

St Philip's CofE Primary School

Barrow Street, Salford, Greater Manchester, M3 5LF

Inspection dates 24–25 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher has created an ethos in which all pupils are known as individuals, nurtured and supported to relish school and learning. Together with senior leaders and governors, she has improved teaching so that it is consistently good.
- There has been strong improvement in pupils' achievement since the previous inspection. Progress is good for all groups of pupils, including those eligible for support through the pupil premium.
- The pastoral team works creatively with families and outside agencies to ensure that any barriers to learning are tackled so that learning can be maximised.
- The specialist resourced units are an integral part of the school. Skilled diagnosis and effective teaching enable pupils to make good progress in developing communication skills.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are keen to succeed and value school highly.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is of good quality, characterised by strong leadership and exciting teaching.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary. Pupils are taught to embrace diversity, reflect deeply on values and make a positive difference to their community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportions of pupils making better than expected progress in English and mathematics from their relative starting points are not consistently higher than those found nationally.
- On a few occasions, higher-attaining pupils are not fully challenged to achieve their best.
- Pupils do not always respond fully to the helpful feedback provided by their teachers.
- There have been insufficient opportunities for subject leaders to fully evaluate teaching and learning in the areas for which they are responsible.
- Despite the robust efforts of leaders and managers, attendance remains stubbornly low.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, including two observed jointly with the headteacher. She observed the work of staff, including the visiting speech therapist, teaching small groups of pupils and watched a physical education session delivered by a pastoral leader. She observed a personal and social education session delivered by outside speakers and attended an assembly led by pupils from the resourced units. She listened to pupils reading and reviewed the work recorded in their books over time.
- Meetings were held with the school leaders, three governors including the vice-chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke with many pupils during lessons and at social times as well as attending a meeting of the school council. She also spoke with a range of staff and considered 18 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- There were insufficient responses to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, to be considered. The inspector took into account parents' responses to the school's most recent survey and spoke with several parents and grandparents informally on the playground.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents. These included the school's records of achievement of pupils currently attending the school, records of the school's monitoring of teaching and appraisal arrangements for teachers. The school's self-evaluation record was considered, as were minutes of meetings, notes made by governors visiting the school and reports from the local authority on the quality of the school's work.
- During the inspection, the inspector asked additional questions to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of these services.

Inspection team

Shirley Gornall, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school, but its numbers are growing and it is due to become a one-form entry primary school in September 2015. The school includes two resourced units supporting pupils with speech and language difficulties. There are eight pupils in each unit.
- Typically there are more boys than girls on roll.
- Over half of all pupils attending the school are eligible for support through the pupil premium. This figure is significantly higher than the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or for children looked after by the local authority.
- An above average proportion of pupils is disabled or has special educational needs supported at school action.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is significantly higher than that found nationally as is the proportion speaking English as an additional language. Many of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English. Twelve different home languages are spoken by pupils.
- A significant and growing number of pupils join or leave the school at times other than the end of the school year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set out the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- When it was inspected in October 2012 the school was judged to require improvement. A monitoring inspection took place in December 2012 at which the school's leaders were judged to be taking effective action in response to the areas for improvement that had been identified.
- The school has gained the Leading Parent Partnership Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop teaching so that more is outstanding and pupils' progress accelerates further by:
 - providing consistently high levels of challenge for higher-attaining pupils
 - structuring ways in which pupils can respond effectively to teachers' feedback on their work.
- Provide further opportunities to enable subject leaders to develop their skills in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning.
- Improve attendance, particularly for those who are persistently absent from school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From their varied starting points, pupils achieve well in English and mathematics.
- Pupils enter Nursery with skills that are typically well below those expected for their age. They make good progress in small steps and make a smooth transition into Reception where continued careful teaching is responsive to their individual needs and good progress is sustained.
- Progress at Key Stage 1 has been strengthened and is now good. Published data indicate that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is low overall. This is mostly because of high transition in and out of school, particularly among younger pupils. Several pupils have joined the school during Key Stage 1 with low attainment because they are at the very early stages of learning English or because they have specific delays in communication for which they have received statements of special educational needs and have places in the resourced unit. They make good progress from their starting points even though they may not reach the nationally expected level of attainment by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils who are on the school roll continuously through Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 attain at a higher level than their peers in school.
- In 2013, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was similar to that found nationally in English and mathematics. Virtually all pupils made at least expected progress from the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics and the proportion exceeding this compared favourably with national data. The school's tracking of pupils' current progress indicates that good progress is sustained across classes. Pupils who arrive during a key stage, often with no prior attainment data, are quickly integrated through an effective induction programme and are well supported to catch up quickly.
- Reading has a high priority, as indicated by the school mantra that pupils regularly make reference to: 'if you can read you can do anything.' A consistently structured approach to the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) has led to more pupils making early and sustained progress in decoding words. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage showed great enthusiasm for learning ditties containing three letter words that they were proud to read. Pupils quickly learn to adapt their reading according to punctuation and to use different skills to understand words in context. A Year 2 pupil explained that 'reading helps your brain grow.' Some staff are particularly passionate and knowledgeable about books, which they recommend to pupils and discuss with them. The reading skills of pupils at the early stages of learning English are assessed quickly and reading programmes are adapted to meet their needs.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs achieve well. Those who attend the specialist resource centre make good progress in literacy through tightly focused teaching that builds their confidence in language production and conceptualisation. Pupils with other special needs are supported effectively by their teachers and by highly skilled teaching assistants who know them well and understand how they learn. Parents and grandparents of children with special educational needs told the inspector of the 'huge difference' the school has made to their achievements, including by working in partnership with families.
- There is very little difference in the attainment of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium and their peers. In 2013, those who were eligible for pupil premium attained less well than their peers by just under one term. In several year groups, the attainment of eligible pupils outstrips that of other pupils.
- High-attainers generally achieve in line with national expectations although inspection evidence suggests that they could sometimes be challenged to achieve even more.

