

# Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary School

Clinton View, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 8JN

## Inspection dates

14–15 March 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Governors have not challenged fully the slow rate of school improvement or the low outcomes for pupils by the end of key stage 1.
- Leaders do not evaluate their actions in terms of the progress made by pupils. They cannot determine whether their actions to improve the school are successful, because they do not have a reliable way of measuring pupils' progress from their starting points in English and mathematics.
- The effectiveness of teaching and learning varies. Inspectors found that across the school, the most able pupils, including the most-able disadvantaged pupils, are not always challenged to reach the high standards of which they are capable.
- Leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. School development plans lack the detail needed to raise standards.
- Governors find the assessment information that they are provided with confusing. This prevents them from questioning fully the progress of pupils within the school.
- The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has remained similar for the last three years and is now below the national average for 2016.
- Leaders are not keeping a close enough check on the progress children make in the early years.

### The school has the following strengths

- Progress in writing by the end of key stage 2 is strong.
- The school provides a wide range of experiences that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' knowledge of British values is very good.
- Leaders have been effective in improving the attendance of pupils.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite and respectful of others.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - establishing a more effective means of tracking pupils' progress and using the data to help evaluate the impact of actions on improving the school
  - setting high expectations for all pupils and monitoring their attainment and progress closely, paying particular attention to the most able and most-able disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance by ensuring that governors:
  - ask more probing questions about the progress of pupils, particularly the most able and most-able disadvantaged pupils in mathematics
  - hold the headteacher to account for the rate of school improvement within the school, particularly in key stage 1.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
  - pupils' work is challenging, particularly for the most able and most-able disadvantaged pupils
  - staff receive incisive, subject-specific feedback on how they can improve their teaching and pupils' learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The school requires improvement because leaders have been slow to address the low standards of attainment in key stage 1.
- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has effectively tackled the weakest teaching and pupils' progress in writing has improved.
- An area for improvement at the last inspection was to ensure that teachers' planning focused on the needs of individuals, particularly the most able. Senior leaders do not use assessment information to track the progress of pupils effectively. Leaders agree that they have been focused on pupils' attainment of the expected standard rather than pupils' progress. This means that some pupils who achieve the expectations for their age are not progressing as well as they otherwise could if they were provided with more-challenging work. This is seen in the low proportions of pupils achieving the highest standards by the end of key stage 1 in mathematics and in writing.
- Inspectors found that some of the most-able pupils from across the school were not provided with opportunities to consolidate their learning in different contexts. They reported that their work was too easy. Consequently, some pupils switch off from their learning and time is not used productively. Senior leaders have identified the need to challenge the most able pupils further. They are putting in place actions to improve teaching and learning, so that teachers focus upon consolidating and deepening pupils' understanding by developing their reasoning skills. However, because leaders do not have a system to measure pupils' progress accurately, they are unable to evaluate whether their actions are successful or not.
- Leaders' pupil premium strategy and spending is effective in supporting pupils to achieve the expected standard, but has not focused on improving outcomes for the most able disadvantaged pupils, whose progress is lower than that of other pupils in the school.
- At all levels of leadership, the process of analysis and evaluation is lacking. Middle leaders are enthusiastic about their subjects. They have implemented the new national curriculum by ensuring that there is suitable coverage of each subject. However, they have not had an opportunity to monitor and evaluate the school's work in their subjects, to be able to explain how their actions have improved standards or the quality of teaching and learning. This was an area for improvement identified at the previous inspection.
- The physical education (PE) and sport funding has been used effectively to develop PE within the school. The pupils that inspectors spoke to enthused about the opportunities they have to access a range of extra-curricular clubs. The survey that pupils completed for the inspection showed that the large majority attend clubs after school.
- There are many strengths to the leadership of the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school because there is a strong, caring ethos. The headteacher, supported by her committed deputy headteacher, has made significant improvements to the school

environment. Pupils are greeted by bright, well-organised spaces with inspirational quotes on the walls.

