



**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee  
Ofsted Subgroup**

**School inspection outcomes: academic year 2016/17**

School	Date of previous inspection	Previous Ofsted outcome	Date of most recent inspection	Ofsted outcome
Manchester Academy	24 January 2012	Good	20 September 2016	Requires Improvement
Loreto High School	9 July 2013	Good	27 September 2016	Requires Improvement
Crowcroft Park	20 May 2014	Requires Improvement	27 September 2016	Good
Manchester Communication Academy	19 September 2012	Good	27 September 2016	Requires Improvement
Levenshulme High School	3 July 2013	Inadequate (SM)	5 October 2016	Outstanding
The Birches School	11 July 2012	Outstanding	1 November 2016	Outstanding
The Willows Primary School	11 February 2015	Requires Improvement	2 November 2016	Good
Moston Fields	21 April 2015	Requires Improvement	8 November 2016	Requires Improvement
Connell Sixth Form College	27 January 2015	Requires Improvement	21 November 2016	Requires Improvement
St Chrysostoms	3 November 2011	Outstanding	29 November 2016	Good
The Barlow RC High School	16 October 2012	Good	30 November 2016	Requires Improvement
Secondary PRU	2 June 2015	Good		
Baguley Hall Primary	12 February 2013	Good		

School report



# The Barlow RC High School and Specialist Science College

Parrs Wood Road, East Didsbury, Manchester M20 6BX

## Inspection dates

30 November–1 December 2016

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not maintained a good quality of education since the last inspection.
- The standards that pupils reach in mathematics is low given their starting points.
- The standards that pupils reach in science, especially the most able pupils, are not high enough given their ability.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as they should across a number of subjects, especially mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities underperform and teaching is not consistent in meeting their needs.
- The pupil premium funding has not been specifically focused on strategies to improve the academic achievement of these pupils.
- The school development plan does not demonstrate how leaders and governors will know that their actions are having impact.
- Assessment systems are new and are not being used well enough to inform the next steps in learning. Consequently, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding in some subjects.

### The school has the following strengths

- Attendance is above the national average and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is low.
- The personal development and welfare of pupils are strengths of the school.
- The careers education, information, advice and guidance for pupils are of high quality.
- Pupils achieve well in English, humanities, modern foreign languages, art, physical education and religious education. This is also where effective teaching is consistent.
- Pupils feel safe at this school and leaders work very hard to ensure that pupils are kept safe, especially the most vulnerable.



## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Ensure that pupil premium funding is used on strategies to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the standards in mathematics and science.
- Sharpen the school development plan so that it is clear what needs to be done and how leaders and governors will know that it has been successfully achieved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.



## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, leaders have not sustained a good quality of education. There have been a number of contributing factors to this – most notably, the significant instability in staffing.
- The performance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has declined since the last inspection. This is being addressed. However, the focus has been on the pastoral provision for these pupils and not on improving how well these pupils achieve academically. The funding that the school receives for disadvantaged pupils has not been targeted enough on strategies that will improve their outcomes and ensure that they achieve as well as other pupils nationally.
- Leaders correctly identify the areas that need improving. However, the school development plan is weak. It does not provide a clear, unambiguous road map as to how these improvements will be made and how it will be demonstrated that they have been successful.
- Leaders have struggled to recruit teachers to key subject areas such as mathematics and science, and this has significantly impacted on pupils' learning in these subjects. Recently, new teachers have been appointed to these departments and the new leaders appointed have brought a determination and proven capacity to make a positive difference. Already the impact of their leadership can be seen in the progress that pupils are making. Leaders correctly recognise that there is much to do, especially in mathematics.
- The performance of teachers and leaders is managed in a fair and equitable manner. The process is clear and consistent. It is underpinned by a programme of professional development. For example, there has been a significant amount of professional development around understanding the different special educational needs and/or disabilities that pupils may have and how their needs can be met in the classroom. Teachers are now incorporating these strategies into their teaching, albeit inconsistently.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is appropriate and meets the needs of pupils so as to equip them to move on to the next stage of their education. The pupils whom inspectors spoke to said that they feel that they have a good range of subjects to study and subsequently choose from. The effectiveness of the curriculum can be seen by the very high number of pupils who go on to further education, employment and/or training.
- Leadership of the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is strong. Pupils are given the opportunities to think and act positively on many of the topics that are discussed in their personal, social and health education lessons. For example, the pupils at the school have a strong social awareness and a respect for cultural diversity. The principles and values of being British are aligned to the Catholic ethos of the school, which is tangible and clearly permeates every aspect of school life.



- Leaders ensure that pupils are provided with the necessary careers education, information, advice and guidance. It is of a high quality and impartial. Recently, the school has received national accolades for the quality of the advice and guidance it gives to pupils. The pupils whom inspectors spoke to value the accurate advice that they have received to help them make informed choices about their next steps.

### **Governance**

- Governors are committed to the school and eager to see it improve. This can be seen in the interest and attention that they pay to the daily life of the school.
- Governors have ensured that they have the skills and expertise in different areas so as to be able to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. However, it is only recently that they have provided the real and necessary challenge, especially in regard to declining standards.
- Governors have not routinely monitored the impact that the pupil premium funding has on pupils' academic achievement. Consequently, this funding has done little to improve how well these pupils achieve.
- Inspectors noted that there has been a real shift in terms of the sharpness of governors' meetings and committees since the governing body was reconstituted. Governors understand the urgency with which they need to move and have made a number of tough decisions.
- Governors take their safeguarding duties seriously and partake in all safeguarding training opportunities.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders are unrelenting and watchful in ensuring that pupils are kept safe, especially the most vulnerable. It is not uncommon for leaders to go above and beyond to ensure that vulnerable pupils are safe. One example of this is that the school's safeguarding officer is employed full time and not just term-time.
- The policies and practices are up to date and reflect the recent changes and developments. This has been accompanied by regular training for all staff and governors. Leaders also regularly check staff's understanding of safeguarding by following up training events with reviews and evaluations. Safeguarding records, checks on staff and recruitment practices are thorough.
- Leaders have been particularly attentive to ensuring that matters such as extremism, radicalisation, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and forced marriages are understood by all staff.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- The use of assessment information to inform teaching is not sufficiently developed. This is partly because the assessment system is new, but it is clear that in some subjects pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding and these are not being addressed.



- The needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not consistently being met in lessons. Teachers have only recently received support and development with teaching strategies to meet the needs of these pupils. The adults who work with teachers in the classroom to support the learning of these pupils are enhancing teachers' effectiveness.
- The additional funding for pupils who are disadvantaged has not been targeted enough on specific strategies used by teachers to improve pupils' learning in the classroom. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils have not made the progress that they should.
- As a result of more focused and specific teaching strategies, the needs of lower-attaining pupils are being met. However, outside English lessons, these pupils are not always being supported and developed to write in a sustained manner.
- The most able pupils are beginning to make better progress because they are being challenged in their lessons and are given work that reflects their ability.
- Leaders' records indicate that they have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching over time. They rightly correlate the effectiveness of teaching and learning with outcomes for pupils and know where teaching needs to improve. Where teaching is not effective, leaders have put in place programmes of support which have led to improvements or tough decisions being made.
- Inspectors observed teachers asking pupils questions that really made the pupils think. The quality of the responses by pupils was eloquent and perceptive and is indicative of their ability.
- The quality of feedback that teachers provide helps pupils move their learning forward. Pupils value this feedback and told inspectors that it shows them how much effort the teachers put in, and makes them want to put in even more effort. This also demonstrates the quality of relationships between pupils and teachers.
- The majority of parents value the communication they receive about their children's progress. They say it is clear and tells them what they need to know. The parents whom inspectors spoke to were particularly appreciative of the sessions that leaders provided regarding the new assessment system and curriculum changes.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good and a strength of the school. The manner in which this aspect of the school is promoted is considered and strategic.
- The pupils are articulate and charming. They are proud of their school and they are happy to be there. This is also the view of the vast majority of parents.
- The student leadership team and the student council are dynamic groups and forces for good. They are given responsibility for the direction they take, and they are mature and considered in how they carry out their work.



- It is impressive that the pupils are not only interested in looking for ways to improve the school but they are just as keen to help those less fortunate in the local area and community in which they live. The pupils are currently collecting hampers to distribute at Christmas but they were insistent that the hampers have to be 'luxury hampers' because the recipients have to feel and know that they are important.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and that, when bullying occurs, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. The records that leaders keep are thorough and show that the incidents of bullying are continuing to reduce. This is because there has been significant input over the last few years in assemblies, and external visitors coming in to speak to pupils about all different issues such as crime, drugs, mental health and bullying. The school has recently received a national anti-bullying award.
- A recurring message evident around the school in displays and in conversations with inspectors was 'Barlow: no labels'. Pupils are respected for who they are and there is no acceptance of anything that hints of discrimination or labelling because of gender, sexual orientation, race or belief, for example.
- Pupils generally show very positive attitudes to learning. Where this is less strong is where teaching does not meet their needs.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The attendance for all pupils is good and above the national average. Although the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been lower than the national average, leaders have implemented a raft of strategies that have led to higher rates of attendance.
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is below the national average, and the systems and provisions in place to insist on pupils attending school regularly are working.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions are reducing and are only issued as a last resort. Leaders will only exclude pupils after every other sanction has been exhausted.
- The uniform is smart and presentable. The standard of expectation has been raised and this is evident in school and as pupils travel to and from school. The high standards expected in uniform and appearance reflect the school building which is clean, litter and graffiti free, and an environment which is conducive to learning.
- There is a new behaviour management policy which is clear and uses a step-by-step approach to issuing sanctions. This is not fully embedded and so learning in a few lessons can be disrupted by poor behaviour. However, the pupils spoken to all told inspectors that behaviour has greatly improved.
- The behaviour and attendance of pupils educated at alternative providers is good. Leaders are in regular communication and any issues or absences are dealt with quickly. Leaders often visit the alternative providers to assure themselves of the quality of provision, including safeguarding practices.



## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- For too long pupils have not achieved as well as they should in mathematics. This is especially so for disadvantaged pupils.
- Progress that pupils make in science is not as good as other pupils nationally with the same starting points.
- While the proportion of pupils who attained five or more GCSEs, including English and mathematics at grade C or above, in previous years has been above the national average, it has declined since the last inspection. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved a grade C or above in English and mathematics was below the national average.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged do not make the progress that they should at this school. The progress made by the least able and most able disadvantaged pupils has been too slow.
- The most able pupils do not achieve as well as they should across the curriculum. They do make good progress in English, humanities, religious education and art, for example. The proportion of pupils who achieve the highest grades in biology, chemistry and physics is lower than the national average in these subjects.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have not made good progress across the curriculum. This is contrary to pupils who have a statement or education, health and care plan who consistently make better progress than their peers nationally. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are now making modest improvements in their learning. Their specific needs are being better met than they were previously and their learning is benefiting.
- Pupils are now making quicker progress. This is evident in pupils' work, lessons and the school's own assessment information. The stability in teaching that is now being seen is contributing to this.
- Progress made by the most able pupils is improving in subjects where they are challenged to think hard, and in lessons where they are deepening their knowledge and understanding. Leaders recognise that this is not always consistently happening.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged and the most able disadvantaged still have a lot of catching-up to do with other pupils nationally. The differences in all year groups are closing but not quickly enough. This is because the pupil premium funding has not been targeted specifically on strategies to improve academic standards.
- Progress made by pupils in English, humanities, modern languages, art and religious education is consistently good.
- Pupils are encouraged to read and reading lists of appropriate books are provided. There is a well-resourced library which pupils use. The reports that parents receive also include their children's reading age which parents told inspectors they particularly liked.
- Pupils who are educated at alternative providers achieve well given their starting points and circumstances. Leaders monitor the progress of the pupils at these providers and it is evident that they are appropriately based and their needs are being met.





- Almost all pupils go on to further education, employment or training when they leave this school. This is because of the effective information, advice and guidance that they are provided with.



## School details

Unique reference number	105581
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10024203

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	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	880
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marian Meakin
Headteacher	Claire McCarron
Telephone number	0161 445 8053
Website	<a href="http://www.thebarlowrchigh.co.uk">www.thebarlowrchigh.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@thebarlowrchigh.co.uk">admin@thebarlowrchigh.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	16–17 October 2012

## Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British, with a significant minority of pupils from a variety of different ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is similar to the national average.



- In 2015, the school's GCSE results exceeded the government's current floor standards.
- Pupils join the school with starting points that are similar to the national average.
- Ten pupils are educated off-site at the Manchester pupil referral unit, the hospital school and the Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of information on its website.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons across subjects and across all year groups. A learning walk took place with senior leaders. Inspectors spoke with pupils and looked at their work.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from both key stages, the student council and the student leadership team about their experience of school and their learning.
- Inspectors considered 41 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 25 written submissions on 'free text'. There were 32 staff responses and 35 pupil responses to Ofsted's inspection questionnaire. Inspectors also met with a group of six parents who requested to meet with inspectors.
- Inspectors met with the members of the governing body. Meetings were also held with the principal, senior and middle leaders, and members of staff. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority and the Diocese of Salford.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of documentation including the school's own self-evaluation and development plan, anonymised performance management documents, school policies and procedures, and the school's own assessment information. A range of documentation regarding safeguarding was scrutinised, including behaviour and attendance records and bullying logs.
- Inspectors listened to a group of pupils read.

## Inspection team

Jonathan Jones, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Vicky Atherton	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Long	Ofsted Inspector
Steven Caldecott	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Crossley	Ofsted Inspector
David Woodhouse	Ofsted Inspector



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Further education and skills inspection report



# Connell Sixth Form College

16–19 Academy

**Inspection dates**

21–23 November 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>		<b>Requires improvement</b>	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>	16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Outcomes for learners	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Requires improvement	

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- Too many current students do not make the progress that is expected of them. This is because too much teaching does not meet the individual needs of students, particularly the most able.
- Quality assurance is not effective in ensuring that the many new initiatives introduced by leaders are consistently improving the quality of provision across all subject areas.
- Too few students have meaningful external work experience that is linked clearly to their courses and career aspirations.
- Teachers do not set precise enough targets based on students' starting points. They do not provide students with sufficiently informative feedback to help them to improve their work. Consequently, too many students do not achieve the grades of which they are capable.
- Failure to recruit sufficient numbers of students over the last three years has led to serious financial concerns for the college.
- The curriculum does not meet the needs of the local community. Consequently, too many students who want to study at the college are referred to alternative providers in the locality.

### The provider has the following strengths

- A new culture of high expectations, introduced by the recently appointed senior leadership team, has led to improvements in student outcomes in the last year.
- Progression to further and higher education, employment and apprenticeships is high.
- There are high standards of student behaviour in an inclusive and respectful environment. Students successfully develop a good understanding of the values of living in modern Britain.



## Full report

### Information about the provider

- The college is part of the Bright Future Education Trust, a chain of academies in the North West of England. The college opened in September 2013 with a small cohort of students and relocated to purpose-built premises in September 2014. The college was established to provide high-quality academic provision for young people in East Manchester. The curriculum now includes BTEC level 3 qualifications in sport, business studies and science, in addition to A levels. The college currently has 314 students on roll and also provides academic programmes for Manchester City Football Club scholars who are funded by the Premier League.

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

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - ensuring that targets set for students are precise and based on their starting points so that they make good or better progress
  - providing students with informative feedback which helps them to identify what they need to do to improve in order for them to achieve the grades of which they are capable
  - ensuring that teachers take into account what students already know and can do, so that learning activities meet the needs and interests of students, including good levels of challenge for the most able.
- Ensure that students are able to benefit from meaningful work experience that is linked closely to their courses and career aspirations through good-quality careers advice and guidance.
- Strengthen quality-assurance arrangements to ensure that leaders closely and accurately monitor the impact of new initiatives in order for the quality of provision to be consistently high across all subject areas.
- Evaluate the curriculum and introduce courses that meet the needs of the local community, particularly school leavers.
- Improve the financial sustainability of the college.



## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders in the college are strongly committed to their collectively agreed mission to 'think big' for their students. A new culture of higher expectations introduced by the new senior college leaders, after a time of great turbulence, has led to significant improvements in student outcomes in the last year. In order to further improve outcomes and the student experience, the senior team have introduced many much-needed changes, including more accurate data capture and reporting, a new appraisal system and a revised management structure, including a head of upper and lower sixth form. As yet, too many students still do not make the progress expected of them based on their previous qualifications.
- Leaders have not met the recruitment targets on which college funding plans have been based. They have not taken action quickly enough to reduce costs, even though they implemented a restructure of the college for the start of the current academic year. Leaders have recognised the significant financial risk to the future viability of the college and are taking action to secure additional funding.
- The college offers a wide range of advanced academic courses and a much narrower range of vocational courses. Leaders are planning to expand the range of level 3 vocational courses in 2017/18. Students progress well from these advanced-level courses, particularly into higher education. Currently, leaders do not provide an appropriate curriculum for the many local school leavers who lack the necessary qualifications to start a level 3 course. College leaders are planning to introduce vocational level 2 provision in 2017/18.
- Leaders recognised that advice and guidance was inadequate in 2014. Many students were recruited onto inappropriate courses and a high proportion either left the college or failed their AS-level and A-level examinations. Since 2015, improved initial advice and guidance has led to more students staying on course and continuing to a second year of study. Leaders do not ensure that they receive important student information from all the local schools about the students that enrol at the college. This means that some students do not receive appropriate and prompt support.
- The college's restructure, implemented by the new principal, has resulted in clear accountability for all staff and has led to many poorly performing staff leaving the college. Leaders have not implemented the new appraisal system well enough and do not set clear targets for teachers to hold them to account for the quality of their teaching and their students' outcomes. Many teachers' targets do not relate sufficiently to the quality of learning and assessment in their classes, the previous outcomes of their students and the high expectations of leaders.
- The majority of the college's self-assessment report is clear, detailed and forms part of a clear quality cycle. Although strengths within the report are overstated, the quality improvement plan includes clear actions for the large majority of areas for improvement.
- Managers have not recognised the weak reporting and overgrading of the observations of teaching, learning and assessment. The observations focus too little on student learning and progress in lessons, with the result that areas for improvement identified in the last inspection remain, such as the variable quality of teaching, learning and assessment across different subjects and meeting of the needs of the most able students.