The quality of teaching is good

- Lively, insightful teaching that takes account of individuals' needs is apparent in all classes. New teachers to the school commented on how quickly they had been made to feel at home.

Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent.

- Teachers work hard to make learning challenging, memorable and fun. They listen carefully to what children tell them and adapt their teaching accordingly. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's interests inform their teachers' planning. Nursery children have been inspired by mixing paint in the rain and making rainbow toast. Reception children could hardly wait to find out whether the Gruffalo might return to his cave in their classroom to leave a second message for them to read. In Year 2, pupils were engrossed in creating mnemonics to spell tricky words and had an interesting debate as to whether 'dynamically' or 'dramatically' was the best choice of adverb to complete a new phrase they developed. Older pupils give feedback to their teachers on how they learn best.
- Teachers have created a supportive environment in which pupils are confident to make and learn from mistakes. A misconception about the difference between height and width was quickly addressed by a teacher in a way that helped the lower junior class by giving them a clear visual image. The school has found that many boys prefer 'learning by doing.' Investment in practical equipment has boosted progress in mathematics by enabling more physical investigation work.
- The school has focused extensively on improving pupils' learning in English and mathematics, but there is plentiful evidence of a broader, balanced curriculum too. School displays celebrate wide-ranging topics from the study of rivers to Titanic survivors' diaries and paintings inspired by Monet. Good opportunities are taken to develop pupils' literacy skills through other subjects. An example of practice that deepened pupils' thinking was the study of the First World War by Year 6 pupils inspired by reading Michael Morpurgo's *Private Peaceful*. Pupils were keen to research this period further themselves.
- The school has worked hard to improve pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills. Talking as a precursor to writing has been successfully developed so that pupils can share ideas in preparation for producing extended written pieces. Pupils' writing has become increasingly detailed and technically accurate in response to systematic teaching.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and fully. They provide clear advice as to improvements that can be made but the evidence that pupils respond to teachers' comments is not consistent throughout the school.
- Homework is set regularly and parents are effectively supported in how to help their children learn. Pupils complete homework willingly, enjoy 'finding out more,' revise for their tests and develop a work ethic that bodes well for their next stage in education.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils are keen to learn and value the rewards system that was instigated by the school council. Learning is very rarely disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. Pupils present their work well and there is very little unfinished work in books. They are particularly proud of their work when it is displayed in classrooms. One pupil, at an early stage of learning English, was keen to tell the inspector how much he had enjoyed drawing a portrait of Catherine of Aragon for the Tudor display.
- Pupils value all that school has to offer. As a Year 6 pupil explained, 'high school will be exciting but I am sad to leave St Philip's because it's such a special place.' Relationships within the school community are strong and nurturing. Pupils rarely misbehave because they have great respect for the staff and each other.
- At social times, pupils play well together and enjoy friendships with peers from different countries. Their dining experience is very pleasant and the cook confirmed that good behaviour is absolutely the norm. The playground is a lively space where games are encouraged and pupils chat with interest to each other and to the adults who supervise them.
- The school's diverse community is celebrated regularly. During the inspection there was a sense of excitement about the forthcoming Diversity Week that would involve pupils in a wide range of multicultural activities. The celebration of individual differences is ingrained in the school's ethos, exemplified in an assembly led by pupils from the resourced units who retold the story of *The*

Three Billy Goats Gruff by various means, including signing.