- Leaders have brought about improvements to the provision in Reception by strengthening opportunities for learning through play. They have also put in place better arrangements for these pupils to move into key stage 1, so that their transition is smoother and they are ready for Year 1.
- Leaders' promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils display a good awareness of other cultures and religions. The school promotes strong values. Pupils are accepting of each other's views and opinions.
- Pupils' awareness of British values is very well developed. They are animated in their discussion of what these values mean to them and keen to share their understanding.
- Events such as disability awareness week provide pupils with a good sense of equalities. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of key stage 2, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. However, leaders do not consistently promote age-appropriate awareness of some protected characteristics from the 2010 Equality Act in lower key stage 2.
- The new special educational needs coordinator is bringing strong leadership to this aspect of the school. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and accurately. Funding is used well to make sure that support is tailored to meet the specific learning needs of these pupils.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are aware that some aspects of the school's practice require improvement. They lack aspirations for pupils in key stage 1, believing that attainment by the end of key stage 2 is their primary goal. Although this view is not shared by school leaders, governors have been slow to question standards at the end of key stage 1.
- Governors have not been effective in accelerating the rate of improvement at the school. Leaders have been slow to implement assessment arrangements for the new curriculum. School leaders do not measure pupils' progress accurately from their starting points. Moreover, the use of assessment information has become overly complicated. Taken together, these factors impede governors' ability to question, in detail, how well pupils learn.
- Governors have a good overview of performance management processes in the school. They hold the headteacher to account by making the best use of external support.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The leadership of safeguarding is strong. The headteacher has ensured that the school site is much more secure by installing better fencing and a new entrance system. This is symbolic of her drive to ensure that the school offers a safe and secure environment for all pupils. All records are comprehensive and stored securely. Plans for pupils who are looked after by the local authority are clear and have specific targets for pupils.

Good practice is evident in the way in which the school provides opportunities for pupils to contribute to these plans, through various activities designed to understand any issues from the child's perspective.

- Staff have very positive relationships with pupils. Pupils feel that staff are supportive and that they are approachable. Of the parents responding to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, the vast majority agreed that their child felt safe and was happy at school.
- Staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training and they are aware of the most recent changes to legislation. They receive continual updates in weekly briefings. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the pupils in their care. All staff are clear about their responsibility for keeping pupils safe and they are well equipped to pick up on any signs that may suggest that a pupil is in distress.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about the lessons they have received about online safety. They know how to keep themselves safe online.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is variable. Teachers do not offer consistently high expectations for pupils' learning.
- Inspection evidence found that challenge for the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, is not consistent across the school. These pupils are not challenged to make as much progress as they could otherwise achieve in mathematics and in their written work.
- Although staff have had opportunities to develop their teaching, this has not led to improved outcomes for pupils. For example, the proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check have remained static against a rising national trend and are now below average. By the end of Year 2, pupils are applying their phonics knowledge well and are developing fluency in their reading. By the end of key stage 2, pupils are reading with intonation and expression. They have a very good awareness of the texts that they read, which are well matched to their abilities.
- The use of teaching assistants to develop pupils' learning is also variable. Where they are deployed most effectively, they have a notable impact on pupils' understanding, but in others they are asked to carry out administrative or organisational tasks. Leaders use additional funding well to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teaching assistant staff have clearly planned tasks that are related to the pupils' next steps in learning.
- Pupils do not have the opportunity to extend their learning to achieve even higher rates of progress. Leaders agree that this inhibits the progress of some of the most able pupils, including some of the most able disadvantaged pupils. Some of the pupils that inspectors spoke to said that they often had to wait while other pupils caught up with the work being done that day.
- The strongest teaching enables pupils to develop depth in mathematical reasoning through appropriate challenges. In some lessons there are also challenge activities. For example, a Year 2 boy enthused about the challenge cards that he could move on to

when he had completed his work. Teachers use pupils' misconceptions well to model successful examples. The work in pupils' books shows good progress in writing, although some of the most-able pupils could be challenged further.

- Where pupils felt challenged, it was because the teacher asked probing questions to extend pupils' learning and stretch their thinking.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are self-confident. They have very positive attitudes to learning and they are respectful of others' views and opinions. They are proud of their school. The school fosters a sense of belonging through the colourful displays, one of which features butterflies. Each butterfly represents a pupil in the school and is as individual as the pupil who designed it.
- Pupils know and understand what British values are. The work in their topic books celebrates different aspects of what it means to be British and their history work on The Beatles reflects the school's local cultural inheritance. Pupils also explained how their work on Judaism and Hinduism has broadened their understanding of others' beliefs.
- When asked, pupils agreed that there is no bullying in the school. They told inspectors that small disagreements are handled well by staff and that instances of poor behaviour are rare and handled swiftly and decisively. Pupils clearly display respect for the staff who look after them and report that there are no instances of the use of derogatory language.
- The school has worked to promote equalities through activities such as disability awareness week. In discussion, some Year 4 pupils laughed in embarrassment when discussing how some children may have two mothers or two fathers. Leaders have identified that they need to extend their promotion of equalities to ensure that lower key stage 2 pupils have a better, age-appropriate understanding of all of the protected characteristics.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are welcoming and polite.
- At playtimes, pupils take part in a range of activities. The newly refurbished outdoor areas allow a wider range of activities such as composing a dance routine on the outdoor stage.
- When talking to adults, pupils are respectful and eager to contribute. They have very positive attitudes towards their learning and are well behaved in lessons even when, occasionally, not fully engaged in the tasks set. Disruptive behaviour is rare. Good behaviour is celebrated well and pupils respond positively to the praise they receive. The inspection survey of pupils clearly showed that all are happy at school.

