

St Charles' RC Primary School

Emlyn Street, Moorside Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 9PD

Inspection dates

15–16 January 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and leadership team share their high aspirations and expectations for pupils effectively with staff, parents and carers.
- Leaders create a learning environment which promotes their school motto well as pupils 'love to learn and learn to love'. The outdoor provision is used imaginatively and enhances learning opportunities.
- Leaders have developed an exciting and purposeful curriculum which builds on pupils' prior knowledge. The curriculum ignites their curiosity, for example in art and history.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress overall. However, checks on the progress of these pupils are not fully effective. As a result, the progress for these pupils varies across year groups.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading and writing. This is because of the well-planned, systematic learning opportunities teachers provide, particularly in key stage 2.
- Teaching is effective, and pupils enjoy learning. Most activities enthuse pupils but at times teachers do not plan learning in mathematics that challenges the most able pupils.
- The social, and emotional support pupils receive enables the most vulnerable pupils to overcome many of their barriers to learning.
- Children in the early years thrive as a result of the outstanding quality of teaching they receive. The extremely nurturing environment excites and stimulates them as learners. They are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well supported through the wealth of opportunities leaders have provided. Pupils are prepared extremely well for life in modern Britain.
- Governors use their knowledge and expertise well to hold leaders to account in order to maintain the good quality of education that pupils receive.
- The positive relationships fostered in school contribute positively to pupils' exemplary behaviour and attitudes to learning. Pupils are rightly proud of their school.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the care, guidance and support that their children receive. Most parents would recommend the school to others.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the role of middle leaders by:
 - sharpening the evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics
 - improving the quality of information teachers receive about pupils with SEND so that they plan appropriate learning opportunities to support these pupils.
- Further improve the quality of teaching learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers routinely challenge the most able pupils in mathematics
 - teachers use information effectively to ensure consistency in support so that pupils with SEND make the progress they are capable of and are not over-reliant on adults.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have maintained a good quality of education at St Charles' RC Primary School. The headteacher's commitment to the pupils and the local community is unwavering. Staff and governors share her vision for continued improvement. Leaders actively promote high levels of respect and cooperation. Pupils thrive socially and personally in a nurturing environment that promotes high aspirations for pupils. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school.
- Skilled senior leaders ensure that staff receive training to improve their subject knowledge. They work with other professionals and colleagues, including in other schools, to share knowledge and expertise. Leaders' actions ensure that the quality of teaching is good and continues to improve. Teachers have the skills that they need to support pupils' learning and progress effectively.
- Senior leaders use a range of assessment information to identify priorities for improvement. The leadership of English is effective. To improve writing, leaders have created a language-rich environment throughout the school. Visits to exciting venues and high-quality texts are used imaginatively to enthuse pupils. Leaders ensure that teachers improve pupils' understanding and build on their knowledge further. Consequently, pupils produce complex pieces of writing across a range of genres, including scripts for plays.
- Leaders ensure that the teaching of phonics is consistently effective from the early years. Pupils use their phonics knowledge effectively in their writing, with increasing accuracy. They are becoming competent and confident readers who enjoy reading the high-quality books teachers provide.
- The leadership of mathematics has been effective in improving the quality of teaching in many respects. However, leaders for mathematics do not routinely check the impact of their actions. As a result, opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics are not developed in depth in some year groups, particularly for the most able pupils.
- There is a high proportion of pupils with SEND. Although progress for this group of pupils is generally good, leaders' analysis of the areas of need for some pupils is at times not precise enough. This leads to some pupils' individual plans not clearly identifying the next steps to be taken in enough detail to promote sustained progress. Leaders do not routinely evaluate the impact of the support that pupils with SEND receive. Consequently, some teachers do not provide the appropriate learning opportunities that pupils need to succeed. Some pupils rely too much on adult support.
- The small proportion of disadvantaged pupils are supported well by staff. Leaders know families very well and accurately identify pupils' barriers to learning, particularly their social and emotional needs. Leaders work closely with other agencies and charities within the parish. This ensures that vulnerable pupils and their families receive the help and guidance that they need and contributes to the good progress that this group of pupils make. The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well, for

example through visits to local museums and art galleries. Residential trips provide pupils with the opportunity to challenge themselves and develop independence. Pupils are prepared very well for life in modern Britain through the range of responsibilities and positions on committees they hold in school. For example, pupils known as 'Mini Vinnies' promote the Christian values of 'welcome, witness, worship, welfare and word' effectively through the work they do to support people who are facing challenging circumstances.

