

St Mary's C of E Aided Primary School, Prestwich

Rectory Lane, Prestwich, Manchester, Lancashire, M25 1BP

Inspection dates 10–11 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Consistently outstanding leadership has driven the school from strength to strength since the previous inspection.
- Governors check all aspects of the school's work thoroughly and continually challenge it to improve.
- Parents and staff fully support the school's leadership and are equally committed to its success.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct around the school are impeccable. They have excellent attitudes to learning. They feel valued by adults who work in the school, and entirely safe.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is outstanding. Pupils are consistently challenged by work that is above expectations for their age and they enjoy these challenges.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage gives children an excellent start so they achieve exceptionally well.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are consistently well above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- More pupils than previously achieve the very highest possible standards in mathematics, although this is not yet the case with reading and writing.
- Pupils, year- on-year, make excellent progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons and part-lessons.
- Meetings were held with members of staff, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Also taken into account were 64 responses from parents via the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a wide range of documentation that included: national assessment data and the school's own assessments; samples of pupils' work; curriculum planning; minutes from governing body meetings; the school's own view of its work and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Kevin Johnson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maureen Hints

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school in which the majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- A very small proportion of pupils is supported by school action only.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets current floor standards which are the minimum expectations set by the government for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher provides support for leadership within the cluster of other local authority primary schools with which it works.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Use the methods that have successfully raised the achievement of the most-able pupils in mathematics in order to take pupils to similarly high levels of achievement in reading and writing.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school's success is driven by the headteacher's unfailing focus on pupils' learning and the impact that teaching has on it.
- Systems used to check the quality of teaching, repair perceived weaknesses and improve teachers' skills through training leave nothing to chance.
- Senior leaders provide models of outstanding practice for colleagues with regard to teaching and relationships within the school.
- Middle leaders, who are responsible for individual subjects, make sure that pupils learn from an exciting range of subjects which gives them many opportunities to express their ideas and reflect on the different ways that they can learn.
- All leaders share the responsibility for checking the school's work. They talk to pupils about their learning, scrutinise their work in books and observe each other's work in the classroom regularly. Results are carefully recorded and cross-checked to make sure quality is maintained. As a consequence all staff have a very accurate view of the school's effectiveness.
- Sport funding allocated to the school is put to very good use. The range of activities and level of pupils' participation in both competitive and non-competitive sport have increased significantly. Teachers' skills have improved as a result of working with specialist physical education teachers who help with planning and teaching of lessons. A particularly good example is the introduction of karate lessons for the whole of Year 6. The activity is equally accessible to girls and boys and provides for self-discipline and fitness as well as some cultural awareness.
- The local authority recognises that only very light-touch quality assurance is required for the school, and has harnessed the leadership skills of the headteacher to provide support for other primary schools in the authority.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors share a wide range of expertise. The experience they bring to governance ensures that they challenge the school's leadership and other aspects of its work very effectively. They analyse the school's academic performance meticulously and compare it with schools nationally. They maintain a very accurate view of teaching quality and how this is linked to the school's salaries structure through checking the performance of staff. All statutory duties are dealt with efficiently, including financial management. Governors are knowledgeable about the impact of pupil premium spending and are fully committed to equality of opportunity for all disadvantaged pupils. They challenge the school to ensure that maximum opportunities are offered to all pupils in all activities so that full benefit is gained from sport funding. There are no concerns regarding the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils and staff.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Attitudes to learning are exemplary. In lessons, pupils enjoy what they do and are always eager to do their best, whether working with others or on their own. Their enjoyment of school is shown by their very high levels of attendance.
- There is never any disruption to learning and this accounts for pupils' excellent progress and high standards.
- The quiet area of the playground is very popular among readers who want to enjoy a novel or browse through a history book during playtimes.
- Pupils are invariably polite and show the greatest respect for one another and for adults. Their conduct around the school and their manners are a credit to them and are an important contribution to the calm and purposeful atmosphere seen throughout the school.
- Pupils know what is acceptable with regard to behaviour and consistently live up to the school's clear expectations. A pupil commented that it would be 'shameful to be singled out for misbehaviour'. School records show that outstanding behaviour has been a hallmark of the school over time. This is fully endorsed by parents' views.
- Pupils show the greatest respect for the different cultural lifestyles of their friends in school. Parents talk to pupils to share these differences. This boosts the school's other efforts to instil cultural awareness and positive attitudes through the curriculum.
- Pupils have a voice in school matters and their views are heard. Through the school council, for example,