- The recently appointed senior leadership team has introduced many new initiatives. However, quality-assurance systems are not effective in ensuring that these initiatives are consistently improving the quality of provision across all subject areas.
- A culture of inclusivity permeates the college, where students from many different cultures and educational backgrounds demonstrate tolerance and respect. Students report that they feel safe. All parents responding to the college survey agree that their sons and daughters are safe at college. A 'no missed opportunities' strategy has led to effective learning about equality and diversity.
- The college has responded well to the 'Prevent' duty, with regular training for staff and students, clear policies and approaches and a strong approach to e-safety. Staff's and students' understanding of the threats of radicalisation and extremism is good and all are aware of how to report issues and concerns under the 'Prevent' duty guidance.

### **The governance of the provider**

- Changes to the governing body mean there is now a skilled and experienced team of governors who have overseen the appointment of a new, committed senior leadership team.
- Governors are very well informed and receive regular performance reports. They offer good support, challenge and suggestions to the senior team.
- Governors are well aware that the college has serious financial concerns and will not continue to be viable without additional support from Bright Futures Education Trust (BFET) or another external source. They are taking action to secure the necessary financial support for the college.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- A newly constituted safeguarding team is well qualified, has effective links with external agencies, and makes appropriate referrals.
- Staff have received comprehensive training on all aspects of the extensive safeguarding policy.
- An annual audit of safeguarding in the college ensures a detailed and current focus and all the recommended improvements have been acted on.
- College leaders have worked well with other members of BFET to share good practice in safeguarding across primary, secondary and post-16 sectors.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Requires improvement**

- Too many teachers do not plan activities that provide challenge for students, particularly the most able, to ensure that students make good progress and achieve their full potential. They do not rigorously assess students' progress in class and fail to question students well enough in order to check their understanding of topics or challenge misconceptions. Teachers often answer questions before students have had a chance to answer for themselves. Too many teachers do not ask sufficiently challenging questions to extend students' learning or to develop their verbal skills.
- Teachers give too little attention to developing students' mathematical skills. Managers



recognise that they have concentrated on strategies to develop students' English skills to the detriment of mathematics.

- Targets set for students by their subject teachers do not always take account of students' starting points. Targets are too broad and do not support students to know what they need to do to achieve their goals. As a result, too few students, particularly the most able, make the progress expected of them and fail to achieve or exceed their targets.
- The monitoring and tracking of students' progress are not rigorous enough. Teachers' inconsistent use of individual learning plans to monitor students' progress means that records are often incomplete or comments and targets are too general. Individual learning plans are not routinely shared with students. Consequently, students are often unable to recall accurately their level of progress or know what they need to do to progress further. Teachers' feedback on students' work does not consistently indicate clearly what students need to do to improve.
- Most teachers use their good subject knowledge well in the majority of lessons. However, too few teachers use vocational examples, such as market research in business studies, to contextualise learning for students and to extend their understanding of the subject.
- In a minority of subject areas, teachers plan interesting and stimulating lessons based on students' starting points. Teachers skilfully pose questions to students depending on their abilities. In these lessons students develop good critical thinking skills, use technical vocabulary accurately and the most able are suitably challenged. For example, in geography, students discuss convincingly the erosion and weathering in glacial environments; in sociology, students identify accurately the academic achievement of different social groups. As a result, students in these lessons make rapid progress and meet and often exceed their target grades.
- Students benefit from a culture of respect and tolerance. They work well together in lessons and respect each other's views and opinions, entering into healthy debate on topical global issues such as the European Union referendum and the United States presidential elections to broaden students' understanding of the values of society.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

### **Requires improvement**

- Information, advice and guidance for students on entry to the college are generally good and ensure that most students enrol onto appropriate courses for their career aspirations. However, careers guidance during students' study programmes is limited. Teachers and careers advisers do not routinely review students' careers aspirations or their progress to ensure that their planned next steps in education, apprenticeships or employment are realistic and achievable. Careers advisers provide students with information about external careers events but do not routinely evaluate the take-up and impact. As a result, staff are unaware of the value of such events in helping students to make informed decisions about what to do after college.
- Too few students benefit from meaningful work experience that is linked to their courses or career aspirations. The planning and evaluation of work experience is weak. Too many students do not recognise the value of work experience in helping them to make informed decisions about their future learning or employment. For example, A-level students applying to university for teaching courses, or students on vocational programmes who



want to join the fire service, have not had a work experience placement in a school or fire station.

- The new tutorial system, which was introduced in September 2016, does not meet the aim of providing a whole-college coordinated approach to the development of students' personal, social and employability skills. Approximately half of students who completed the student survey in October 2016 reported that tutorial sessions are repetitive, often boring, and that their time could be better spent on alternative activities.
- Organised enrichment such as sports activities is well planned and well attended by students. Students also participate in activities such as volunteering, employability awards and charitable work in the community. They develop a wide range of personal and employability skills through these activities. For example, students are proud of their development of an application for mobile telephones for a charitable organisation.
- As a result of recently implemented strategies to improve behaviour and establish high expectations, students are now considerate and well-mannered. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning, and behaviour around the college is exemplary.
- Successful interventions by managers to improve attendance have resulted in high levels of attendance in lessons. Punctuality is good, with only a few students arriving late for their lessons.
- Students are keen to participate in new initiatives to recognise their achievements such as The Resilience Challenge, Language Ambassador Programme and the Attendance Leader Board. Through initiatives such as these, students develop skills required for employment, improve their standards of behaviour and prepare for their future lives.
- Students demonstrate a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe and how to seek support should they have any concerns, including if they feel people are trying to influence their views.

### Outcomes for learners

### Requires improvement

- The proportion of students who successfully achieved their A-level qualifications, at the grades expected of them, in 2015/16 was too low and varied significantly between subjects. For example, the proportion of students who met or exceeded their target grades in physics and biology was very low, yet in law and business studies it was high.
- Overall achievement on AS-level courses increased significantly in 2015/16, but considerable variation exists between different subjects. For example, the proportion of students who achieved or exceeded their targets grades in chemistry, English language, English literature and sociology was high, but in business studies, law, mathematics and physics it was low.
- Achievement rates on BTEC level 3 programmes are high and almost all students on extended diploma programmes achieve high grades. However, most students on subsidiary diploma programmes fail to achieve the grades expected of them.
- Achievement in English and mathematics GCSE is improving and is higher than similar colleges nationally. The proportion of students achieving English GCSE at grades A\* to C is particularly high.



- Too few students, particularly the most able, make the progress expected of them. Too many current students are not achieving the in-year grades of which they are capable.
- Leaders track the destinations of students well. A high proportion of students progress to university. Two thirds of students are accepted at their first choice of university. Those students who do not go to university progress to apprenticeships, employment or further study. Students who do not return for the second year of their programmes progress to full-time employment, apprenticeships or level 3 courses at other colleges.
- Leaders have taken appropriate action to retain students and, as a result, the proportion of students who stay until the end of their two-year level 3 programmes has improved significantly.
- Leaders accurately identified achievement gaps between different groups of students and took positive action to reduce these gaps. There are now no significant achievement gaps.



## Provider details

Unique reference number	139730
Type of provider	16–19 academy
Age range of learners	16–18
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	321
Principal/CEO	Ms Jane Hopcroft
Telephone number	01612 319200
Website	<a href="http://www.connellsixthformcollege.com">www.connellsixthformcollege.com</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	0	0	0	0	304	10	0	0
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	N/A							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	0							
Funding received from:	Education Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							



## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the assistant principal, quality and curriculum, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, and questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions and tutorials. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

## Inspection team

Anita Pyrkotsch-Jones, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kathy Passant	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Brabner	Ofsted Inspector
Suzanne Wainwright	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrea Murphy	Ofsted Inspector
Claire McGuire	Ofsted Inspector



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School report



# Moston Fields Primary School

Brookside Road, Moston, Manchester M40 9GN

**Inspection dates**

8–9 November 2016

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	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Where there is repeated staff absence, pupils' progress falters, particularly in early years.
- Opportunities for purposeful outdoor activity are underdeveloped in the early years.
- Although improving, the rates of progress made by those pupils who are most able, including those who are disadvantaged, are not fast enough to help them reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils' achievement across a range of subjects, such as history, geography and religious education, is patchy because teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for them to gain the necessary skills and knowledge.
- Pupils in key stage 1 do not yet make good progress from their starting points on entry to Year 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, standards are lower than they should be.
- Middle leaders have too little influence on the quality of teaching across the curriculum.
- Responsibility for improvement has been unequally distributed. Too much responsibility has rested with too few leaders, particularly in terms of assessment and analysis of data.
- Some teaching does not take sufficient account of pupils' different starting points. Insufficient challenge holds the most-able pupils back from making rapid progress.
- Although much has been done to address attendance issues, absence for disadvantaged pupils remains higher than average, as does persistent absenteeism.
- The teaching of phonics is not yet effective in setting up pupils to be successful readers.
- Pupils do not yet get enough opportunities to practise their writing skills across the wider curriculum.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are a delight to meet. They enjoy school, behave well and feel safe.
- Pupils' personal development is strong. Pupils are well prepared to become valuable citizens of the future.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and are keen to succeed.
- The pupil premium spend has improved achievement for disadvantaged pupils. They make good progress from their starting points.
- Governors challenge and support leaders effectively. They understand what leaders need to do to drive the school forward.
- Mathematics and computing are well led. This has resulted in improved outcomes for most pupils in these subjects.