- Leaders have developed a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of pupils well. The curriculum has been designed around the strong Christian ethos of the school. Leaders ensure that pupils understand and respect those from different backgrounds, cultures and faiths. The curriculum builds on pupils' prior knowledge with clear progression across school, for example in science and history. Leaders check to ensure that pupils develop their knowledge and skills systematically and in depth.
- The additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport is used well to provide support for teachers to improve their skills. Pupils benefit from a broad range of activities including dance, multi-sports and football. They enter competitions with other schools locally with increasing levels of success.

Governance of the school

- Governors share leaders' aspirations for pupils. They have the knowledge and experience to hold leaders to account. They attend regular training to ensure that they are up to date with new initiatives, including all aspects of safeguarding. Governors work closely with other governors from local schools to share expertise and good practice.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas for further improvement. Governors use their knowledge effectively to review the impact of action plans and overall they provide appropriate challenge for leaders. They check the additional information that they receive from leaders by talking to staff and talking to pupils about their learning.
- Governors are aware of their statutory duties. They understand and fulfil their responsibilities relating to safeguarding effectively. They are extremely proud to be part of the school and value its place in the local community.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders are vigilant and ensure that the safety and welfare of all pupils and staff are at the heart of everything that they do. Effective training for staff ensures that procedures in place for the protection of pupils are understood well by all. Staff know the signs of neglect and abuse and concerns are acted upon appropriately by leaders. All records relating to safeguarding are meticulously maintained.
- Leaders work closely with external agencies, the parish and local charities to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils and their families receive appropriate help and guidance.

- Detailed checks are in place to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children, including volunteers who help in school.
- Risk assessments are completed regularly for the school premises, and for outdoor learning activities. All requirements for registration and use of the school's minibus are in place and reviewed annually.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good and is based on respectful relationships fostered by staff and the promotion of pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Pupils take pride in their work and in their achievements. Those who spoke to inspectors said that teachers made learning interesting and exciting.
- The teaching of writing is effective. Teachers have benefited from training in the use of assessment information. As a result, they effectively identify the next steps in pupils' learning in literacy. Creative and imaginative teaching helps to spark pupils' ideas. Teachers create a learning environment that supports pupils' learning effectively through displays and carefully selected resources. For example, in Year 5, the story of 'Carrie's War' inspires pupils in their writing of play scripts. They eloquently describe the emotions that the children evacuated might have felt. The performances by pupils as evacuees, seen during the inspection, were very emotional. Teachers build effectively on pupils' prior learning and pupils make good progress.
- Teachers foster a love of reading across the school. The effective teaching of phonics is systematic and taught consistently from the Nursery. Pupils apply their phonic knowledge well in their reading. They are becoming confident, competent readers. Parents commented positively on the progress that their children make in their reading.
- In mathematics, teachers use assessment to meet accurately the needs of most pupils. However, at times, teachers do not provide enough challenge and opportunities for the most able pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems in greater depth.
- Additional adults are deployed well to support pupils' progress. They ask probing questions to encourage pupils to refine their ideas and explanations. In key stage 1, pupils are encouraged effectively to talk about what they want to write. This has a positive impact on the good progress that they make.
- The information that teachers receive to support the high proportion of pupils with SEND varies. When this information is detailed teachers provide effective guidance and help for these pupils. On the other hand, limited information leads to some teachers not providing appropriate learning opportunities and resources to overcome pupils' individual barriers to learning. Consequently, some pupils are over-reliant on adult support. Progress for current pupils with SEND, although good overall, varies across year groups.
- Teachers skilfully plan learning opportunities in other curriculum subjects. They build effectively on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. For example, in Year 4, pupils visited a local museum to act as history detectives and carry out research about Egypt. They reviewed the information they had gathered and discussed the reliability of the information before producing their own detailed historical reports. In