pupils chose the playground equipment that they wanted and successfully changed the lunchtime routines so that pupils spent less time queuing.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils express no concerns about their safety in school. They say that they are very well cared for by the grown-ups. Bullying and name-calling of any nature, they say, are non-existent, but they know how they would deal with it should it occur. Provision to raise awareness of and protect both pupils and staff from potential dangers in the use of technology is given high priority.
- The school looks after those who are potentially most vulnerable extremely well. Pupils from other schools are integrated very successfully. They settle quickly and achieve as well as others by the time they leave.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Pupils' work shows that over time they are consistently challenged to work at levels that are above usual expectations for their age. As a consequence, they attain well above average standards by the time they leave.
- Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and know how they learn best. They use a varied selection of methods and resources to challenge pupils in different ways and at the right levels
- Teachers' subject knowledge is very secure and technology features strongly in pupils' learning. Electronic whiteboards are used in lessons particularly well to keep pupils focused on their learning.
- Teaching assistants provide crucial support for learning. They are well-qualified and highly skilled. Their presence in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, for example, made sure that the pace of learning was extremely rapid and that every pupil made excellent progress in extending their knowledge of decimals and applying the new rules.
- The teaching of English is always challenging. Particular attention is given to correct grammar, spelling and vocabulary in writing and speaking. There is a wealth of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across different subjects.
- Pupils are challenged even more effectively in mathematics. In a Year 1 lesson pupils coped well with place value of numbers, breaking them down into tens and units while work books showed that Year 2 pupils estimate angles and use protractors to draw and measure them accurately. The challenges continue in Years 3 to 6, and with the additional teaching provided, more pupils now reach the highest possible levels of achievement for their age.
- Adults systematically check pupils' learning during lessons and probing questions give them a very clear picture of how well pupils have learnt. Teachers' marking is first class and frequently shows pupils how to improve as well as providing comment. Pupils are given time to reflect on previous work complete corrections to bring about immediate improvement in their learning.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- There is a consistent pattern of well-above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Current school data indicate that this has continued in 2014 and pupils' work from the last school year confirms their rapid progress.
- The rate of progress continues in Years 3 to 6, where again standards continue to be well-above average.
- School data from the 2014 national tests (unvalidated) show that virtually all pupils in Year 6 made at least the progress expected of them in English and mathematics and significantly high proportions of pupils did better than that.
- The most-able pupils are identified and provided for well both through teachers' planning and additional teaching. Methods to take pupils to the highest possible level in mathematics have proved successful. Leaders acknowledge that similar strategies to boost achievement in reading and writing for the most-able pupils may have similarly rewarding results.
- The national phonics check (letters and their sounds) for pupils in Year 1 resulted in much higher than average results for the school. Their achievement means that reading gets off to an excellent start. In Year 2, even at this early stage in the school year, pupils read confidently and with very good understanding, putting their phonics skills to good use when tackling unfamiliar words.
- Pupils in Years 6 are very enthusiastic about books. They read quite challenging books of their own choice, such as 'The Hobbit', and generally read fluently and with good expression and understanding. They read confidently when asked to read aloud.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are extremely well-supported. Assessment data

show that they achieve better than similar groups nationally and school records show very good progress from relative starting points. A very close check is kept on the work that they do and the school works closely with parents and other agencies to make sure that pupils get the best available help.

- Gaps between pupils supported by the pupil premium and others in the school have been closing quickly over time and in 2014 they closed completely. Data for the school show that pupils did better than similar groups nationally in terms of their attainment. Pupils performed better than others in the school in writing and made similar progress to others in reading and mathematics. Leaders are fully committed to maintaining the quality of learning and equality of opportunity for all pupils.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- School assessments indicate that children's abilities are below typical expectations when they enter the Nursery. They make rapid progress through Nursery and Reception classes and all achieve a good level of development in all that they do. Significant proportions of children are more advanced than normally expected in their reading, writing and mathematical development when they go into Year 1.
- Teaching and other provision are outstanding. There has been great improvement, particularly for outdoor learning since the previous inspection. Children have exciting opportunities to practise the skills they learn indoors, solve problems and develop their physical skills by learning to work together outdoors.
- The home visits made by staff prior to children starting Nursery ensure that they know the children, and their parents well and plan for particular needs so that children make the best possible start in their learning.
- There is excellent provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Every opportunity is taken to develop children's social awareness and good learning habits. Before a very lively phonics lesson, for example, children listed all of the things to do to show that they are good listeners and ready to learn. Children play together and share activities very amicably. They learn from each other and from parents who help in school, about different cultural lifestyles and celebrations.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105342
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	448276

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adele McKie
Headteacher	Jonathan Fish
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2010
Telephone number	0161 7733794
Fax number	0161 7737307
Email address	j.p.fish@bury.gov.uk

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