## Full report

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

- Reduce the unevenness in teaching so that across groups of pupils gains in learning are stronger, particularly in writing and throughout the wider curriculum, by:
  - ensuring that teachers have the skills to deepen pupils' knowledge in subjects of the primary curriculum such as history, geography and religious education
  - ensuring that phonics is consistently well taught so that more pupils reach the expected standard by the end of Year 1
  - supporting teachers to ensure that their assessments of pupils' progress are accurate and inform their planning of support for pupils
  - ensuring that the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make faster rates of progress to reach the standards expected from their starting points
  - ensuring that repeated staff absence does not have a negative impact on pupils' progress, particularly in the early years
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to do extended pieces of writing and developing pupils' stamina to complete extended writing using good handwriting.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - developing the role of phase leaders and subject leaders so that they have a more effective impact on improving teaching
  - reviewing the systems for tracking pupils' progress to ensure that information about groups of pupils is analysed and shared in a timely way
  - revisiting the curriculum to ensure that it allows pupils to gain the skills and knowledge they need to succeed
  - systematically analysing the impact of the school's work to improve pupils' attendance.



## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The school's improvement journey has been hindered by instability in staffing. This impacts negatively on pupils' rates of progress, particularly in key stage 1 and early years.
- The acting headteacher alongside her acting deputy know what they need to do to turn the fortunes of the school around. They have started to work with middle and subject leaders, so that responsibility for teaching, learning and assessment can be shared evenly across key phases.
- Recent innovative changes to the timetable for pupils in upper key stage 2 ensure that attendance of pupils on Monday mornings is improving rapidly. However, attendance overall remains below average, particularly for some vulnerable groups.
- Some subject leaders are racing ahead and using the expert guidance provided by the local authority to good effect. This accounts for improvements, particularly in the teaching and outcomes of mathematics, where previous weaknesses have been rectified.
- Leaders have made it a priority to address pupils' social and emotional development. Their systems to support pupils' social and emotional needs have been overhauled. For example, the use of the 'nurture room' provides a safe haven for vulnerable children. The staff charged with ensuring that pupils are safe, secure and well behaved are more than willing to go the extra mile so that pupils are able to learn.
- Leaders have reviewed systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. However, these systems are not yet robust enough to analyse the progress that groups of pupils are making towards their learning targets. The information is not yet accurate, or reviewed often enough.
- Leaders make effective use of more experienced teachers by teaming them with less-experienced staff members to improve their classroom skills. Booklets of good-quality pieces of work are shared with staff so they know what to do to raise their expectations of pupils.
- A range of strategies are in place to help pupils overcome some of the challenges that get in the way of learning such as the decision to provide much smaller classes to cater for vulnerable groups in lower key stage 2. This means that adults can help them to learn more effectively.
- The use of pupil premium funding is now making a real difference to outcomes. Sports funding, too, is used effectively to promote pupils' enjoyment of, and participation in, physical activity. The use of external coaches is helping to broaden pupils' experience of different types of physical activity. This gives all pupils a chance to compete and keep fit and active.
- Pupils are taught all the subjects specified in the primary national curriculum. However, opportunities for them to develop skills in subjects such as history, geography, art and design and technology are not planned as effectively as in English and mathematics.
- Despite this weakness, the curriculum is much livelier than it was due to the wide range of enrichment opportunities now on offer. Visits outside school coupled with visitors and



themed assemblies are strengthening pupils' enjoyment of school. For example, pupils were posed the question in assembly: 'why do we wear poppies?', which encouraged them to reflect upon the meaning of Armistice Day.

- Pupils are gaining the skills, values and attributes to make a positive contribution to modern society. Their understanding of British values is promoted well. Pupils know about other cultures and different faiths such as Hinduism and Judaism and visit their places of worship. Their awareness and understanding is underpinned further through a timetable of assemblies, resulting in classroom work displayed on the 'theme of the week' board.

### **Governance of the school**

- The restructured governing body is working smartly because governors know their roles and they are equipped to fulfil their responsibilities. Consequently, governors know what to ask about teaching and pupils' achievement and they understand the answers that leaders provide.
- The chair of the governing body holds regular monthly meetings with the acting head teacher to ensure he has a working knowledge of what is happening in school on a week-to-week basis. He shares this information with the full governing body so that everyone is kept informed.
- Governors are working on a review of all policies to make sure they are fully up to date and relevant for the school. They also check the website regularly to make sure all statutory information is made available to parents.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff and pupils know who to turn to if they have a problem or a concern. The safeguarding lead holds meetings to share information with other professionals when appropriate. These ensure that early help is put into place promptly. In a pupil meeting one child said 'We know we're safe here', summing up the views of others
- School records show that any worries are followed through thoroughly. Good use is made of external services to support vulnerable pupils and their families.
- All staff have been made aware of how to spot early warnings of child abuse.
- The child protection and parent liaison support adviser has training and experience that equips them to play a vital role in ensuring that there is a culture of safeguarding.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- Although improving, pupils' learning remains uneven across classes, year groups and subjects. In some classes children are flourishing but in others they make slower progress. This links directly to the frequent absence of teachers and teaching assistants on one hand and a lack of experience in other staff, particularly in key stage 1.
- Pupils' books shows that learning is not at its best when activities lack structure or fail to build on what pupils already know and can do. For example, a child was asked to multiply 6 x 6 and misheard. She worked out 60 x 60 with ease, but the lack of challenge for the pupil was not picked up. In English, work for six different learning



groups can have the same outcomes. Some able pupils chose not to improve their writing, for example, as they are not asked to do so.

- In some classes, extra adults work in close partnership with teachers to make sure that all pupils can learn effectively. In others, they do not make enough difference because they are unsure of how to teach a particular topic effectively.
- The teaching of English is on a journey. It is improving, but still has a way to go to ensure that pupils are competent at writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar. There are missed opportunities for reinforcing pupils' writing skills across subjects other than English.
- The teaching of mathematics now ensures that pupils are starting to make links between mathematical concepts and are learning by solving problems.
- In contrast, the teaching of phonics is not helping some children to read fluently. The use of phonics to decode words is beginning in Years 1, 2 and 3. However, not all pupils accurately break down and build up words according to sounds.
- Questions about the texts do not allow pupils to use inference in their answers. Tasks for able pupils are too often undemanding and slow their rates of progress.
- Most teachers support pupils' learning well through the productive and warm relationships they foster. Teachers' good use of humour and praise paves the way for pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are increasingly keen to throw themselves into their learning, because most teachers strive to make activities fun and relevant.
- Teachers reflect regularly on how their pupils are doing but their frequent rearrangement of pupil groups leads to wasted time for some pupils.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Children take pride in their school and are keen to contribute towards its success. They take their responsibilities seriously, particularly the many ambassadors and school councillors, who work with staff, pupils and the wider community to bring about change. They set a strong example of how to treat others and be valuable citizens. Pupils are eager to share their ideas because they have a voice in school. Their views count and their suggestions are acted upon to make school a happy place.
- Different groups of pupils say that they feel safe. Incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with very quickly on those occasions when it is reported. Pupils recognise that everyone is different but equal. They understand that unkind remarks about skin colour, sexuality, faith or learning difficulties can cause harm. Incidents of racist and homophobic language are a rarity.
- There is real emphasis by all staff on being healthy, exercising and eating the right foods. An allotment has been established with a little orchard that is building pupils' skills in 'grow it' activities. Parents and others from the wider community are actively involved with this project, as they are with the recently established whole-school outdoor learning project.



- Breakfast club is a huge success, with 45 pupils able to get to school early to eat a healthy breakfast and play games until the start of the school day, when they are ready to learn.
- Those pupils who feel as if they need a safe haven receive effective support, including through their visits to the 'enchanted forest' room.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is improving strongly because of the care and support from those adults who have responsibility for pupils' social and emotional needs. Pupils speak highly of the staff support they receive. They report that it helps them to solve problems both in school and at home.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They try to do their best, listen attentively, follow instructions and take pride in the school.
- Pupils agree that behaviour is improving. They think it is mostly good, and say, 'There are some arguments, but the buddies solve it.' They respond well to new behaviour initiatives in classrooms that result in golden time and activities and treats. Pupils feel that the systems are fair and understand the behaviour that is expected in school.
- Recent improvements have led to raised attendance. Several classes are now achieving weekly attendance of 100%, much celebrated in assemblies and on the school's website. The overall attendance and persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils continues to be below average.
- Almost all of the parents who shared their views agree that pupils are safe and behave well, and that bullying is dealt with effectively.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **Requires improvement**

- Pupils' books and the school's data show that pupils' achievement is moving in the right direction and strengthening over time. Higher standards than previously in mathematics and reading at key stage 2 are a positive indication that Moston Fields is improving.
- Disadvantaged children make better progress than non-disadvantaged, which is a testament to the way that pupil premium funding is spent. However, most-able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are not yet making enough progress from their starting points.
- In key stage 2, standards are rising in mathematics, reading and writing because pupils are making better progress than they did in the past.
- This is not the case in key stage 1, where attainment over three years shows a decline, including in phonics.
- Pupils' outcomes are not yet good because gaps remain between certain groups and pupils' achievement in other subjects is patchy. Moreover, weaker teaching in the past means that as the pupils get older, teachers are having to ensure that pupils make more rapid progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' learning across subjects other than English and mathematics is uneven. Pupils blossom in some areas. Frequent opportunities for pupils to participate in learning a musical instrument and sport are helping them to gain a broader range of skills and excel in different areas.