art, pupils studied the work of Henry Moore and his portraits during the Second World War. A visit to a sculpture park enhanced their understanding of portraits further. Pupils' sculptures, and sketches of scenes from the air raids, create a very evocative display.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The extremely positive relationships fostered in school exemplify the high levels of understanding, warmth and respect between staff and pupils. Pupils flourish in a caring and nurturing environment which values each pupil's individuality.
- Pupils are extremely well prepared spiritually, morally, socially and culturally to become thoughtful, caring citizens. Pupils are rightly proud of the work that they do to support people in the local and wider community. The focus is clearly on helping people who are less fortunate than themselves. For example, through the sale of toast at snack time they contribute to the cost of providing meals for vulnerable children in Kenya through the project 'Mary's Meals'.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and are well looked after. They feel confident that adults will listen to them if they are worried. Pupils talked about the benefit of sessions with the art therapist. 'You can talk about things that happen outside school that upset you and it helps you to feel calm again.'
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including online, because of the well-planned activities that leaders provide. These include visits from national charities and sessions to teach them how to keep safe while riding a bike.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They are confident that if bullying did happen, it would be dealt with quickly. Pupils are considerate of the feelings of others. Teachers develop pupils' respect, tolerance and understanding effectively. This understanding prepares pupils very well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders provide an exciting range of enrichment experiences for pupils to broaden their horizons and raise aspirations, especially for disadvantaged pupils. A variety of clubs and activities enrich the curriculum including opportunities to play an instrument, go horse riding and visit local museums. Visitors from the local community are an important part of the life of the school. Local artists work with pupils on projects to enhance their school environment and celebrate their community. Work on the Greater Manchester project, 'Bee in the community', produced some wonderfully imaginative designs. The final bee was placed on display for the general public.
- Older pupils take their responsibilities as members of committees and role models for the younger pupils very seriously. The training they receive gives them the confidence to help other pupils who are feeling worried or upset. Pupils demonstrate their moral responsibility by caring for others and fundraising for local charities that support the homeless. The school choir performs for the elderly in the community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in high rates of attendance which have been above the national average for the past three years. Attendance for pupils who are persistently absent continues to improve and is now broadly in line with the national average. Staff work closely with the families of the most vulnerable pupils to ensure that they receive the help that they need to attend school regularly.
- Pupils' conduct around school and behaviour in lessons is exemplary. Their extremely positive attitudes to learning contribute significantly to the good progress that they make.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and very well mannered. They have high levels of respect towards each other and adults. They chat happily with their friends at lunchtime and play harmoniously together.
- There are very few incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Pupils speak confidently that should any occur it is dealt with swiftly and appropriately by adults. They make the right choices about their own behaviour and have a good understanding of how their behaviour impacts on others.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Published data shows that progress for pupils at the end of key stage 2 over time has fluctuated slightly but has remained broadly in line with national. In 2018, progress for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, improved considerably and was above the national average.
- The attainment results of national tests at the end of key stage 2 have remained above the national average for the past three years. Attainment for the most able pupils has been below the national average but increased considerably in 2018 to above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, including for disadvantaged pupils.
- Attainment for pupils in key stage 1 has been above the national average for the past two years, and above the national average at greater depth in 2018.
- Current work in pupils' books shows that pupils make good progress in reading and writing throughout the school. Work is neatly presented, reflecting the pride and care they take in their work. Teachers use a variety of methods to record the progress that pupils make. For example, in drama pupils used technology to record the performance of short plays about being an evacuee. Pupils were able to use this information to critique the performances of their peers and give constructive feedback on how they could improve their delivery. This supports the good progress pupils make, including disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils in key stage 1 apply their phonic knowledge with increasing accuracy in their writing. In reading, pupils decode unfamiliar words with confidence. The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 remains above the national average.

