

St Luke's Church of England Primary School

Albion Street, Chadderton, Oldham, OL9 9HT

Inspection dates	9–10 December 2015
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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The hard work of the headteacher and deputy headteacher has resulted in significant improvements in the school since the last inspection.
- Governors know the school well and challenge senior leaders to continually improve.
- The effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment in the school is consistently good.
- Writing is taught well and promoted very visibly and consistently in all Key Stage 1 and 2 classes.
- The use of signing in school is highly effective, loved by pupils and staff and makes a significant contribution to pupils' communication, understanding and learning.
- All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, make at least good progress from their starting points, which are typically below those found for their age.
- The personal development of pupils in the school is a strength, as is the care and welfare of both pupils and their families.
- Pupils are very respectful to their peers in school and take time to help one another and celebrate each other's successes.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Provision in the early years requires further improvement. A significant proportion of children are not reaching the good levels of development that prepare them well for the next stage of their schooling.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils at both key stages to act upon suggested improvements in their learning.
- Most-able pupils have insufficient opportunities to deepen their understanding and knowledge.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Significantly increase the number of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception by:
 - clearly defining and improving provision in each area of the early years classroom so that it is stimulating and helps children to develop the skills they need
 - ensuring and checking that children regularly visit each area of learning so they have plenty of opportunities to practise their skills, and that adults carefully monitor and record their progress
 - adults asking well-considered questions of children to encourage them to learn, strengthen their skills and deepen their understanding.
- Provide greater opportunities for pupils to follow up on the improvements suggested by teachers in their marking and feedback so that they can improve their learning.
- Develop questioning and other opportunities to offer most-able pupils a chance to deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the last inspection, the strong partnership and complementary skills of the headteacher and deputy have tirelessly driven forward school improvement, resulting in a significant turnaround in standards in the school.
- Senior leaders give a clear sense of high expectation in terms of both learning and achievement and the care and welfare of pupils and their families.
- The school is warm and welcoming because of the very positive relationships between staff and pupils and pupils with each other.
- Senior leaders know their school well. They accurately assess the quality of teaching across school, follow the progress of each individual pupil in detail and ensure that whatever support is needed is put in place so that pupils achieve their best.
- School improvement planning is effective and contributed to by middle leaders who are developing their roles. There are detailed action plans to steer improvement, and middle leaders are given a regular opportunity to check that agreed actions are in place in all classes and are being applied by everyone. This has resulted in a high level of consistency of approach in classrooms: for example, the 'magpie' books to collect together words or ideas to use in future writing, and the development of handwriting across the school.
- A positive learning environment for staff has ensured that there is a culture of teachers and teaching assistants always seeking to learn new skills through any development opportunity made available to them. As a result, there is high staff morale and clear sense of purpose that is focused on ensuring consistently good-quality teaching and learning in order to ensure that all pupils make good or better progress.
- Pupil premium funding (additional funding for disadvantaged pupils) is used effectively. Disadvantaged pupils are supported well, both personally and academically, enabling them to be successful and be part of everything the school has to offer.
- The physical education and sport premium is also used well. Pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities both before and after school and at lunchtimes. There are also opportunities for pupils to be involved in sports competitions with other local schools. Sports coaches visit school regularly to offer activities. The additional activities have been instrumental in effectively tackling issues with attendance and punctuality in the morning and behaviour at lunchtimes.
- The school offers a good-quality curriculum that engages pupils and contributes to their enjoyment of learning. It provides well-planned activities, suitably adapted so every pupil can make good progress in all subjects. For example, in a French lesson the teacher made direct reference to the grammar work pupils were doing in their literacy lessons, giving them an opportunity to practise their learning in another subject. Reading and writing are woven across the curriculum very effectively to strengthen pupils' opportunities to practise the skills they are learning in these areas, and to add a richness to reading and a purpose for writing.
- Well-promoted spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means that the school is a calm, orderly environment where pupils with different backgrounds and from different cultures feel safe and secure and mix happily together. The school council makes an important contribution to school life and pupils recently visited the town hall and met the mayor. Pupils become increasingly responsible, respect different religions, lifestyles and cultures, and are well prepared for their future life in modern Britain.
- The relationship between the school and the local authority has improved. The local authority's involvement with the school has been reduced to reflect the school's improvements and confidence that the leaders of the school are tackling issues effectively.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors know their school well and are confident to ask challenging questions. They have an effective monthly monitoring committee specifically to look closely at the school's improvements and regularly check on pupils' progress. As a result, governors have a good level of understanding about the progress pupils are making and need to make. They take a particular interest in the progress of different groups of pupils such as those with English as an additional language, those who have special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged. They check to ensure that the pupil premium and the physical education and sports premium are spent effectively and have impact.