- Pupils think there is occasional bullying at school but they are confident that any instances will be dealt with effectively by staff before they escalate. Parents who spoke to the inspector confirmed this view. During the inspection, visiting speakers challenged pupils to explore the different reasons for racist and homophobic bullying during a thought-provoking session that revealed pupils to have a clear moral code.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Staff and governors discharge their duties with regard to safeguarding assiduously. Staff receive regular training on child protection and there are clear processes in school to deal with any concerns that may be reported. Site safety has been given high priority during an extended period of remodelling of the school building, alongside other construction work in the immediate vicinity. Pupils display age-appropriate awareness of the potential threats associated with internet use and have strategies to keep themselves safe online.
- Attendance remains stubbornly low and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is higher than average, despite the tenacious efforts of senior leaders and the pastoral team to encourage families to send their children to school every day. Some families are resident in Salford for only part of the year and return to their home countries for extended periods. This affects the continuity of pupils' education and has a negative impact on the school's attendance figures. Daily punctuality is difficult for some pupils to achieve; the school is working hard with families to improve this.

The leadership and management are good

- The school motto, 'making progress whilst making memories' is highly appropriate. From the moment they enter Nursery, children are provided with a stimulating curriculum that encourages their development as individuals. Several parents explained to the inspector that they had chosen the school because of 'its family feel.' Some make a considerable journey each day because they value the relationships fostered in the school so highly.
- The school's leaders have focused on raising standards while maintaining the ethos of care and support that St Philip's is renowned for. They are relentlessly optimistic and have ensured that staff morale is high and teamwork exceptionally strong, particularly during a period of disruption while the building is altered. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's development and works collaboratively with staff to develop this through well-considered policies. One teacher told the inspector, 'we spend a lot of time discussing any changes as a whole team and making sure everything is properly considered and people know why they are being made and what part they have to play.' Mentoring is a strength of the school: teachers and support staff are coached to become as successful as possible and there is ongoing discussion about what works well.
- The school's leaders monitor all aspects of its work carefully and have a very clear understanding of the skills and areas for development of staff. They encourage staff to contribute ideas and readily seize opportunities to make learning memorable, including engaging the builders working on site to find buried 'dinosaur bones' for children in Early Years Foundation Stage to investigate.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders act upon the outcomes of their evaluation, including in collaboration with other schools in their local cluster who share practice and training events.
- Due to changes in staff, some subject leaders, including those responsible for English and mathematics, are new to their roles. They have not yet had opportunities to observe teaching, although they have started to evaluate learning through considering work in pupils' books. They are keen to further develop their skills and influence colleagues' practice. Coaching from the assistant headteacher is giving them confidence.
- The leadership of the resourced units and of wider special educational needs within school is very effective. The precise identification of pupils' needs, effective programmes of support and partnership working with external agencies mean that pupils make good progress.
- The school's pastoral team makes a significant contribution to the effective running of the school

and to the promotion of good achievement for all. The learning mentor is highly regarded by the numerous families she supports and by pupils whose social and emotional development she fosters. The team has had real success in helping pupils to deal with difficult circumstances, including examples where individuals' attendance has improved considerably as a result of intervention, although school attendance remains low overall. Part of the pastoral team's work is funded through the pupil premium and evidence indicates this is good value for money.

- Sports premium funding has extended pupils' opportunities to engage in good quality physical education, developed inter-school competitions and encouraged a focus on health and well-being including working with families. The Islington Neighbourhood Games Area is an excellent example of how the community and school work successfully together; local fund-raising supported the development of an excellent facility that has greatly increased pupils' opportunities for physical exercise.
- Equality of opportunity is embedded within the policies and practice of the school. Some pupil premium funding is used to ensure that all pupils have access to the visits and special events that they discuss with passion. New arrivals to the school are integrated quickly and fully involved in the life of the school so that their progress is at a similar rate to that of their peers.
- The local authority has provided appropriate challenge and support for this school on its journey to become good. The level of local authority involvement has reduced as the evidence of the school's improvement strengthened. A School Improvement Officer has validated the school's self-evaluation through termly meetings. Consultant support has been provided to improve teaching in mathematics and this has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. An education improvement partnership comprising several local schools provides mutual school-to-school support that is highly valued by school leaders. The local authority has responded to this group's request for comparative school performance data.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have benefited from training to develop their role in challenging the school's leaders over pupils' achievement. They have an accurate understanding of the school's performance data and clear insight on the quality of teaching and learning. Governors are well informed by the school's senior leaders and debate key issues fully with them. They visit the school regularly, including on governors' open days when they consider the particular aspects of teaching and learning that are leaders' focus for school improvement. Governors bring a variety of skills and talents to their roles and are well regarded by the local community. They take well-considered decisions including with regard to the remuneration of staff and the spending of pupil premium and other monies.

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	105944
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	442385

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	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Andy Salmon
Headteacher	Mrs Hazel Brady
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2012
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