

Burnley St James' Lanehead CofE Primary School

Briercliffe Road, Burnley, Lancashire BB10 2NH

Inspection dates

28–29 April 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This good school is improving rapidly because of the determined leadership of the headteacher and senior leaders, supported by a positive team of effective teachers.
- Leaders and governors have successfully addressed the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. As a result, the school has improved and is now consistently good.
- Governors have reviewed their working practice and are now skilled and knowledgeable about all areas of their role and duties. They support school leaders and rigorously hold them to account to ensure the continued improvement of the school.
- The well-respected headteacher has inspired the school community to believe in themselves and in their school. As a result, the school is a calm, orderly and purposeful place to learn. It is a happy community where pupils are well mannered, polite and courteous, and enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in their good attendance.
- Highly effective pastoral support systems ensure that pupils feel safe and well cared for by staff who have the best interests of every child at heart. Parent support officers provide valuable help and encouragement to children and their families and effectively promote the shared determination to nurture pupils' personal, social and academic development.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved and is now consistently good or better. Although results in key stage 2 dipped in 2015, pupils currently in the school are making good progress and achieving well.
- The well-designed curriculum provides pupils with an interesting range of memorable experiences, which engage and enthuse them.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. It is promoted well through the curriculum and acts of worship and is central to all that the school does.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A lack of challenge in the past has left a legacy of underachievement. Consequently, not enough pupils are achieving outcomes at the end of key stage 2 that are at or above those of pupils nationally.
- The leadership and management skills of middle leaders are not yet sufficiently well developed to have a significant impact on driving forward improvements at a rapid rate.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate the good progress pupils are making, especially for those who have fallen behind and lower attaining pupils, so that they reach the expectations for their age.
- Develop the role of middle leaders in bringing about improvements in different areas of the school's work to support its continued rapid improvement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- There is a strong commitment by all leaders and governors to improve the school. Working together with the local authority, they have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. They have a clear understanding of what the school does well and areas that can be further improved. Based on accurate self-analysis, plans for future improvement are robust and precise. After a turbulent time of staff changes since the last inspection, the school is now in a more stable position. The appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher, along with the support received from an associate headteacher and associate deputy headteacher, place the school in a strong position to move forward with even greater vigour.
- Since taking up her post, the well-respected headteacher has been resolute and aspirational in her leadership and has brought about a significant change in the culture and ethos of the school. In partnership with the governing body, the headteacher and senior leaders have very clearly set out the direction of travel for the school and left no one in any doubt that only the best will do.
- Senior leaders have established a regular and rigorous system for checking the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This has played a key role in improving the quality of teaching across the school and has ensured that teachers receive appropriate training and support to develop their professional skills. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is now good. The school is aware, however, that there is inconsistency in the knowledge and skills of teaching assistants and has plans to provide further training where this is needed, in order to support accelerated progress.
- Most pupils are making the progress they should because of improvements in teaching. However, gaps in learning still remain from a legacy of less effective teaching in the past. As a result, some pupils have fallen behind, and others, especially the lower attaining pupils, have not reached the expectations for their age. Leaders are successfully putting in place strategies and systems, with a focus on basic skills, to address this legacy of underachievement. Consequently, pupils' progress is now accelerating throughout the school but has not yet been rapid enough to ensure that outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are as good as those of other pupils nationally.
- Leaders of English and mathematics are passionate about the subjects they lead. Assessments are detailed and thorough, showing precisely what each child has to do to improve. As a result, senior leaders and staff very quickly pick up on pupils who are not doing as well as they should, and additional support is put in place to help these pupils make better progress.
- Middle leaders have begun to monitor provision and pupils' progress in their subjects. However, as a number of staff are new to leading their subject, their role is not yet fully developed in order to support senior leaders in driving forward improvements at a rapid rate. The school recognises the need for, and importance of, training for middle leaders, and has plans in place to address this.
- There is a robust system to manage the performance of staff, with clear targets linked to the school's priorities and improving outcomes for pupils. Staff are very appreciative of the growing opportunities to share their practice, learn from each other and observe good and outstanding practice in other schools.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to provide additional help and support. The well-regarded parent support officers work with pupils and their families to remove barriers to learning and are absolutely committed to ensuring that every pupil has the best possible chance to succeed. Additional staff provide extra support for disadvantaged pupils who need it, enabling them to be successful and take part in everything the school offers. Leaders maintain detailed records of the additional provision that disadvantaged pupils receive and its impact on their learning and attendance.
- The well-designed curriculum provides pupils with learning experiences that engage and enthuse them, whilst placing emphasis on English and mathematics to accelerate progress. The curriculum is organised around well-designed topics, which are supported by a good range of visits and visitors. These include a visit to the zoo to see animals that live in rain forests and a visitor who brought creatures into school. As part of a topic on the outdoors, pupils visited Cuerden Valley Park and also took part in bush craft activities. These memorable experiences contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As one pupil said, 'There is always a twist in our learning'. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in reading, writing and mathematics across a range of subjects to enhance learning and progress. A wide range of well-attended clubs, including for boccia, curling and mad science, provide pupils with experiences that they may not otherwise have the opportunity to enjoy.

- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Worship themes and the curriculum are used well to develop pupils' understanding of fundamental British values. Learning about different faiths and cultures helps pupils to understand the diversity of the world in which they live and the importance of mutual tolerance and respect.
- Leaders make good use of primary school sports funding. The school is part of the Burnley School Sports Partnership, which encourages participation of all pupils in sporting activities and provides increased opportunities to take part in competitive sport. The school employs a sports apprentice and a good range of sporting activities are on offer at lunchtime or after school.
- Most parents and carers appreciate all that the school does for their child. One parent said of the staff, 'They live their school values and give 100% dedication to their pupils, and communication between school and parents is excellent'. This was echoed by others and supported by outcomes from the governors' own recent parents' survey. 'Family Friday' activities, half-termly curriculum maps and homework learning logs support liaison between home and school very effectively and provide a good range of activities to help parents and carers support their child's learning.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school since the last inspection. School leaders and governors have used this support well to drive forward improvements. The headteacher has also set up a local network of schools and this has provided effective support and challenge for the school on its journey to becoming a good school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Since the last inspection, governors have been supported by the local authority in a review of governance. As a result, governors have carried out an assessment of the capacity of the team and have taken part in training, which has helped them to improve their understanding of how to hold leaders to account.
 - Governors know the school well and take their role seriously. They have a good understanding of the progress pupils are making and need to make, including the progress of different groups. They are focused on improving the school and check the school's performance regularly. The minutes of governing body meetings show that governors ask challenging questions and hold leaders to account.
 - Governors ensure that pay progression is dependent on sufficiently good performance and have high expectations of staff paid to take on extra responsibilities.
 - Finances are well managed and governors are knowledgeable about how the pupil premium and sports funding are used to support provision and achievement.
 - Governors are proud of the school's improvement since the last inspection but are equally aware that there is further room for improvement, particularly in outcomes for pupils. They closely monitor progress towards the school's planned objectives and are committed to supporting the school's ethos.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet statutory requirements. All adults who work with pupils are checked to ensure their suitability. Staff and governors benefit from regular training that ensures they are up to date with keeping children safe in education.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Well-planned professional development opportunities have helped teachers to develop their subject knowledge and skills, and there are good opportunities to share best practice. Teachers respond very positively to advice and feedback; they are reflective practitioners, always looking to improve, and are ambitious for pupils. As yet, however, not all teaching assistants have had opportunities to take part in training in order to fully develop their skills to maximise the progress of all pupils.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and are eager to learn because teachers plan interesting lessons, which are engaging and motivating. High levels of mutual respect and supportive relationships ensure that pupils feel confident to 'have a go' without fear of failure. Most lessons are well planned and carefully build on what pupils already know. For example, in a Year 1 phonics session (letters and the sounds they represent), pupils were able to add conjunctions they already knew to a sentence they were creating with the 'ou' sound in it.
- Teachers regularly check where pupils are up to and give them clear guidance on next steps. 'Fix It' time is made available daily for pupils to check and improve their work and clarify misconceptions. Teachers are then able to pitch work appropriately to move pupils on swiftly and ensure that they are suitably challenged.