- Some pupils are struggling to meet the standards for writing because of weaknesses in handwriting, grammar, spelling and punctuation. Teachers are working hard to address these across all classes and their shared focus is starting pay dividends.
- The school recognises that pupils' phonics development has not been strong enough. Staff are working to accelerate Year 1 pupils' reading development and there are signs of improvement. Phonics teaching in key stage 2 boosts pupils' skills. Nurture-group staff teach phonics in an engaging way that keeps pupils focused on the activities.
- Too little attention on the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in the past left this group floundering and their progress was not good enough. This is now being tackled and these pupils are making stronger progress.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those pupils who speak English as an additional language make strong progress and often surpass the standards gained by their White British classmates.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- The numbers of temporary staff in early years has a detrimental effect on how children learn. As a result, the important bonds that are built between adults and children every day do not get the chance to form. Some adults do not know which activities the children should be directed to as it is not clear what they need to learn next.
- Provision in the outdoor area is not as engaging and well planned as it is for reading, writing and mathematics in the classrooms.
- Pupils sometimes lack guidance on tasks in Nursery and wander around aimlessly.
- There is mixed success with the teaching of a phonics. When the teaching of letters and sounds is planned for children at specific stages of development, it is successful and they make good progress. However, where the matching of teaching to needs is not as carefully considered, progress stalls.
- New systems to gather information about children's progress are used effectively some of the time to identify next steps for each individual. In Reception, clear records show the steps that children are taking and how their skills are developing. The records kept in Nursery are of a lower quality and are not annotated, so it difficult to see how the pupils are progressing.
- The early years offers a safe environment, both indoors and outdoors.
- Parents are very happy with the improved communication from school. They are pleased to be invited in, to work with their children for 'phonics bingo' and homework club. These activities are building positive learning partnerships with parents but do not give parents the advice they need on how to develop their children's early phonics skills.
- A large proportion of children who enter the Nursery have weaker skills and knowledge in language and communication than are usually expected for their age. Over the last three years, there has been a rising number of pupils achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception Year. In 2016, the proportion of children gaining a good level of development surpassed the national average.
- Early years staff also welcome parents to speak with them at the start of the day if there are issues they wish to discuss. As a result, parents feel listened to.



- Children are polite to adults and show respect for each other. Children follow instruction and play and work well together.



## School details

Unique reference number	105427
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10019797

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	378
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	John Hayes
Acting Head teacher	Nicki White
Telephone number	0161 681 1801
Website	<a href="http://www.mostonfieldsprimaryschool.co.uk">www.mostonfieldsprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@mostonfields.manchester.sch.uk">head@mostonfields.manchester.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	12–13 November 2014

## Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school
- The proportion of pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, as is the number of children who speak English as an additional language
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average
- The proportion of pupils who receive support through the pupil premium funding is above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards. These are the minimum standards and rates of progress expected in reading, writing and mathematics of pupils in key stage 2.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been considerable staffing changes. A new acting headteacher took up post in January 2016. The acting deputy headteacher took up his role at the same time.





- A new headteacher, with a proven record of success, will be taking up her substantive post in January 2016.
- The school meets the requirements for publishing information on its website.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited each classroom to observe teaching and pupils' learning. Three of these lesson observations were carried out with the senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils during lessons and at play. They met formally with five groups of pupils, and heard pupils of different abilities read.
- Meetings were held with staff, phase and subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding. They took account of school information about pupils' outcomes and scrutinised pupils' books.
- Inspectors spoke informally to a small group of parents at the start of the day. They also considered the 11 free-text comments and the single pupil response to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Maggie Parker, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Dimeck	Ofsted Inspector
Jeremy Barnes	Ofsted Inspector



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School report



# St Chrysostom's CofE Primary School

Lincoln Grove, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Manchester M13 0DX

**Inspection dates**

29–30 November 2016

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leadership has stabilised after a period of turbulence. The executive headteacher provides highly effective leadership and has set a clear direction to improve the school.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The school is a welcoming and harmonious community.
- Behaviour overall is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and the majority are well behaved in lessons. Pupils' behaviour around the school is exemplary.
- Assistant headteachers make a strong contribution to improvement and provide excellent support for less experienced staff.
- The governing body provides good support and challenge to leaders. They are managing the move towards full federation with St John's Primary School in Longsight effectively.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. After a period of instability, permanent staff are in place who bring energy and innovative ideas to the school. Staff morale is high.
- Teaching assistants make a significant and valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff are vigilant and pupils feel and are safe.
- The decline in achievement at key stage 2 has been halted. Pupils are now making good progress. The high standards attained at key stage 1 have been sustained.
- The early years provision is good. Children are happy and safe and make good progress. They make rapid gains in their language skills. Their progress in other areas, particularly mathematics, is not as rapid because their abilities are not assessed as thoroughly.
- Subject leaders' skills are not yet sufficiently developed to enable them to check pupils' progress and lead improvements in teaching.
- Although there have been recent improvements to the teaching of reading comprehension skills, these are not yet consolidated across the school.
- Pupils, particularly the most able, have not acquired sufficient reasoning skills to confidently solve problems in mathematics.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills on extended pieces of writing.



## Full report

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

- Continue to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - teaching reading comprehension skills explicitly and evaluating the impact of strategies that have been recently introduced
  - ensuring that pupils, particularly the most able, are supported to develop reasoning skills, apply their knowledge to solve problems and deepen their learning in mathematics
  - giving pupils opportunities to write at length
  - further developing pupils' vocabulary and spelling skills.
- Develop subject leaders' skills to enable them to lead improvements to teaching and check that pupils' knowledge and skills are developing systematically.
- Ensure that children in the early years, particularly able children who do not yet speak English, make the best possible progress in all areas of learning by:
  - ensuring that assessments accurately reflect children's ability in mathematical understanding, knowledge of the world and their personal and social skills
  - ensuring that activities in mathematics are sufficiently challenging to enable children to extend their learning.



## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The recently appointed executive headteacher provides clear direction. His knowledgeable, highly effective leadership is motivating staff and ensuring that improvements continue apace. He has quickly established where further improvement is needed, based on thorough and accurate evaluation of the school's performance.
- The assistant headteachers make a strong contribution to school improvement. They are excellent role models and support less-experienced staff very effectively. They are leading improvements in the teaching of reading and literacy across the school successfully and their work is already having an impact on pupils' progress.
- Leadership of other subjects is not yet developed fully. Middle leaders are committed and enthusiastic but many are relatively new to the role and they have not received the training or time to develop their role fully. Action planning for foundation subjects and mathematics is not focused sufficiently on improving teaching and ensuring pupils' continued good progress.
- Staff morale is high. The large number of new teachers, appointed since the last inspection, bring energy, enthusiasm and innovative ideas. They share senior leaders' ambition and high expectations for pupils' achievement and personal development.
- Teachers' performance is managed effectively. Teachers have appropriate targets linked to their role, pupils' outcomes and whole-school priorities. Leaders and governors make sure teachers only progress through the salary scale when their performance warrants it.
- Good-quality induction supports newly qualified teachers to develop their skills and become familiar with school policies and priorities for improvement. All staff are supported to develop their skills further through well-planned professional development and work with other local schools. The links with St John's School in Longsight provide good opportunities for staff to learn from best practice and enrich pupils' experiences by sharing staff's expertise across both schools.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key strength. Pupils' rich cultural heritage is celebrated by all. Pupils show great respect for each other and interest in the diverse backgrounds and faiths represented in the school community. Pupils gain a good understanding of values such as democracy and the rule of law because such values are exemplified in the work of the school and in lessons.
- The promotion of equal opportunities is integral to the work of the school. Staff do all they can to remove barriers to learning and make sure all pupils achieve as well as possible. Pupils who join the school part way through the year in all year groups are supported successfully to access the curriculum. Disadvantaged pupils are funded to access enrichment activities. Pupils' personal development and welfare are paramount and the most vulnerable pupils are supported extremely well.
- The curriculum is broad and enriched with a range of before- and after-school activities. Pupils enjoy drama, gardening, choir and a range of sports, for example. The use of additional sports funding is planned with care to broaden pupils' experience and participation in school and in after-school clubs. As well as the more traditional sports,



pupils enjoy skateboarding and street dancing. Sports coaches provide training for staff to improve their teaching skills to ensure that quality provision is sustained.