- A number of governors are actively involved in the school and participate in the day-to-day life of the school including attending assemblies and celebrations and fund raising. They contribute to the evaluating of aspects of school life such as pupils' behaviour and conduct, the learning environment and reviewing the school's ethos and aims.
- Governors have a good understanding of performance management procedures and as well as holding teachers and leaders to account, they ensure that the management of teachers' pay is effective.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Rigorous and robust systems are in place in all areas of safeguarding and these are understood by staff. Regular and appropriate training for staff is undertaken and is up to date. There are very effective relationships with other agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe and their welfare needs are met. The school sensitively handles relationships with parents and families that may need support and advice at times. This area of the school's work is a particular strength and is greatly appreciated. Parents who responded during the inspection agreed that the school keeps pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly in Key Stages 1 and 2 since the last inspection and is now typically good and sometimes better. Teachers are positive and engaging; this creates a good environment for learning where pupils are enthusiastically involved in their lessons. Pupils describe their learning as fun and interesting.
- Teachers use their good knowledge of pupils to plan lessons effectively. They generally match activities well to the different abilities and needs of pupils in classes, and adapt the lesson or activity if they feel a pupil needs more support or needs stretching further. Pupils are often eager to talk about the next day's learning when teachers share with them what their forthcoming lessons will be about.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to learn new skills and practise ones they are still learning, and for the most able to extend their knowledge and skills. However, on occasions most-able pupils do not always get the chance to deepen their understanding and skills.
- Teachers and leaders check on pupils' learning regularly and are quick to identify anyone who is struggling. An effective range of learning activities to help pupils catch up are given and result in pupils at all levels of ability making strong progress.
- Very effective support helps pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs. Their needs are identified quickly and additional support is planned well, resulting in these pupils making good progress in lessons and in their personal and social development.
- Teachers have a good subject knowledge and make regular reference to pupils' past learning. Where pupils make mistakes, these are used positively by teachers to provide an opportunity to develop learning further. Effective questioning by teachers prompts pupils' thinking.
- All classrooms display a consistent and very rich writing environment; this is a strength. Pupils' writing is shared and celebrated and this motivates them to do well. Pupils become absorbed in their writing because teachers structure activities well for them and provide them with plenty of prompts to help them to sequence their work; consequently pupils develop good-quality writing skills. Pupils are rewarded and aspire enthusiastically to handwriting awards. Handwriting is given a high priority in the school: pupils write neatly because teachers consistently emphasise the importance of presentation.
- A strength in teaching across the whole school is the use of signing. All teachers and pupils sign with gusto to support their communication skills and understanding. Pupils are keen to share their signing skills and are confident to use them spontaneously. The effect this has on pupils' learning is significant: apart from all pupils feeling that it is fun to sign, it contributes to their understanding and ability to recall the things they have learnt. It is also very effective at helping make the curriculum accessible to pupils who might sometimes struggle, including those pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- Teaching assistants across the school are deployed effectively and make an important contribution to the progress of the pupils with whom they work.
- Reading and phonics (letters and the sound they make) are taught well in school. Although pupils struggle when they first come in to Key Stage 1, by the time they leave they are increasingly confident at sounding out words and reading. The combination of signing and phonics works well and contributes to pupils having a good range of skills to tackle difficult words. The school rewards reading at home; pupils say they enjoy reading and as they get older it is clear that they get a lot of pleasure from being engaged in the world of books.

