

St Chad's RC Primary School

Balmfield Street, Cheetham, Manchester, M8 0SP

Inspection dates 7–8 July 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school from their different starting points.
- Children have a very good start to their learning in the early years provision and are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is good across the school. Staff set work that engages pupils effectively in their learning and enables them to make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Any gaps in their attainment and progress compared with other pupils are closing.
- Pupils behave well and there is a positive ethos for learning. Pupils are keen to learn and get on well together. They say they feel very safe and well cared for in school.
- School leaders and governors have a clear view of how well the school is performing and where it can do better. They are working well together to improve the quality of teaching and this is raising pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Parents are very appreciative and supportive of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Pupils, including the most able, are not always given work that is hard enough to enable them to make the best possible progress and reach the highest standards.
- Achievement in writing, although good, is not as strong as in reading and mathematics. Pupils do not write at length in different subjects, and there is insufficient emphasis on accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Staff do not always give clear enough guidance about what pupils need to do to improve their work. There are too few checks to ensure pupils respond to this advice when it is given.
- The role of middle leaders is not clear enough. They are not fully accountable for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.
- A small number of pupils do not attend regularly enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning on 18 occasions. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and with five governors, including the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also met a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met two groups of pupils and spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in lessons and in their books over time. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents concerning pupils' current achievement and progress, development plans and information about teachers' performance. They also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. The minutes of governing body meetings were also considered.
- Year 1 and Year 2 were on a school trip for one day of the inspection, and Year 6 were absent for one morning.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally and took account of 18 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, as well as 45 responses to the school's version of this questionnaire. They also considered 40 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robert Birtwell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michelle Beard

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in eight single year group classes from the Nursery to Year 6. The early years provision includes full-time Nursery and Reception classes.
- Over three-quarters of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the largest groups of African and Pakistani origin.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average, including some who are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium, is well above average. The pupil premium is funding the school receives for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- Six teachers have joined the school within the last two years, including two newly-qualified teachers who joined this year, and one teacher who joined in January.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement, especially in writing, so that more pupils make the best possible progress, by making sure that:
 - expectations of what pupils can achieve are always high enough
 - the work set is always hard enough so pupils, including the most able, are consistently challenged to make the best possible progress and achieve the highest standards
 - pupils have more opportunity to write at length across the curriculum with a clear focus on accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - pupils are always given very clear guidance about what they need to do to improve their work, especially in mathematics, and checks are made to ensure pupils respond to this advice.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure the role of middle leaders is clarified, and that they become more involved in, and are more accountable for, making checks and improving the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- Work closely with parents to improve the attendance of the small number of pupils who do not attend regularly.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads the school effectively and is well supported by staff and governors. Their actions are leading to improvements in the quality of teaching and a rise in pupils' achievement. There is an orderly and productive atmosphere throughout the school.
- Staffing difficulties have slowed progress this year in upper Key Stage 2, but these have now been resolved and the school has a strong capacity to improve further.
- The school's systems for checking how well pupils are doing are thorough. School leaders have a clear view of how well the school is performing and where it needs to improve. School leaders closely monitor the quality of teaching and check and evaluate each pupil's performance. This information is used to provide pupils with extra help and support if they need it. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs. Consequently, all groups of pupils in the school are making good progress.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding successfully to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils in the classroom, individually and in small groups. In addition, it is used to provide extra support for vulnerable pupils and to improve links with their parents. This is helping to improve attendance and close gaps in the achievement of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. This shows the school's successful commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils.
- The role of middle leaders is developing; they are improving their knowledge and becoming more skilled. However, their role is not clear enough and they do not have enough involvement or accountability for checking the quality of teaching and learning in their areas.
- School leaders use information about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement to check how well teachers are performing. They identify where further support or training is needed and this is helping to raise the quality of teaching. Staff are working increasingly effectively to improve teaching by sharing best practice within the school and by observing good practice in other schools.
- Information about pupils' achievement is taken into account when judging how well teachers are performing and making recommendations about their pay.
- The curriculum is well planned, engages pupils effectively in their learning and promotes good behaviour. There is a good range of activities, clubs, trips and visits to enrich the curriculum, including sport, drama, music and culture. For example, pupils greatly enjoyed performing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Royal Exchange Theatre. Others spoke about visits to the Museum of Science and Industry and were enthusiastic about a residential outdoor activities trip.
- The school actively celebrates its diversity, and marks and celebrates major cultural festivals. For example, some Muslim pupils recently explained to others the significance of Ramadan. In addition, pupils have visited a Sikh temple and the Jewish museum. This addresses discrimination effectively, fosters good relations and contributes to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- British values are effectively addressed in lessons and through activities and assemblies. For example, the value of democracy is recognised through elections for head boy, head girl and house captains. Pupils have also visited the Crown Court, which strengthened their understanding of law and justice. In addition, the school has developed its own Remembrance memorial for pupils who died in the First World War. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Staff and governors' training is up to date, and systems and procedures are effectively implemented.
- The school has worked successfully with parents to encourage pupils to come to school more regularly. As a result, attendance has improved and is now above average. However, a small number of pupils still do not attend often enough.
- The school is using the additional primary school sport funding successfully. A specialist teacher takes lessons and trains staff, and a sports apprentice helps to run a range of sporting activities. The school also participates in a wider range of sports competitions through the local sports partnership. Consequently, more pupils are involved in sporting activities and this has a positive impact on their physical well-being, health and lifestyles.
- The local authority provides effective monitoring and support for the school. This is contributing to improving the quality of teaching and is helping the school to move forward.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - There have been significant changes in the composition of the governing body recently and most governors are relatively new. Nevertheless, governors have a good range of skills and experience, and carry out their duties effectively. Governors are very supportive of the school and visit frequently in a