- Pupils' progress is rigorously monitored during lessons, through scrutiny of their work and at pupil progress meetings with senior leaders. This ensures that any underperformance in reading, writing and mathematics is swiftly identified and addressed.
- Skilful questioning is used consistently well to check pupils' understanding, clarify misconceptions and make them think for themselves.
- In mathematics, teachers are providing increased opportunities for pupils to try out learning in the context of solving real-life problems. The school has invested in a good range of practical resources to support learning and there are growing opportunities for pupils to reason and think for themselves. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were challenged and supported by a skilled teaching assistant to work out the maximum area of a farmer's field they could fence off, using poles and chicken wire, with a specified amount of money. However, in some lessons, pupils are not moved on rapidly enough to deepen their understanding. They are asked to complete too many examples of work they can already do.
- Good teaching is leading to improved progress in writing. Teachers develop pupils' writing skills well and pupils are able to write with increasing effect in a range of different styles. There is now greater expectation of the amount and complexity of writing required and this is helping to address the legacy of previous underachievement. There are growing opportunities for pupils to write in various areas of the curriculum, which provides pupils with additional opportunities to practise their skills. For example, as part of their topic work on life cycles, Year 5 pupils were asked to write about the life cycle of a butterfly for younger children and compare modern living with that in Anglo-Saxon times.
- The school's reading programme is helping pupils to make good progress. The teaching of phonics is strong and much improved since the last inspection. Scores in the Year 1 phonics screening check were above the national average in 2015. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy reading, which is promoted well through regular opportunities to choose books from the school library, and opportunities for pupils to work with an author, and to participate in reading challenges.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are supported well. A specialist consultant is employed alongside a new leader of special educational needs and together they ensure that pupils requiring additional support are identified quickly and their needs addressed well, resulting in most pupils making good progress in lessons and over time.
- Teachers use assessment information well in English and mathematics to provide work that is appropriately targeted. They are well aware of how different groups are learning and most lessons provide appropriate challenge and support to help all pupils make good progress. Assessments in other subjects are not yet as rigorous. New systems are being implemented and these have yet to be embedded. Consequently, they do not yet clearly show next steps in learning. The school is aware of this and is addressing it. The first priority was to create new assessments in English and mathematics in order to accelerate progress.
- Pupils say that they enjoy the open-ended homework activities in their half-termly learning logs. They like it that some tasks mean their family can be involved as well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school and parents agree with this. Pupils get on well with each other and there are warm and trusting relationships with all adults who work in the school. Pupils are well cared for, and those to whom inspectors spoke were confident that there is always someone they can talk to whenever the need arises.
- High value is placed upon pupils' emotional well-being. Pupils are encouraged to become confident and successful learners in a calm, orderly and purposeful environment. The highly effective parent support officers work closely with the headteacher and senior leaders to ensure that the needs of pupils and their families are well met and barriers to learning eliminated.
- Pupils are aware of risks and have a good understanding of safe and unsafe situations. The school's personal, social and health education programme teaches pupils about dangers such as a variety of forms of bullying, and road, water and online safety. Specialists, including police, the fire service and road safety teams, are invited into school to support pupils' understanding of potential dangers.

