

Inspection of Nelson St Philip's Church of England Primary School

Leeds Road, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 9TQ

Inspection dates: 16–17 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Nelson St Philip's is a happy, friendly and welcoming community. Leaders and staff nurture pupils' good attitudes to school. Pupils abide by the school values. They learn to live with 'love, hope and respect'.

Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff and with other pupils. Leaders and staff know every pupil well. They are committed to keeping them safe. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and at playtimes is good. The pupils who spoke to us said that there are very few cases of bullying. Pupils are confident that, if bullying does happen, staff sort problems out quickly.

Pupils work hard and try to do their best at the school. Teachers have high expectations in some subjects, such as writing, history and art, where pupils achieve well. However, some pupils do not develop all the knowledge that they need to succeed in reading and mathematics.

Leaders and staff work successfully to improve pupils' personal development and provide them with opportunities to develop their understanding of culture. Pupils enjoy attending the activities provided beyond the school day. These include a wide range of after-school clubs, such as football, cookery and dancing.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

While the school has many strengths, leaders, including governors, recognise that pupils do not achieve as well as they should in some subjects. This is particularly true in reading and mathematics. In these subjects, leaders have not ensured that learning is organised clearly enough to help some pupils to know more and remember more.

The quality of the curriculum in reading is mixed. Pupils at the school love reading. Teachers are well trained and support younger children and pupils to develop their reading well. Books are matched closely to the sounds that pupils already know, so that they can practise and become confident readers. However, leaders and staff do too little to identify and support those pupils in key stage 2 who fall behind in reading. Too many pupils leave the school with reading skills below those of other pupils nationally. This means that they are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The previous mathematics curriculum was not sufficiently well ordered. It did not help pupils to make strong enough progress, especially in key stage 2. As a result, the Year 6 pupils who left the school in 2019 made weaker progress than other pupils nationally. Leaders have introduced a new mathematics curriculum. Staff now provide pupils with worthwhile opportunities to build their mathematics knowledge and understanding, including their reasoning skills. The new curriculum is having the

greatest impact in early years and key stage 1. This is because many pupils in key stage 2 have developed gaps in their knowledge. Some pupils cannot solve mathematical problems as accurately and quickly as they should.

In some subjects, such as writing, history and art, leaders have developed a clear curriculum that develops pupils' knowledge in a logical way. Pupils can discuss their learning and how their new knowledge builds on what they already understand. For example, in history, pupils in Year 6 contrasted their current learning about the Victorians with their learning about the Second World War.

Leaders and staff skilfully support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to learn the curriculum in different subjects. This is because work is carefully adapted to meet their needs.

Leaders and staff provide strong support for pupils' personal development. The headteacher is determined that the school gives pupils the best opportunities to prepare them for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils learn about different faiths, such as Judaism and Sikhism. Pupils enjoy trips that widen their life experiences, such as in Year 6 when they gain much from two residential visits to Whitehough.

Children settle quickly in the early years, which is a safe and happy environment. While there was a dip in the attainment of children in 2019, leaders and governors have since acted decisively to improve the early years curriculum. It is now well ordered. Teachers routinely check what children learn and know. As a result, current children in the early years are learning well.

Children behave well and display positive attitudes. They are calm, friendly and interact well with each other during lessons and at playtime.

Pupils' attendance at the school is below average but improving. Leaders are taking many important steps to help parents and carers to understand the importance of pupils' full attendance at the school and not to take family holidays during term time.

Staff say that leaders consider their well-being and workload. They appreciate the many professional development opportunities that they access.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff and governors know that they are responsible for keeping pupils safe. They receive regular training and respond quickly if they have any concerns. Leaders have a clear understanding of specific local safeguarding issues and address them sensitively and well. Leaders' records are thorough and show that the school works successfully with a range of external agencies to keep pupils safe.

Leaders and staff ensure that pupils know how to stay safe and protect themselves. They help pupils to live safely. For example, pupils know how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum planning for reading in key stage 2 does not help pupils to build on the positive start that they make in key stage 1. Too many pupils leave the school not reading confidently. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is planned effectively. Leaders should make certain that staff spot and support pupils who fall behind with their reading. This will mean that pupils catch up quickly and that all pupils read fluently and accurately by the time they leave Year 6.
- Leaders have implemented a renewed mathematics curriculum. This is having the best effect in early years and key stage 1. The new curriculum is not yet bearing fruit in key stage 2. This is because older pupils have gaps in their knowledge due to the weaknesses in the way the previous mathematics curriculum was planned and delivered. Leaders must ensure that the new curriculum is carefully adapted to enable older pupils to overcome gaps in their mathematical knowledge and skills.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	119437
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10125316
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Wendy Harvey
Headteacher	Kathryn Ellidge
Website	www.st-philips.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 March 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The most recent section 48 inspection of religious education took place in December 2015.
- There has been a new chair of governors since September 2019.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with six members of the governing body, including the chair of the governors. We also met with a representative of the local authority.
- We met with several school leaders, including the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the early years leader and the leader for SEND.
- We did deep dives in early reading and phonics, mathematics, art and history. We considered leaders' curriculum plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and met with subject leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. We talked with pupils about their learning in these subjects. We listened to some pupils read.

- We checked safeguarding procedures and reviewed some records of safeguarding and pupils' behaviour. We checked levels of pupils' attendance. We spoke with leaders, staff and pupils about how the school keeps pupils safe.

Inspection team

Gary Bevin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Michael Platt

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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