

Clarendon Primary School

Recreation Street, Bolton BL3 6SN

Inspection dates 2–3 March 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The new headteacher, with good support from senior and middle leaders, is making rapid improvements. She delegates responsibilities effectively and staff work well as a team.
- Working together, the leadership team has driven forward rapid improvements in teaching. As a result, current pupils in the school make good progress and achieve well in relation to their low starting points.
- Pupils come into school with smiley, happy faces and a spring in their step. This is because they feel very safe and enjoy their learning.
- Exceptional attitudes to learning and exemplary behaviour, together with respectful and caring relationships, are hallmarks of this successful school.
- The quality of the learning environment is a real strength of the school.
- Well-led, effective early years provision and very good personal development and welfare support help children do well when they first start at the school.
- The curriculum engages pupils' interests because it is broad, balanced and exciting. High-quality enrichment activities further enhance pupils' enjoyment.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of all aspects of the school's work. The school website provides parents with a wide range of valuable support and information which they really appreciate.
- Governors are very supportive of the new headteacher and know the school well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most-able pupils are not consistently challenged, particularly in mathematics.
- Not all questioning effectively extends and deepens pupils' understanding.
- Targets set out in the school development plan are not all measurable and do not, therefore, show the impact of the school's work.
- The performance of teaching assistants is not monitored as rigorously as that of teachers.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make rapid progress and achieve higher standards by ensuring that:
 - the most-able pupils are consistently challenged, especially in mathematics
 - all teachers use questioning that deepens pupils' understanding and extends their learning.

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the performance of teaching assistants is monitored as rigorously as that of teachers
 - ensuring that targets set out in the school development plan are measurable and show the positive impact of recent initiatives and improvements.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The new headteacher has high expectations for all pupils who are at this school and she is relentless in her determination that they receive the best possible education. She communicates her vision to the school in a calm and encouraging manner. Under her effective leadership, the school is improving quickly and the school's performance is on an upward trend.
- Staff work well together as a close-knit team. Morale is high and responses to the Ofsted questionnaire show that staff are proud to work at the school. Staff are very supportive of the headteacher and all the recent improvements made to enhance outcomes for pupils. Staff typically commented, 'our school has grown and flourished into an amazing place for learning'.
- Poor teaching has been eradicated and a close eye is now kept on the quality of teaching. Helpful and constructive feedback after lesson observations, book sampling and learning walks support teachers in further developing their practice. However, the performance of the teaching assistants is not managed with the same rigour and senior leaders recognise this.
- Staff have regular access to good-quality training to help keep their knowledge and skills up to date. Teachers also observe best practice within the school and at other schools locally.
- School leaders know how well the school is doing and what further improvements are needed. These are clearly set out in the school development plan, which is sharply focused on raising standards. However, targets set are not all measurable and do not explain fully the positive impact of these improvements.
- Middle leaders across all subjects provide valuable support to the headteacher and senior leadership team. They closely monitor their subjects of responsibility and track pupils' progress in these subjects as they move through the school.
- Subject leaders have worked hard to implement the new National Curriculum, which has been designed to excite pupils' interests. Subjects are linked through topics and the imaginative displays around the school bring the curriculum to life. The curriculum is further enhanced by numerous trips, out-of-school clubs and special events. For example, visits to Tatton Park, Chester and Formby Beach help deepen pupils' understanding of historical and geographical-linked topics being taught in school. Strong emphasis is also placed on developing pupils' appreciation of the arts through music and drama.
- Through the curriculum, pupils also become aware of different faiths and cultures. The school promotes positively how others should be treated and the value of truth, democracy, honesty and integrity. Consequently, pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education and for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use the pupil premium (additional government funding) money well so that disadvantaged pupils get the most out of school. There is a clear focus on breaking down barriers to learning so that these pupils can take a full and active part in school life. In addition to academic and emotional support, the funding is used to develop key life skills such as cooking. Such good practice clearly demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The sports premium funding has also been spent wisely to help develop pupils' health and well-being. Funds have been used to provide a wide range of after-school sports clubs. Specialist coaches also provide a varied range of sporting activities at lunchtime, which pupils clearly enjoy. Teachers also work alongside these coaches, thereby supporting their skills in delivering high-quality PE (physical education) lessons.
- Positive relationships have been developed with parents, helping to promote security and consistency in pupils' lives. The school's own parental questionnaire indicates high levels of satisfaction with every aspect of the school. Nothing to dispute this came to light when talking to parents during the inspection.
- The school website provides a valuable resource for parents. It is bright, informative and easy to navigate; particularly noteworthy is that it is available in a variety of languages, thereby effectively supporting parents who have a limited knowledge of the English language.
- The local authority and educational consultants have provided good support to the school and this is reflected in improving outcomes for pupils.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a clear understanding of the indicators of abuse and procedures to follow should they be concerned about a child's welfare. They also talk with confidence about radicalisation, extremism and female genital mutilation. Staff responsible for leading safeguarding and recruitment are trained at the appropriate level. The school site is safe and secure and visitors' identity is closely monitored.
- **The governance of the school**