- The school's policy for marking is consistently applied across the school. Pupils have the opportunity to find out what they have done well and what they could do to improve. Although teachers make recommendations to pupils on how to improve their work, they do not always give pupils enough time to respond to these suggestions.
- The curriculum is well planned. Teachers plan plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their reading, including phonics, writing and mathematics in different subjects. Teachers and teaching assistants promote and model effectively the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, and there are many opportunities for pupils to develop these aspects across the curriculum.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good and a strength.
- Pupils develop good personal and social skills because it is threaded through the culture of the school that pupils should be respectful of others and of themselves. Pupils are encouraged to make a positive contribution to the life of the school and to the local community. They run the popular healthy eating tuck shop at break, Year 6 organise the Friday celebration assembly and fund-raising events for local charities are enthusiastically responded to. The school consistently promotes the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as preparing them for becoming citizens in modern Britain.
- Pupils are confident and happy to talk to adults about their learning. They are very proud of their school and the work they do reflects the pride they take in themselves, and in the presentation of their books and quality of display.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude and feel very much a part of what they learn. They show great enthusiasm for their lessons and are keen to participate and encourage others.
- Pupils are respectful and aware of each other: for example, they rarely talk over each other; instead they wait patiently and take their turn. When any pupil does well in a lesson, no matter what their ability, the others are pleased and will sometimes break out into spontaneous applause. A pupil on their own in the playground will be noticed by another pupil and encouraged to join in their game.
- All staff treat pupils equally and ensure that the school makes them feel welcomed and valued.
- Those pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are well cared for, participate fully in all that the school has to offer and benefit from teaching which is carefully planned to support their progress.
- The school values highly the involvement of parents in their children's learning and a lot of time is spent encouraging and supporting them in a range of ways to help their child to learn, and providing support to families if needed. All parents spoken to and those who responded to the parent survey (Parent View) commented that the school is not only caring of their child but of them also, saying that staff would often go the 'extra mile'. They felt that all staff were approachable and had no doubt that they would offer advice or support, or just understanding if needed. No parents expressed any concerns about the welfare of their child or behaviour in school.
- Pupils say that bullying is 'very, very rare' and are confident that teachers deal with any unkind or negative language towards other pupils very quickly. Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There have been significant improvements in pupils' behaviour since the last inspection and as a result the school is a calm, purposeful, fun place to learn.
- The range of activities available in the playground before school and at lunchtime have made a significant contribution to the positive and purposeful behaviour of pupils at these times. Pupils enthusiastically rush to school for the 'wake and shake' playground exercise session before school starts, which staff and parents are also encouraged to join in. On the lunchtime playground pupils benefit from opportunities to get involved in several team games, table-top activities and dancing and singing to pop songs resulting in fun, a very positive experience for all and very infrequent behaviour incidents.
- Pupils move around school in a well-mannered and polite way. Those pupils who have behavioural needs are well supported to ensure that their behaviour does not get in the way of their learning and does not disrupt others' learning. There are a few incidents of inappropriate behaviour in school but they are rare

and dealt with quickly by teachers. Occasionally in some classes a few pupils can be distracted and as a result distract others.

- Pupils' attendance is above the national average. Very few pupils are persistently absent from school. Pupils report that they enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn when they arrive.
- The systems for monitoring attendance, absence and punctuality are rigorous and effective. There is a range of rewards for good attendance that are well supported by staff, resulting in good attendance having a high profile in school.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- The significant improvements in progress at the end of Key Stage 2 have resulted in all Year 6 pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015. Virtually all pupils in Year 6 in 2014 also made expected progress. Many of these pupils made more than expected progress in comparison with pupils of a similar age in reading, writing and mathematics. This progress is often made from starting points that are below other pupils of a similar age.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result they make good or better progress through school. In all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics, the progress pupils make is typically in line with or above other pupils in school and nationally. This is because the school very effectively monitors the progress of pupils and ensures that they are supported well in class to improve.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. Teachers and teaching assistants provide very effective support to ensure that pupils have the appropriate resources to help their learning.
- By the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils attaining at age-related expectations is above that expected of pupils of a similar age. This is not yet the case at the end of Year 2. Attainment in reading is in line with that expected of pupils of a similar age at Level 2 but in writing and mathematics, although improving, the proportions of pupils securing Level 2 and level 3 are lower than those found nationally. However, there are clear signs of rapid improvement in attainment for these pupils over their time in Key Stage 1. Work in pupils' books shows good progress over time.
- The proportion of pupils passing the national phonics check in Year 1 is below what would be expected of pupils of a similar age; however, by the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils have caught up significantly.
- Pupils enjoy reading and have lots of opportunities to read in school. In all year groups, time is dedicated to allow pupils to read. Reading is important in school and is rewarded, particularly if pupils regularly read at home.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel very much involved in their learning. They are keen to talk about what they are learning about and even what they will be learning about the next day. They know when they have done well and how to make progress in their learning.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- The early years is not as strong as other areas of the school. The leader of early years has a clear understanding of the improvements that need to be made and is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. There have been recent changes to staffing and some improvements made to the outdoor learning area. However, it is too early to see the results of this work on improving outcomes for children.
- Many pupils start Reception with skills and knowledge below what typically would be expected for their age and a few are significantly below. Communication skills are underdeveloped for a number of children and some speak English as an additional language. A number of children in Reception are disadvantaged or have identified special educational needs.
- The proportion of children who reached a good level of development at the end of Reception in 2015 was low and has been consistently so for the last three years. From their starting points, some children do make good and effective progress but this is not the case for all children, including those children who are disadvantaged. Where provision is stronger, particularly in developing communication, listening and attention skills, most children make good progress, but in other areas it is inconsistent. Where provision is