- Parents have been involved in supporting the school to help pupils understand the dangers of extremism and racism. A group of pupils and parents attended a community event at Turf Moor Football Ground to heighten awareness. As a result of this, and a parents' meeting with the 'Prevent team', there is now a link on the school website for other parents and pupils to find out more about how to promote tolerance and prevent extremism.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and that any unkindness that does arise is dealt with quickly by staff in school. Parental questionnaires show that most parents agree. Those pupils spoken to were adamant that everyone should be treated equally, no matter what their differences.
- Pupils make a positive contribution to the life of their school. They take on roles of responsibility such as becoming librarians, play leaders, or members of the school council or ethos committee. They regularly raise funds for charities such as Macmillan Cancer Support. A rolling programme, which focuses on values such as friendship, loyalty and trust, promotes the caring, respectful ethos of the school.
- The school works hard to provide a wide range of clubs for both key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils to support their personal development and welfare. These are very well attended and provide good opportunities for social development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is a happy community where pupils enjoy coming to school, and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance and low levels of persistent absence. They understand the importance of regular attendance and the difference this makes to how well they learn.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. In most lessons, very little time is wasted because pupils are keen and ready to learn. They apply themselves and cooperate well in paired talk or shared tasks. Most pupils take a pride in their work. However, there is some inconsistency in the presentation of work in a few classes.
- All adults in school promote the 'calm school contract', and as a result, pupils behave well at all times of the school day. Pupils of all ages are kind and considerate towards adults and one another, demonstrating the values the school instils in them. They hold doors open for each other and for adults and show great respect. This creates a welcoming and friendly atmosphere throughout the school.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- From starting points below those typical for their age, especially in communication and language skills, children in Reception class make good progress. The number of children achieving a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year has risen significantly since the last inspection because of the good teaching they now receive. As a result, a greater proportion of children are now prepared for their work in Year 1.
- Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 builds on the good start children make in the Reception class and thorough assessment ensures that pupils progress well from their individual starting points.
- The Year 1 check on pupils' skills in phonics in 2015 showed pupils to be above other pupils nationally and higher than in previous years. This shows accelerated progress for these pupils from their starting points.
- Results at the end of key stage 1 have improved since the last inspection in reading and writing and are close to the national average. Mathematics has remained close to the national average since the last inspection.
- Published data shows that the number of pupils making expected progress in reading and mathematics was below the national average at the end of key stage 2 in 2015. Expected progress in writing was above the national average, with more than expected progress below. This reflects the school's legacy of underachievement. Although these pupils made at least good progress in Year 6, teaching that required improvement and past turbulence in staffing meant that progress from their starting points was below the national average. The school's information and work in pupils' books show at least good progress now in reading, writing and mathematics for all year groups and groups of pupils.

- Carefully targeted support for pupils who have fallen behind, improvements in the quality of teaching and the good level of support provided by the local authority have ensured that the legacy of underachievement is now eradicated. Consequently, there has been a significant improvement in the progress pupils make in all year groups. However, by the end of key stage 2, some of those pupils who fell behind in the past, and lower attaining pupils, are not yet reaching the expectations for their age.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. The school has acted swiftly to reduce the gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and others. The school's information for the current Year 6 shows that the gap in progress has been closed. In most other year groups, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress. However, some pupils who had fallen behind in the past are not yet reaching the expectations for their age.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability receive well-targeted support. As a result of these timely interventions and good teaching, this group of pupils make good progress and achieve well, taking into consideration the complexity of their needs.
- The most-able pupils are progressing well. Work in pupils' books shows that the most-able pupils make good progress because they are set challenging work. In all year groups, the most-able pupils are making at least expected progress. They are on track to meet age-related expectations or above in all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Progress made by low-attaining pupils is now good from their starting points because of the effective support provided by teachers and teaching assistants and close monitoring of progress at pupil progress meetings with senior leaders. Work in books shows that low-attaining pupils are making similar progress to others in all year groups. However, because of the legacy of underachievement from the past, these pupils have not caught up to reach expectations for their age by the time they leave key stage 2.
- The small but growing number of pupils from ethnic minority groups make outstanding progress, and in all year groups they are on track to meet age-related expectations or above.
- Teachers make sure that the skills pupils learn in reading, writing and mathematics are used well in other subjects. Consequently, the good and better progress made by all groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is reflected in other subjects.