variety of capacities. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They have a clear view of how well the school is doing and where it needs to improve. They understand how to analyse and use data about pupils' attainment and progress. Governors evaluate how well they are performing and governors have undertaken training to improve their skills.

- Governors hold the school to account effectively by asking searching questions and by setting challenging targets as part of the headteacher's appraisal. They also make sure that pupils' achievement is taken into account when making decisions about teachers' pay. Governors manage the school's finances effectively. They know how the pupil premium is spent and the impact it is having on improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Governors ensure that the school meets its statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are well motivated and have positive attitudes to learning. They listen carefully to staff and work well both independently and in groups. As a result, lessons typically proceed smoothly with no interruption to learning.
- Pupils get on well with one another and with adults in the school. There is a strong caring ethos throughout the school and a climate of mutual respect. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and enables them to make good progress.
- Pupils know how they are expected to behave and why good behaviour is important. School records and discussions with pupils show that poor behaviour is rare. Pupils say that there is very little racist or discriminatory behaviour in school; on the few occasions when pupils misbehave, staff sort it out quickly and fairly.
- A small number of pupils sometimes show challenging and difficult behaviour but staff manage this effectively. These pupils are supported in a caring and nurturing way, usually involving the inclusion coordinator. This leads to the improved behaviour of these pupils.
- Inspectors observed good behaviour in lessons, in assembly and around the school. Pupils mix well and are typically considerate of one another. They play enthusiastically together during breaks, and behave responsibly in the hall at lunchtime.
- Pupils take on responsibility in a variety of areas. For example, older pupils act as 'buddies' for younger children and some pupils help to run the school tuck shop, which has a strong focus on healthy eating.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and would recommend it to others. Attendance has improved and is above average. Persistent absence has fallen, although it is still above average. A small number of pupils do not attend regularly enough.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel very safe and are well cared for in school.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe in different situations. They know about e-safety when using the internet, road safety and cycling safety, for example.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of different kinds of bullying, including name-calling and discrimination. They understand the difference between bullying and falling out. They say that there is hardly any bullying in the school, but would report it if it occurred. They are very confident that the school would sort it out quickly.
- Almost all parents who responded to the Parent View survey and the school's questionnaire think their child is happy, safe and is well looked after at school.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good across the school. This was confirmed by the work in pupils' books, the school's records of pupils' progress and checks on the quality of teaching. Consequently, pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There are positive and productive relationships in the classroom. Staff know pupils well and set work that motivates and engages pupils in their learning. Pupils say that lessons are mostly interesting and

enjoyable, and that most teachers push them to do better. They also say that the work they are set is not often too easy and they enjoyed being challenged.