- Parents who spoke with inspectors and responded to Parent View are overwhelmingly positive about the school. All would recommend it and the vast majority feel their children are taught and looked after well. There are good opportunities for parents to learn how to support their child's learning at home in various workshops. A small minority of parents feel they do not receive enough information about their child's progress and feel that past leaders have not responded well to their concerns.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school through a time of instability in staffing and leadership. Interim posts have kept the school moving forward, but such turbulence has had an impact on pupils' progress. The decline that was evident has now been halted.

### **Governance of the school**

- The governing body provides good support for school leaders and checks the performance of the school closely. Governors are managing the move from two governing bodies to one federated governing body effectively.
- The chair of the school governing body has an in-depth understanding of the school's performance based on a good understanding of data and comprehensive reports from the local authority.
- Governors ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively. Disadvantaged pupils of all abilities make good progress because they benefit from additional support, good-quality resources and access to a range of enrichment activities.
- Governors oversee leaders' performance and teachers' performance management effectively.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There are thorough procedures to ensure the safe recruitment of staff and ensure that governors and all who work with pupils in school have the relevant checks.
- Records relating to safeguarding are detailed and well organised. Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are supported very effectively, with support from outside agencies where appropriate.
- All staff have completed training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty appropriate to their roles and responsibilities. They receive frequent updates and all have read the most recent government guidelines. Staff are aware of the signs of abuse and risks associated with extremism; they know the routes to follow if they have any concerns.
- There are appropriate filters in place to ensure the safety of pupils when they are online.
- All parents who responded to Parent View said their child feels happy and safe.



### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and teaching assistants are encouraging and provide motivating activities that engage the interest of all pupils. Positive relationships help pupils to grow in confidence; pupils are keen to contribute in lessons because they feel their views are respected and valued.
- Teachers explain new learning well and are skilled in questioning; they probe and deepen pupils' understanding effectively. Teachers use good-quality resources, including information and communication technology, to aid teaching and support learning.
- Activities are usually planned well for different groups of pupils in lessons. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported extremely well, with support from staff or pupils speaking their first language where possible and intelligent use of visual aids. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who need to catch up are supported effectively in classes and in small groups.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, both in class and in small groups, with pupils of all ability. They have received good-quality training in the teaching of phonics and many have specialist skills in teaching pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, language difficulties or social and emotional needs.
- The most able pupils are not always taught as effectively as they could be. While teachers' questioning is effective in discussion, the activities set for the most able are not sufficiently challenging to enable pupils to achieve greater depth in mathematics. For example, pupils repeat calculations that they are already fluent in.
- The teaching of phonics has improved significantly with the introduction of a new approach that engages pupils' interest. Pupils are grouped effectively so they build on their knowledge and skills systematically from the early years to Year 3.
- The teaching of reading comprehension skills is a whole-school focus. Good-quality training has already improved teachers' skills but it is too soon to evaluate the impact of new approaches on pupils' ability to read for deeper meaning.
- Senior leaders are leading the way in promoting the joy of reading and deeper understanding of texts. Pupils in key stage 2 were captivated in the assembly by the executive headteacher focusing on the book, 'The New Jumper'. The assembly fired pupils' imagination and provided teachers with a wealth of material to follow up in class.
- Teachers are imaginative in making links between subjects and helping pupils to transfer learning from one context to another. This effectively supports pupils, especially those speaking English as an additional language, to develop their language and literacy skills.
- Teaching is particularly successful in supporting pupils to develop their understanding of different types of writing and punctuation. It is not quite as effective in helping pupils to identify spelling mistakes and use more exciting vocabulary in their writing.
- Mathematical knowledge is taught consistently well so that pupils have a good grasp of number facts and calculation methods. Pupils attain expected standards in





mathematics but they are not taught effectively how to apply reasoning skills, investigate and solve problems. This means that some pupils, particularly the most able pupils, do not develop the depth in learning of which they are capable.

- Teachers' marking and feedback to pupils is consistent and follows school policy.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare is at the heart of everything the school does. Pupils grow in confidence and are extremely well prepared for life in modern society.
- The school is a welcoming and harmonious community where everyone gets on well. Staff are excellent role models in promoting positive and caring relationships. Pupils show great respect for each other and celebrate the diversity within their school enthusiastically.
- Pupils and staff ensure that pupils who join the school during the school year are helped to settle in quickly. Older pupils who have limited experience of English or the national curriculum are provided with excellent support to help them catch up and learn English.
- Pupils are encouraged to contribute to decision-making and the running of their school at every opportunity. For example, they talked about the qualities they would like in their new executive headteacher and a representative group interviewed candidates, asking very challenging questions.
- Pupils' leadership skills are developed exceptionally well. The school council and pupil leadership groups, such as the Champions of Worship, rightly take great pride in their work. The school councillors ensure that they represent the views of their classmates. The school grounds have been developed as a result of their most recent project and the garden is enjoyed by all.
- Pupils feel and are safe in school. They have an in-depth understanding of risks and hazards that could compromise their safety in school and beyond, including when they are online. Pupils know who to talk to and what to do if they ever feel at risk or concerned.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors were positive that bullying does not happen in their school. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including that associated with racism, extremism and homophobia. They know that such bullying will not be tolerated in school.
- All parents who made their views known feel their children are happy and safe. The vast majority feel bullying is dealt with effectively.

#### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.



- Pupils' attendance is above average and they are punctual to school.
- Fixed-term exclusions have been reduced significantly from above average in 2014 to nil in 2015. This is because behaviour is being managed more effectively by all staff and pupils who initially struggle to manage their own behaviour are provided with excellent support to ensure that they remain engaged in school. No pupils have been permanently excluded during the last three years.
- Behaviour around the school and in shared areas is exemplary. Pupils are polite, considerate and sensible.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and the vast majority concentrate in lessons and produce good-quality work. Occasionally a few pupils wander off task and may temporarily disrupt the learning of others in lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants are quick to recognise where this happens and provide appropriate support. A few pupils do not look after their books well.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Good

- Pupils' progress across the whole school is now good. The decline in pupils' achievement at key stage 2, that has been evident for the last two years, has been halted. The disruption to leadership and staffing, including several interim appointments and temporary teaching staff, contributed to this decline. Staffing and leadership are now stabilised and new teachers and leaders are raising pupils' achievement.
- Pupils have made consistently make good progress from their starting points and attained above-average standards at the end Year 2 over a number of years. This strong performance is continuing and current pupils are achieving at least expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in each class at key stage 1. Attainment in the phonics screening check also remains above average.
- The low attainment at the end of key stage 2 in reading in 2016 was due partly to the high number of pupils in that cohort who joined the school in key stage 2. Leaders recognise that past pupils have not received explicit enough teaching in comprehension skills to help them understand deeper meaning in texts. For some, limited English and lack of understanding of vocabulary was a barrier. Teaching is now securing better progress in reading.
- The most able pupils read with fluency and understanding and have a good range of strategies to work out unknown words. The least able pupils are more reliant on phonic strategies and work out the pronunciation of words accurately. However, they do not have the fluency to infer meaning from the text.
- In mathematics, pupils typically attain at expected standards at the end of key stage 2 and lower- and middle-ability pupils have made good progress in the past. The most able pupils have not made such good progress however, considering their prior attainment at key stage 1.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported effectively and make at least as good and sometimes better progress than other pupils in school with the same starting points. In 2016 disadvantaged pupils made similar or better progress than other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics. Progress in reading was not as positive and reflected that



of other pupils in school.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress over time. They benefit from targeted support in class and additional help from specialist support staff in small groups. The support in early years and at key stage 1 is particularly effective. Pupils who need to catch up are also supported well so they make accelerated progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well across key stage 1 and key stage 2. Those who are at early stages of English-language acquisition are given effective support to develop their language skills in subjects across the curriculum.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress in writing across the school and in all subjects at key stage 1. They do not make such good progress in mathematics at key stage 2 because activities are at times too repetitive and do not provide them with sufficient opportunities to develop reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils of all abilities, including the most able, have not made expected progress in reading in the last two years.

### Early years provision

### Good

- Children enter the early years with a wide range of pre-school experiences. Many children do not speak English so their communication, language and literacy skills in English are often below that which is typical for their age. Their knowledge and skills in other areas of learning are more varied and cohorts vary from year to year.
- Children make good progress from their starting points and the proportion reaching a good level of development is typically in line with the national average. Children make rapid gains in their communication, language and literacy skills. They are prepared well for further learning in Year 1.
- The early years provision is well led by an assistant headteacher. New staff are inducted well and all receive appropriate training to develop their skills and ensure that they are up to date with school policies and safeguarding procedures.
- The learning environment is stimulating and well organised to promote imaginative play and provide children with purposeful activities across all areas of learning. The outdoor area is well resourced and provides an exciting outdoor classroom. Children enjoy exploring natural materials and developing their skills across all areas.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and teaching is consistently good. Children are motivated and delight in exploring the range of activities. In the Nursery, for example, children developed their manual dexterity by managing utensils to create models, using tweezers to pick up buttons and using writing and painting materials to make marks.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength. Children in the Reception classes are grouped appropriately and build on their skills systematically. The multi-sensory approach ensures that they develop effective early reading and writing skills.
- There is excellent provision for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in the early years. Children make great strides in their learning in structured



sessions with a speech and language specialist. Adults work together consistently to support children's learning and personal development in a range of contexts.