Early years provision

is good

- Leadership and management of the early years are good.
- The early years leader has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement and has identified these in her development plan. Swift action has been taken since the last inspection to significantly improve the outdoor area. Consequently, children are provided with a good range of stimulating and interesting opportunities to develop their language and mathematical skills and to investigate and experiment.
- Children join Burnley St James' from a range of settings. A few children have no nursery experience and there is an increasing range of languages spoken. A growing number speak little English when they join the school.
- Children make good progress in Reception class because of the good teaching they receive through a range of interesting and carefully planned adult-led activities and opportunities for independent learning. As a result, children are increasingly well prepared for the Year 1 curriculum. Boys' writing skills, however, still lag behind those of girls and the gap between disadvantaged children and others in communication and language and literacy remains evident.
- Children requiring additional help to catch up are supported well. This enables all children to make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers' assessments and tracking of children's learning are of a good quality and activities are matched to their needs. Learning journals clearly demonstrate the progress children make. However, as yet, parents do not have an opportunity to contribute to these.
- There is a clear emphasis on creating a caring and nurturing environment, which is evident from the positive relationships adults have with children and children have with each other. The 'calm school code' is constantly reinforced. Children move around their indoor and outdoor areas sensibly and considerately. They understand the need to take turns and help their friends. The classroom and outdoor area provide a safe environment for children, and safeguarding is effective. Children's behaviour is good and they have a positive attitude to learning.

- The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared, with stimulating activities matched to the range of abilities. There are good opportunities for imaginative play and for children to generate their own learning. Children maintain focus and interest when working with their friends. For example, when choosing to play in the snow, two children floating handfuls of snow in the water they had collected spent time discussing how the melting snow resembled the frog spawn that they had recently brought into school.
- Opportunities to develop mathematical skills and apply children's phonics learning in other parts of the curriculum are maximised. In discussion with one child, the teacher questioned why the child, who was using a magnifying glass to observe tadpoles in a tank, thought that the frog would have three legs rather than four. Another child, in writing up observations about the life cycle of the frog, was supported in sounding out the words that were about to be written.
- Visits are made to nurseries before children begin their Reception Year and opportunities to work in partnership with parents are being developed through the school's 'Family Friday' activities. These sessions help parents to support their child's learning at home. Teachers plan carefully together so that Reception children in both classes receive the same opportunities and learn together in the outdoor area. Transition into Year 1 is strong because teachers work closely together to plan for children in the mixed-age classes.

School details

Unique reference number	119487
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10002245

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	273
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Whittaker
Headteacher	Michelle Stott
Telephone number	01282 426633
Website	www.st-jameslanehead.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	head@st-jameslanehead.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 November 2013

Information about this school

- Burnley St James' is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There are nine classes, some of which are mixed-age and some single-year groups.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Although the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average, there has been an increase this academic year.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is below average. Pupil premium funding is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements for the publication of specified information on its website.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been several staffing changes, including the appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher. The school has received support from an associate headteacher and associate deputy headteacher.
- The local authority has provided support to the school since the last inspection and work has been carried out with a local network of schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all classes and in a range of subjects, including a joint observation with the headteacher. They visited worship, listened to pupils read, talked with them about their enjoyment of reading and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also observed a number of small groups working with teaching assistants.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and assessed the school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They observed pupils as they moved around the school, during lunchtimes and at breaktimes in the playground.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, early years leader, curriculum leaders and parent support officers.
- An inspector met with four members of the governing body. A meeting was also held with two school improvement representatives from the local authority.
- A group of pupils discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with inspectors. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils in the playground and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors took account of 16 staff questionnaires. There were 42 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View, and inspectors had conversations with a number of parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including minutes from meetings of the governing body. They scrutinised information on pupils' outcomes across the school, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plan. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Gillian Burrow, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Barbara Harrold	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Marie Dimeck	Ofsted Inspector

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