- The school has taken effective steps to improve pupils' overall attendance, which is currently above the national average. Appropriate systems are in place to check on the absence of pupils. Parents receive regular newsletters showing the attendance for each class.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- The outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 require improvement. The proportion of pupils who attain a good level of development at the end of Reception has been broadly in line with national averages. Outcomes for the same pupils at the end of key stage 1 have been below average, particularly in mathematics and writing. This indicates that progress in key stage 1 has been slow.
- Outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 2 are, however, good. Published progress data supports this. However, the work in pupils' books shows that progress is not maximised for some of the most able pupils because they do work that does not challenge their thinking, particularly in mathematics. In their topic books, there is little evidence to show that pupils have opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Small-group phonics and reading teaching has met with some success, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, because leaders evaluate pupils' success against a clear measure. For example, a group of pupils who received additional support for phonics all achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Attainment in the Year 1 phonics check has remained at similar levels over the last three years. This means that the proportion of pupils achieving the required standard is now lower than the national average.
- Pupils eligible to be supported by the pupil premium grant make similar progress to other pupils in the school. The school targets pupils effectively to catch up through special support. However, the most able disadvantaged pupils do not have additional support to stretch their thinking to achieve the highest standards. No disadvantaged pupil in key stage 2 achieved a higher standard in reading, writing or mathematics, because the school's focus is only on getting pupils to achieve age-related expectations.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities varies. Pupils in receipt of additional funding make good progress from their starting points. This is because of the effective arrangements in class that provide additional targeted support.
- Leaders plan pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have good interpersonal skills and display a good awareness of others' needs, views and opinions.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- Early years provision requires improvement because leaders in the early years do not have an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Leaders have relied on

external support to improve teaching and learning in the early years. However, there is little evidence of impact on children's outcomes. The school's own tracking for the autumn term shows that their progress is slow.

- Children enter Reception with skills typical of their age. By the end of the Reception year, the proportions of children achieving a good level of development are broadly in line with those nationally. Additional funding is used well to support disadvantaged children to achieve age-related standards.
- Since the last inspection, the school has ensured much better transition arrangements for children, which have contributed to their readiness to start Year 1. As a result of additional training, teachers are now providing an improved range of activities for children. However, there is presently little evidence to show that this has improved children's outcomes.
- Children work with a good degree of exploration and they are starting to make links between ideas. Staff model social skills, with a clear focus on developing children's understanding through language. Sensory tasks such as 'Who is in the box?' encourage children to interact with one another to discuss possibilities.
- Children are settled in their environment. They cooperate well with one another, take turns and share. There is no disruption to lessons and children are aware of clearly established routines. This is due to the high level of care and support that children receive from staff.
- Parents are positive about the early years provision. Staff are proactive in engaging parents through daily contact, workshops and regular updates.
- Safeguarding in the early years is vigilant and all statutory requirements are met. All staff receive training and support regularly to keep children safe.



## School details

Unique reference number	133320
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10003350

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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Carol Houghton
Headteacher	Mrs Pamela McGuffie
Telephone number	0151 424 6130
Website	<a href="http://www.olpsprimary.co.uk">www.olpsprimary.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head.OLPS@halton.gov.uk">head.OLPS@halton.gov.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	19–20 April 2012

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school has a privately run nursery on site which is subject to a separate inspection.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from an ethnic minority background is well below the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in each class. This included shorter visits made jointly with the headteacher as well as longer observations to observe the work of classes from Reception to Year 6.
- Inspectors looked through a range of pupils' work across the curriculum and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally in groups and informally around school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the day and took into account the views of 45 parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors made observations of pupils' behaviour during lessons, at lunchtime and when pupils were moving in and around the school.
- Meetings were held with staff, governors, senior leaders and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and its areas for development.
- Inspectors looked at attendance and behaviour records, including records of bullying incidents.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documentation and how this related to daily practice as well as speaking with staff and children.
- Inspectors took account of seven responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors took account of 56 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Clare McGarey	Ofsted Inspector
Mavis Smith	Ofsted Inspector

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