- Staff make good use of additional funding and make sure that disadvantaged children make just as good progress as others.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to children's learning and are consistent in all their dealings with children. They are particularly skilled in supporting children's language and literacy development.
- Children are very well behaved and develop good attitudes to learning at an early stage. They work and play together happily. Children feel safe, develop independence in learning and grow in confidence because adults are encouraging and provide an excellent level of care for children.
- Staff are vigilant in ensuring children's safety and well-being and make sure all welfare requirements are met. All staff know the routes to follow if they have any safeguarding concerns.
- Engagement with parents is very good. Parents are welcomed and involved at the start of the day and provided with good advice to support their children's learning at home. They told inspectors that they are impressed with the 'calm and welcoming atmosphere' and the 'purposeful activities that capture children's interest'.
- Adults assess children's communication and language needs very thoroughly and adapt teaching and activities well to meet their needs. However, children's mathematical skills, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their social needs are not assessed as effectively. Sometimes, children's lack of English masks their ability in other areas. Consequently, some of the activities provided, particularly those designed to promote mathematical skills, are not sufficiently challenging for the most able children.



## School details

Unique reference number	105491
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10025642

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 controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	429
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Gutteridge
Executive headteacher	Gareth Elswood
Telephone number	0161 273 3621
Website	<a href="http://www.st-chrysostoms.manchester.sch.uk">www.st-chrysostoms.manchester.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@st-chrysostoms.manchester.sch.uk">admin@st-chrysostoms.manchester.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	3–4 November 2011

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The number on roll has increased significantly since the last inspection.
- A much larger than average proportion of pupils join or leave the school at times other than the start of the Reception Year. Some pupils stay only a short time while their families find a more permanent address.
- The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. A much larger than average proportion speak English as an additional language and many pupils join the school at early stages of English-language acquisition. Over 20 languages are spoken.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is well-above average.



- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is well-above average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan is average.
- The school meets the 2015 floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has experienced instability in leadership, with a number of interim appointments, and has an almost entirely different teaching staff since the last inspection.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in each class. They talked to pupils about their learning and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors scrutinised a sample of pupils' work from each class from Year 1 to Year 6. They evaluated pupils' progress and standards in writing, mathematics, science and foundation subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils around the school and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke to a number of pupils informally and had meetings with three groups of pupils.
- A wide range of documentation was considered, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement planning, policies, safeguarding procedures and monitoring by the local authority.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers, two governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 28 responses to Parent View and spoke with many more parents at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

Jean Olsson-Law, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Shutt	Ofsted Inspector
Moira Atkins	Ofsted Inspector
Clare McGarey	Ofsted Inspector
Sheryl Farnworth	Ofsted Inspector



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School report



# The Willows Primary School

Tayfield Road, Woodhouse Park, Manchester M22 1BQ

**Inspection dates**

2–3 November 2016

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Under the direction of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, all leaders and staff have worked with determination to move the school forward. The Willows is now a good school and it continues to improve.
- Governors are skilled, knowledgeable and dedicated to making the school the best it can be. They have a good knowledge about the school's performance through regular visits and meetings with pupils, staff and leaders.
- Effective leadership has secured improvements in the early years. Good teaching helps children settle quickly and make a strong and happy start to their learning.
- From starting points below those typical for their age, pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, make good progress. By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics, reading and writing are similar to the national average.
- The quality of teaching has improved. It is now good. Well-planned, imaginative lessons capture pupils' interests so that they are keen to learn.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They behave well and show great respect for each other and the adults in the school.
- A caring and nurturing atmosphere contributes well to pupils' personal well-being and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Staff work hard to make sure that pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, are safe.
- The curriculum is rich and exciting. Pupils' interests and aspirations are enriched by a wide range of clubs and activities that develop their sporting, musical and artistic talents.
- Many subject leaders are new to their posts. Their role in improving the quality of teaching and learning is still developing. Checks of pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics are at an early stage.
- Occasionally, reading and writing tasks could provide even greater challenge to enable the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to make the best possible progress.
- The teaching of handwriting is not yet consistently good.



## **Full report**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to raise pupils' achievement by:
  - making sure that reading and writing tasks provide enough challenge to enable the most able pupils, and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to make even quicker progress
  - ensuring that teachers continue to reduce, and eventually eradicate, the gaps in pupils' learning in spelling, grammar and punctuation
  - ensuring that handwriting is taught consistently well across the school.
- Further improve assessment and tracking systems so that leaders have a clear overview of pupils' progress and attainment in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Continue to develop the skills of subject leaders, including those new to their posts, to enable them to contribute fully to improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.



## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The good leadership and management identified at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained and strengthened with high-quality staff appointments.
- Senior leaders and governors have successfully maintained a firm focus on improving the quality of teaching. A determined focus on raising standards has resulted in improved outcomes for pupils. Pupils' progress is now good across the school. Standards continue to rise and the school is well placed to continue to improve.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work extremely well together. They lead by example, providing a strong steer for teachers and teaching assistants, many of whom have joined the school since the previous inspection. All staff work as an effective and highly committed team. Morale is high.
- Leaders closely track pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Swift action is taken to help pupils who may be in danger of falling behind to catch up with their classmates. School leaders are currently developing similar systems to check on the progress of pupils in other subjects.
- Staff and governors contribute to the school's self-evaluation. This provides an accurate overview of the school's strengths and the aspects that can be improved. School plans identify the correct priorities and are checked regularly to ensure that the actions taken by school leaders are having enough impact to bring about the required improvements.
- The deputy headteacher's specific responsibility for improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is proving effective. Assistant headteachers and middle leaders, who lead the different age phases across the school, are also providing good leadership. All senior and middle leaders make robust checks on the quality of teaching. They have a sound understanding of the effectiveness of teaching. The school's documentation about the quality of teaching clearly outlines strengths and areas where improvements are required.
- Leaders ensure that teachers and teaching assistants receive targeted, high-quality training. Staff report that they feel supported in their careers. They value the opportunities provided for them to share their practice and learn from each other. They work collaboratively with other schools to moderate work and share expertise. Currently, subject leaders are working with other schools to develop assessment systems for subjects such as history and geography.
- The role of foundation subject leaders (staff who lead subjects other than English and mathematics) requires further development. They are knowledgeable and are beginning to lead improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- The pupil premium is used wisely. It is targeted specifically at improving the achievement, engagement and well-being of disadvantaged pupils. This funding provides extra teaching support to help pupils overcome gaps in learning and the pupil counsellor whose role is to support vulnerable pupils and their families.



- The primary sports funding is used very well to develop pupils' health and well-being. Sports coaches help improve teachers' skills and the wide range of clubs on offer during lunchtime and after school are well attended.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils receive many rich, varied, broad and balanced experiences. This is further enriched by a raft of extra-curricular activities. The school provides a curriculum which is underpinned by characteristics such as equality; however, more needs to be done to prevent name-calling of anyone with a perceived difference. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They are prepared for life as citizens in modern Britain.
- The very large majority of parents who spoke to inspectors and responded to Parent View and the school's own most recent questionnaire hold very positive views of the school. Members of the Parents' Action Group make a good contribution to the decision making in the school.
- The local authority periodically reviews the school's progress towards addressing the key issues identified in the previous inspection report. Schools in the multi-academy trust (MAT) support each other by sharing training and exchanging effective practice, including that of leadership.

#### **Governance of the school**

- Highly committed governors clearly know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They hold the school to account through thorough and searching questioning of senior and middle leaders. They visit the school regularly to review performance information robustly.
- Governors ensure, through regular training, that they keep their knowledge and understanding up to date. The skills governors bring to their role are deployed effectively to provide effective challenge and support for school leaders.
- The performance management of staff is rigorous.
- Governors check that additional funds such as the pupil premium and sports funding are spent effectively. As a result, the personal and academic needs of disadvantaged pupils are met well and pupils understand the need to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle.
- The 'Children of Success Schools Trust' board works closely with The Willows' local governing body. This enables governors and staff from the schools in the trust to share their expertise, for example in teaching and learning and leadership and management.

#### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The governing body regularly checks all safeguarding systems and arrangements to ensure that they are legally compliant. School leaders and governors have developed a 'safeguarding culture' within the school where all members of the school community, including the pupils themselves, know how to keep pupils and staff as safe as possible.



## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Senior leaders' prompt, decisive action has led to improvements in the quality of teaching. It is now consistently good across the school. As a result, pupils' outcomes have improved and continue to do so.
- Learning is well planned and builds on what pupils already know and can do. Teachers provide clear explanations to move learning on. They use well-developed questioning skills to check on the accuracy of pupils' work and swiftly address any misconceptions.
- Teachers' feedback is effective and helps pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers encourage pupils to share their thoughts through collaborative work with their peers. Pupils are encouraged to explain their answers in order to build their confidence and develop their vocabulary.
- Specialist teaching is helping pupils to improve their understanding and use of grammar skills through music and drama. During the inspection Year 4 pupils enthusiastically played 'preposition tennis' as part of a fun and fast-paced session which enabled all in the class to develop this aspect of literacy.
- The learning environment supports pupils' learning well. Pupils regularly refer to the information provided around the classroom if they are 'stuck' or need an idea to move their learning on. Pupils are also a great support to each other. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson a group of pupils worked very well together to identify how work on simplifying fractions completed by one of the class could be made even better by finding a systematic method to achieve the desired result.
- Teachers foster good attitudes to learning and provide activities that make learning fun. Pupils usually concentrate well. When work is set at the right level of challenge, they remain engaged and often enthused from the beginning to the end of lessons and make good progress as a result.
- The teaching of early reading skills is effective. Teachers' and teaching assistants' subject knowledge of phonics is strong. They use this to develop pupils' reading skills across the curriculum in the early years and in key stage 1.
- Pupils read regularly through a mixture of reading lessons guided by adults and through regular opportunities to read independently. Pupils of all abilities make good progress as they use their phonic knowledge to tackle unfamiliar words during guided sessions.
- In mathematics, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Tasks and activities challenge pupils to reason and think. Teachers move learning on when pupils have securely grasped what they need to. As a result, pupils of all abilities make good and sometimes rapid progress.
- During daily English lessons and reading sessions, teachers develop pupils' writing and spelling, grammar and punctuation skills well and teaching enables pupils to make good progress. However, at times the work set does not demand enough of pupils, particularly the most able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and as a result sometimes progress is not rapid as it could be for them.



- The presentation of work in pupils' books shows a marked improvement since the previous inspection. Leaders are aware that the teaching of a neat, joined handwriting style is not yet consistent across the school.
- Sports funding has been used to employ a specialist coach to develop pupils' skills and increase teachers' expertise in this area. Teaching and learning are of a high quality and have led to greater participation of pupils in school clubs and competitive sports.
- Good partnerships exist between teachers and parents. Workshops are provided to show parents how to help children learn at home. Weekly homework tasks provide opportunities for parents to work with their children.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say the school keeps them safe. They learn how to keep safe through the well-planned curriculum. For example, they are well informed about safety when using the internet. Older pupils sensibly explain about their lessons which help them learn about sexual education and different types of relationships.
- Pupils have good relationships with each other and the adults in school. They have a good understanding of the different kinds of bullying, including that related to gender or race. Pupils say that bullying does happen occasionally and they trust the adults to deal with issues when they occur. Pupils are knowledgeable about the use of language which could be hurtful to others and say that sometimes name-calling does occur, for example 'gay' as a derogatory term. Again, they seek help from adults to resolve any issues.
- Pupils make a good contribution to school life and the life of their local community. Some eagerly take on leadership roles as members of the School Action Team. Others enjoy helping their fellow pupils when they act as reading buddies or play leaders.
- Pupils are proud of their award as a rights respecting school. They are adamant that people have a right to make different life choices – something they have learned about in assemblies and lessons. They understand that people hold different views and have cultures and religions different to their own and that these should be respected. They are well prepared for life in a tolerant and diverse Britain.
- The popular breakfast club provides a nourishing, happy start to the day.

#### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils know the school's rules and rewards systems and think that staff apply them fairly. They say that the system for managing behaviour is helping pupils to behave. Staff sensitively help the few pupils who sometimes find it difficult to manage their own emotions and behaviour well.
- Pupils' books are tidy and well presented. A good quantity of work is produced and observations of learning in lessons showed that pupils concentrate well and are keen to learn.



- Pupils are well mannered and courteous. They have good attitudes to learning and this is reflected in their above-average attendance. They listen carefully to adults and their peers and show respect for the views of others. They respond quickly when called to attention by teachers and support staff.
- Pupils enjoy school. They attend regularly and look smart in their uniforms. Most are well prepared for their lessons and complete their homework on time. A few pupils are yet to develop the habit of bringing their reading book to school so that they are ready for their daily reading lesson.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupil outcomes have improved since the previous inspection and they continue to do so. Pupils now make at least good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 in 2016 are similar to the provisional national averages.
- The school's tracking of pupils' progress and the quality of work in pupils' books shows an improvement in current pupils' work. Most year groups are now making better progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and are continuing to do so because teaching is good. However, due to weaknesses in previous teaching some pupils have gaps in their learning. The legacy of underachievement has been overcome in mathematics and continues to be resolved in reading and writing.
- The very high proportion of disadvantaged pupils in all year groups make similar good progress to other pupils in the school from their starting points. Differences in attainment with other pupils nationally are diminishing.
- Extra learning in groups and good support in lessons by well-trained support staff mean that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including disadvantaged pupils with these additional needs, make good progress from their individual starting points. Observations during the inspection showed this group of pupils to be well-motivated learners.
- In mathematics lessons, teachers skilfully set work which stretches the thinking of the most able pupils and allows them to make at least good and often rapid progress.
- The most able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress in reading and writing. However, at times, teachers restrict these pupils' progress by setting undemanding tasks.
- Early reading skills are taught well. The proportion of pupils in Year 1 reaching the national expectation in the phonics check is similar to the national average. Most pupils achieve the standard by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils make good progress across the full range of subjects taught. They like science, especially planning and carrying out experiments, and are knowledgeable about the historic periods they have learned about. At times, the most able are capable of doing even better in subjects other than English and mathematics.



## Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the school with a range of skills, knowledge and understanding and many have starting points well below those typical for their age. From these starting points, children make at least good and sometimes rapid progress. By the end of Reception, the majority of children reach a good level of development from their different starting points and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Leadership of the early years is good. The new early years leader has established an attractive, well-organised, purposeful learning environment to support and encourage children's learning and development. Routines are well established and maintained by staff and are understood and followed well by children. A strong team of teachers and teaching assistants ensure that children settle quickly and feel safe and secure. Safeguarding is effective and children's personal development and welfare requirements are met well.
- Children quickly learn to listen carefully to the adults and each other. They readily choose activities that interest them. They behave well, take turns and learn to share toys and resources. Children who have attended the setting for some time can sustain their concentration both when working on their own and with others. Children who joined the school at the beginning of this term and are at an early stage of school life have settled well and are growing in confidence when working with an adult or playing with others.
- The early years curriculum is engaging and well planned. Adults regularly check how well children are doing and adjust learning activities to take account of children's interests and what they need to do to improve. During the inspection, some children decided to make a track out of crates. More joined them as the path developed and became increasingly complex. The class teacher skilfully extended children's learning by setting challenges for them to solve as they helped each other up and over the various shaped objects provided. As well as having a great deal of fun and a sense of achievement, children developed the ability to work as a team and to balance safely on uneven surfaces.
- Children's vocabulary and speech and language skills are often below those typical for their age when they start school. Adults skilfully encourage children to talk about what they are doing and model the type of language to be used as they play.
- As a result of good teaching, children, including disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs, make the same good progress as other pupils. Funding is deployed effectively and needs are met well.
- Parents feel welcome in the school. On arrival to the Nursery classes each morning, for instance, parents and their children enjoy exploring the range of activities provided for them. Parents hold highly positive views of the teaching and care their children receive. They feel well informed and able to contribute to their child's education.





## School details

Unique reference number	139438
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10022010

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	477
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheila Cairns
Headteacher	Sue Spiteri
Telephone number	0161 437 4444
Website	<a href="http://www.willows.manchester.sch.uk/">www.willows.manchester.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@willows.manchester.sch.uk">admin@willows.manchester.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	11–12 February 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is larger than most other primary schools.
- The school converted to an academy in April 2013. It is part of the Children of Success Schools Trust (CoSST).
- Almost all children attend the Nursery full time. All children attend Reception full time.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, while the proportion of pupils for whom English is not or believed not to be their first language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is high at almost double the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan is below average.



- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is over two thirds. This is much higher than the national average. In some year groups the proportion of disadvantaged pupils is over three quarters.
- Since the previous inspection the school has experienced significant staffing changes.
- The school provides a breakfast club for its pupils.
- The school meets the government's floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. They observed learning in classes, one jointly with the headteacher, and when pupils learned in small groups.
- The inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and talked to them about their work. They listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of reading skills. Inspectors talked to pupils about the books they have enjoyed and those that they are currently reading. Inspectors took note of displays around the school and the learning taking place outdoors.
- Inspectors talked with pupils informally as they played at breaktimes, visited the dining hall at lunchtime and observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around school. They spoke to pupils informally in the breakfast club and met formally with three groups of pupils.
- An inspector spoke by telephone with the chair of the Children of Success Schools Trust and met with the chair and another member of the local governing body. An inspector also spoke by phone with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with members of school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day, and with representatives of the Parent Action Group. They took account of 48 responses to Parent View and the school's most recent surveys of pupils' and parents' views. Thirty-two returns to the staff questionnaire completed during the inspection were considered.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including information about pupils' progress, school improvement and external views of the school. They reviewed the contents of the school's website and scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding completed by school staff.

## Inspection team

Lyn Pender, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Yvonne Mills-Clare	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Rigby	Ofsted Inspector



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