less strong, such as in reading, writing, number and shape, space and measure, the progress children make is less secure and in some instances remains limited.

- The quality of teaching in the early years is not yet consistently good. Phonics and communication sessions are well taught and children respond to them enthusiastically. The use of signing supports children's learning in this area. However, in the other areas of learning, teaching still requires improvement as it is not tightly focused on what children need to do to move their learning forward. Even when the activity is interesting to children, the quality of the questions asked by adults are often not sufficiently precise to strengthen new skills and challenge children further.
- All curriculum areas are planned for and opportunities are taken to respond to the interests of children to direct their learning. However, the different areas for learning in the classroom are untidy, tired and worn, and are not clearly distinct from one another; as a result, children tend to stray from one area to another. Some areas are insufficiently engaging and stimulating and do not offer the children enough stimulus to help promote their learning. Some spaces are left unused by children because they are uninviting. This variability in the quality of provision contributes to the inconsistency in children's progress.
- Teachers assess what children can do appropriately and learning journals show that a range of opportunities are explored and commented on. Children are often photographed and videoed to provide evidence of their learning. However, on a day-to-day basis, adults are not focused enough on ensuring that all children visit key areas such as writing and number every day. Some children tend to go to the area they feel most comfortable in at every chance and, as a result, miss out on practising the key skills they need. This reflects a lack of direction by teaching staff, resulting in an imbalance of activities between those directed by adults which have clear learning outcomes and those activities children freely choose for themselves.
- Children's behaviour is good and most children are keen to learn and join in with all the activities that are provided. There are well-established routines that help children settle quickly. Some children struggle to stay on task when asked to work on activities by themselves, and therefore can distract others; however, staff spot these pupils and redirect them quickly.
- There is a clear emphasis on creating a caring and nurturing environment, which is evident from the positive relationships adults have with children who, as a result, appear happy and relaxed.
- There are positive relationships between parents and Reception staff. Time is taken to get to know children and families prior to starting in Reception class. This relationship, at an early stage, establishes the foundations for parents feeling well supported as their child continues on in to the Reception year.
- Safeguarding is effective and the classroom is a safe environment for children.

School details

Unique reference number	105708
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10002216

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Hughes
Headteacher	Ian Walsh
Telephone number	0161 770 8404
Website	www.stlukesoldham.co.uk
Email address	mailto:info.stlukes@oldhamlea.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 November 2013

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who need special educational needs support is above the national average but the proportion of those who are disabled or have a special educational needs statement or education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium is twice the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all classes and in a range of subjects. Inspectors also visited an assembly and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and assessed the school's promotion of social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Inspectors observed pupils in the playground and during lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and in the learning journals of children in the early years.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders and teachers.
- An inspector met with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. A meeting was also held with a school improvement representative from the local authority.
- A group of pupils discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with inspectors. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils in the playground.
- The inspectors took account of 21 staff questionnaires. There were three responses to Ofsted's online parent survey (Parent View) and a letter from a parent; these were considered. Inspectors also took account of a recent parent survey completed by the school.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including minutes from meetings of the governing body, information on pupils' outcomes, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plan. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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