expectations of how quickly children can make progress in this area.
- Teaching staff know the children's skills well, as a result of careful and ongoing assessment. Members of staff plan meticulously to ensure that children take part in activities that will build their skills in identified areas. Leaders also ensure that children who need extra help receive the support they need to catch up with their peers. For example, identified children receive additional help to develop the careful physical movements needed for early writing.
- Children are sociable and they show care and consideration for each other. They took great delight in the work they had completed with Muslim pupils from a local school. Impressively, children could explain some complicated terms such as 'Eid' and 'Iman'.
- Leadership and management are good. Strong teamwork ensures that children feel safe and make good progress.
- Staff have established excellent links with parents. Parents are very positive about the early years provision and appreciate the half-termly 'stay and play' sessions. All the parents spoken to indicated that their children are settled and happy in the early years.
- Girls make quicker progress than boys in the early years. Although the school has implemented strategies to address this gap, differences persist for the current Reception cohort. Furthermore, the number of children exceeding levels typical for their age remain low, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Safeguarding is effective. Children are extremely well looked after and staff ensure that statutory requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	119425
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10032798

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	306
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Beattie
Headteacher	Beverly Holmes
Telephone number	01282 771470
Website	www.st-leonards.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	head@st-leonards.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 October – 1 November 2007

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum, the pupil premium grant and how the school caters for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school is slightly larger than most primary schools. The school increased the number of pupils it admits each year from 30 to 45 in 2013. There is currently one class in Years 4, 5 and 6. There are two classes in Year 3 and three classes that contain pupils from both Year 1 and Year 2.
- The early years provision consists of two full-time Reception classes and two part-time Nursery classes.
- The vast majority of pupils who attend the school are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is

significantly higher than that found in most primary schools.

- The headteacher joined the school in January 2014. Since that time there have been significant changes to the school's leadership team.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed lessons in a range of subjects throughout the school. Very short visits were also made to a number of lessons. Inspectors scrutinised the work of pupils in all year groups.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, numeracy coordinator, governors, the school’s improvement partner and a group of staff members. Inspectors also spoke to parents and carers.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils. One inspector spoke formally with a group of pupils about their experiences of being a pupil at the school. Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and during break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 21 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspection team scrutinised a number of documents. These included the school’s self-evaluation and development plan. The inspection team also scrutinised the contents of the school’s website.
- The inspection team assessed the school’s arrangements for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Will Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Sheryl Farnworth	Ofsted Inspector
Kathleen McArthur	Ofsted Inspector
Eithne Proffitt	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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