- Reading is well taught and pupils have a secure knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). This enables them to make good progress. Pupils apply their reading skills to support their learning in a range of subjects, for example, to infer meaning from texts in history.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils have secure basic numeracy skills, and can use and apply these skills to solve practical problems.
- Writing is well taught overall and pupils make good progress. They write effectively in a variety of different styles. However, there are relative weaknesses in provision in that pupils have too few opportunities to write at length in different subjects, and there is not enough emphasis on accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Although staff typically have clear expectations of what pupils can achieve, occasionally these are not always high enough. Staff do not always make sure that the work set is challenging enough to enable pupils, including the most able, to learn as well as they could. On occasions pupils are not always given work that is hard enough to enable them to make the best possible progress and reach the highest standards.
- However, Year 2 pupils were effectively challenged when they wrote a description of an imaginary planet and aliens. Questioning was used effectively to make pupils think carefully about what they were doing and to improve their work. There was an appropriate focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar. As a result, they produced effective and imaginative writing.
- Staff mark pupils' work regularly. They use praise well, but do not always provide clear enough guidance on what pupils need to do to improve their work. In addition, they do not always check that pupils respond to this advice when it is given.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to support pupils who find learning more difficult. This support is well focused to meet the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils; it ensures that they make good progress and achieve well.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress during their time in the school. From starting points in the early years that are generally below or well below those typical for their age, by the end of Year 6 pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average or above average.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have risen steadily. In 2014, pupils' attainment was above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading. Current Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve higher standards this year. This shows good progress from pupils' starting points. Evidence from pupils' work and observing learning in lessons confirms that pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are currently making good progress.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have also improved. In 2014, they were above average in mathematics, and close to average in reading and writing. All pupils made the progress expected of them in reading and mathematics, and an above average proportion made the progress expected in writing. The proportion who made more than the expected progress was above average in reading and mathematics, and close to average in writing.
- Inspection evidence and the school's most recent data show that all groups of pupils, including those at an early stage of learning English, are making good progress and achieving well. However, the overall achievement of Year 6 pupils will not be as strong this year as in 2014 because of particular issues with this group, which include some pupils with complex needs and because of staffing difficulties.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because they have opportunities to read regularly and are well taught. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics screening check has improved steadily. In 2014, it was close to average but is predicted to be much higher this year.
- Pupils achieve strongly in mathematics. They reach above average standards and make good progress across the school. Although pupils achieve well in writing, the standards they attain and their rate of progress are not as high as in reading and mathematics.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils have improved, and any gaps in their achievement are closing. In 2014, the standards achieved by disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were close to that of other pupils nationally in mathematics, a term behind in writing and a term-and-a-half behind in reading. In comparison with other pupils in the school, they were the same in reading and writing, and a term behind in mathematics.
- In 2014, all disadvantaged pupils made the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The

proportion making more than expected progress was above that of other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, but below in writing.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well and make good progress. Their needs are accurately identified and they receive good quality support from teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, they make good progress in line with their classmates and better in some cases.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and achieve well. However, in common with other pupils, they are not always given work that challenges them to reach the highest standards and make the best possible progress.

The early years provision

is good

- Most children join the early years with skills and knowledge below or well below those typical for their age, especially in communication and language. This includes some children at an early stage of learning English.
- Children catch up quickly and make good progress from their individual starting points. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has improved steadily. In 2014, it was above average and has improved further this year. Children are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is consistently good. There is a strong focus on developing language and social skills. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make rapid progress. Staff make sure that learning activities are purposeful and well focused, and children are fully involved in their learning. Staff make good use of the indoor and outdoor learning areas.
- Nursery children were very keen and enthusiastic when telling the inspector about a visit they had made to a local allotment. They had clearly enjoyed this activity, learned a lot and made good progress in developing their social, observational, language and communication skills.
- Children behave well and show good attitudes to learning in a very safe and caring environment. They listen carefully to staff and concentrate well on what they are doing. They work well together and show care and concern for others.
- Staff work well together to meet the needs of individual children. They check children's progress regularly and use this information to plan activities to develop children's learning further. Disadvantaged and vulnerable children are well supported and make good progress.
- Staff have worked effectively to develop increasingly strong links with parents and with other nursery providers. These ensure that children settle quickly into the early years provision.
- Although the early years leader is relatively new to the school, the provision is well led and managed. All staff work well together with a common sense of purpose. They are well trained and know how well each child is performing. This ensures that children make good and improving progress, and is raising their achievement.

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	105525
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	461754

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	243
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Leigh-Baker
Headteacher	John Travis
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2010
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