The governors' astute appointment of the headteacher has been key to the success of this school. They recognise the improvements and the impact she has made. Governors are aware of the school's priorities and what needs to be done to move the school forward. Regular training is accessed to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. For example, they have just had data analysis training, which will allow them to analyse published and school assessment information independently of the headteacher. This will lead to even more rigorous challenge. Governors have a good understanding of the progress that different groups of pupils make as they move through the school. Safeguarding duties are taken seriously and the budget is well managed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Inspectors observed good teaching across the school in a range of subjects. Consequently, pupils make good progress and enjoy their learning.
- The quality of the learning environment now is quite simply breathtaking. Displays are vibrant and informative and many, such as 'working walls', are used effectively as a tool to support pupils' learning. Resources are of a high quality and enthuse pupils' passion for learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of pupils' capabilities. Their planning of activities takes into consideration the different needs of pupils. However, there are occasions when the work they set is not pitched at the correct level to meet the needs of pupils, particularly the most able. As a result, progress for this group of pupils, at times, slows down.
- Teaching assistants are a valuable asset to the school and are generally well deployed. They work well in partnership with the class teacher to ensure that the differing needs of pupils are met.
- Pupils' progress is well monitored both during lessons and at pupil progress meetings with senior leaders. Consequently, any misconceptions are quickly addressed and underperformance is quickly identified.
- The school fosters pupils' love of reading well. Older pupils read fluently and with expression. Pupils read regularly at home and with adults. Positive rewards, such as sparkly pencils and certificates and a wonderful range of books displayed both in classrooms and corridors, motivate pupils to read.
- Pupils are becoming keen writers. During the inspection, several pupils excitedly told inspectors that a big egg had suddenly appeared in the school playground. Pupils put pen to paper to write a selection of poems, stories and newspaper articles about where the egg might have come from and what might be inside it. Such well-planned and creative opportunities highlight the school's commitment to nurturing pupils' passion for learning, whilst making it fun.
- Some skilled staff use questioning well to challenge pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. This was very evident during a science lesson when the teacher asked a series of probing questions to develop pupils' understanding of the lunar month/cycle. In a mathematics lesson, the teacher also used questioning well to assess pupils' understanding of the different strategies that could be used to solve mathematical problems. However, such good practice is not consistent across the school.
- Homework is appropriate to the age and development of the child and is well received both by parents and pupils. One pupil commented to inspectors, 'I don't like homework. I love it.'
- Overall, the quality of marking is good. Pupils' achievements are celebrated and, on most occasions, constructive guidance is given to pupils on what they need to do to improve their work and drive their learning forward.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school places great emphasis on inspiring all groups of pupils to achieve well in life. Clarendon values, which include challenge, resilience, love of learning and success, are totally integrated into all aspects of school life. Pupils openly talk about these values and what they mean to them on a personal note. Aspirations for their future are further raised by visits from Olympic athletes, solicitors and other professionals.
- Pupils have a very good awareness of the different forms of bullying. They emphatically told inspectors that bullying at Clarendon Primary School is rare. However, if it did occur, they are very confident that adults would sort it out straight away.
- Many innovative opportunities are available to help pupils keep themselves safe and healthy. For example, visitors come into school to talk to pupils about the hazards of drinking alcohol, drug misuse and healthy relationships. Keeping themselves safe on the internet is very well promoted by teachers in school. For example, during an information, communication, technology (ICT) lesson, pupils confidently told the teacher that they would never give their full name, address or password to anyone online.
- Pupils have a very strong voice in the school and their opinions are very much valued. They told inspectors they enjoyed their responsibilities as Clarendon carers and reading buddies. A member of the school council was very proud to be involved in raising money to buy a water dispenser for the playground.
- Visitors to the school can quickly sense the strong caring ethos of the school. This enables pupils to grow in confidence, become independent learners and make wise decisions about their own well-being and safety.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well around the school and wear their school uniform with pride. They know that their actions have consequences and understand the school 'Good to be green and Great to be gold' system of managing behaviour and say it is fair.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school, are very keen to learn and feel safe. They have the highest regard for all adults and describe their teachers as 'amazing' and 'fun'.
- Attendance is close to the national average and is rising. Most pupils attend regularly in response to positive rewards and swift action is taken to support those more reluctant to attend.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- This was a complex inspection due to the number of pupils with cognitive difficulties and learning disabilities and the number of pupils that enter school partway through the year and into different year groups. Inspectors took account of the school's own information on pupils' outcomes as well as published data.
- Over the last two years, standards at both Key Stage 1 and 2 have dipped for a variety of reasons, including poor teaching and inaccurate teacher assessment. The new headteacher immediately put measures in place to address these issues. As a result, the school's own assessment information on pupils' outcomes, which is closely monitored and moderated, shows that trends are reversing. There is an improvement in the number of current pupils in the school who are on track to reach and exceed the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Work in pupils' books and observations of learning in lessons also confirm that this is the case.
- Inspection evidence did, however, highlight that, on occasions, the most-able pupils are not challenged, particularly in mathematics. Consequently, the learning for this group of pupils is not as rapid as it could be.

- As a result of significant changes to the way that phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is taught, pupils are becoming increasingly more confident in sounding out unfamiliar words. This also has a positive impact on their reading skills. Furthermore, the school's own assessment information shows that those meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check this year is set to rise once again.
- Taking into consideration their lower starting points and diverse needs, pupils with special educational needs or disability make good progress. This is the result of good-quality support and effective partnership working with outside agencies to ensure that the differing needs of this group of pupils are fully met.
- Pupils who have English as an additional language, or are newcomers to this country, settle quickly into school life because of a highly structured and in-depth induction programme which provides emotional and educational support. As a result, they soon make friends, gain a greater understanding of the English language and make good progress in their learning from their starting points.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils in the school is improving. As a result of stronger teaching, the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally is narrowing.
- Case studies show that pupils who join the school midway through the year make good progress in their learning while at the school.

Early years provision

is good

- Children enter early years provision with knowledge and skills significantly below those typical for their age. Children face challenges relating to their communication, social, reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- As a result of good teaching, all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make good progress in their learning. The number of children achieving a good level of development, although lower than the national average, is rising year on year. Consequently, a greater number of children are ready for the transition into Year 1.
- The classrooms are lively and exciting places for children to play and learn. The outdoor area is just as appealing, offering children a wide range of stimulating activities which are securely linked to their interests. No safety issues were identified during the inspection and there are no breaches of the statutory welfare requirements.
- Adults are calm, kind and caring. Children get to know their teachers and other adults well so that they feel happy, safe and confident. Standards of behaviour are excellent; because children are so busy squabbles are rare.
- Assessments are accurate and a close eye is kept on the progress that children make so that any underachievement can be quickly addressed.
- The knowledgeable early years leader is quite rightly focusing on developing children's reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills. During the inspection, inspectors noted the wide and interesting range of activities targeted specially at developing these aspects of children's learning.
- Staff are very sensitive to the emotional and welfare needs of children in early years provision. Bilingual teaching assistants provide very valuable support to children who do not speak English. As a result, children settle quickly, follow routines and instructions without question and display the hallmarks of effective learners.
- Good relationships are fostered with parents through 'stay and play' sessions and opportunities for parents to contribute to children's ongoing assessments. Such good practice ensures that parents are actively involved in their children's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	105153
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10001117

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	Community
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	492
Appropriate authority	The Governing body
Chair	Corrine Davoy-Wood
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Vicky Chatterjee
Telephone number	01204 333411
Website	www.clarendon.bolton.sch.uk
Email address	head@clarendon.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 May 2011

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is funding for pupils who are, or have been, eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability is below the national average.
- 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.
- The early years provision comprises a Nursery and two Reception classes. Children attend the Nursery class on a part-time basis. Children in Reception attend full time.
- There have been significant staff changes since September 2014. A new headteacher has been appointed and a large number of staff have been replaced. A new Chair of the Governing Body has also been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school holds a Healthy Schools Award.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across a range of subjects in each class of the school. Senior leaders also took part in joint observations with inspectors.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of pupils, listened to them read and looked at samples of their work. They also met with a group of pupils to see how they felt about the school.
- Observations were made of pupils' behaviour at the beginning of the day, breaktimes and when they were moving around the school. Pupils' behaviour was also observed in the classroom.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders and representatives of the governing body and local authority.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation including that relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance and the school's information on pupils' outcomes.
- Inspectors held a meeting with a group of parents and spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They also took account of 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) as well as the school's own parent questionnaire. Inspectors also considered 40 responses to the Ofsted online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors also spoke to teachers and teaching assistants to get their views on the school.

Inspection team

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Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Curtis	Ofsted Inspector
Jennie Platt	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Parker	Ofsted Inspector

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