- Pupils' books show overall progress in mathematics is good. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of basic mathematical skills are secure. However, on occasions, some teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve challenging problems in greater depth. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils.
- Although the school's own information and work in pupils' books shows that progress for the high proportion of current pupils with SEND is good overall, this varies across year groups, particularly in key stage 2.
- Pupils apply their English and mathematical knowledge in science effectively. Work in pupils' books highlights the good progress that they make in science. Pupils' attainment in science remains above the national average at the end of key stage 2.
- In other curriculum subjects, leaders have set out specific knowledge and areas to be covered in each subject. The high quality of pupils' work shows the impact of the systematic acquisition of knowledge, which builds on pupils' prior learning effectively. Most pupils make good and improving progress across a broad range of subjects.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Leaders ensure that the provision for the youngest children, across all aspects of the curriculum, is of the highest quality. Teaching is outstanding and staff in the early years have an extremely good understanding of how young children learn.
- Most pupils start school with skills and knowledge below that of other children of a similar age nationally. Leaders have accurately identified that communication and language acquisition is the main barrier to learning for a high proportion of children. Leaders ensure that training for staff provides them with the knowledge and understanding they need to support pupils extremely well.
- Children's work shows that they make excellent progress from their individual starting points. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development is above the national average, including disadvantaged pupils. They are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders engage with parents very effectively before children start school through a range of very successful visits and activities. As a result, children settle quickly into well-established routines, which promote cooperation and develop independence.
- Parents can develop their own knowledge and skills to support their children's learning at home. Six weekly drop-in sessions and workshops about how to teach phonics, reading and early mathematics skills are well attended. Parents commented very positively about how quickly their children settle into school.
- Leadership is most effective and leads to an environment that nurtures, excites and stimulates children as learners. For example, at lunchtime, the youngest children sit around the table with an adult. Conversation is modelled by adults and children join in happily. Teachers quickly establish positive attitudes to learning for the youngest children. They demonstrate very good levels of cooperation and recognise the importance of sharing and taking turns as they learn.
- Leaders use assessment information accurately to identify the next steps in children's

learning. Leaders quickly identify children who may be struggling with their learning. Teachers provide them with the additional help they need quickly. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and enhance the range of evidence that teachers gather about the progress that children make. Leaders work effectively with colleagues in other schools to check that their judgements are correct.

- Staff are highly skilled in supporting young children. They model spoken language well and correct any mispronunciations sensitively. Questions effectively encourage children to speak and listen carefully. They expand children's learning and deepen their understanding. For example, a group of pupils in Nursery were making cakes using a selection of bird seed, dried fruit and lard. With gentle encouragement from staff children were able to explain why it was important to feed the birds in the winter time; 'They can't get at the worms because the ground is all cold and frozen and hard.' The outdoors is used effectively to enhance learning.
- Teachers design learning activities to develop children's curiosity and independence as active thinkers. They promote high levels of communication, cooperation and engagement. For example, in Reception, the 'smarty challenge' in the water was to work out how to move the small boats from one side of the water tray to the other through a small gap. A group of children demonstrated high levels of cooperation as they discussed how they would tackle the problem. When another child joined the group, they explained that by using a straw you could blow the boat along like the wind. Children explained to the inspector: 'The harder you blow, the faster the boat moves.' Excellent behaviour for learning is nurtured by staff, and children thrive as a result.
- Leaders have ensured that all statutory welfare arrangements are met. Well-established procedures and routines are understood by staff and contribute to the ongoing safety and welfare of the children.

School details

Unique reference number	105955
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	10057961

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart O'Brien
Headteacher	Mrs Clare Campbell
Telephone number	0161 794 4536
Website	www.stcharlesprimary.co.uk
Email address	stcharles.rcprimaryschool@salford.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 March 2018

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is increasing but remains below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by an education, health and care plan (EHCP) is below the national average.
- There are breakfast and after-school clubs, which are operated by a private provider.
- The school does not currently access any other alternative provision.
- The school had a section 48 inspection in July 2015.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning and behaviour. The headteacher and deputy headteacher joined inspectors on most of these classroom visits.
- Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils during lessons and at playtimes. They met formally with groups of pupils and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and members of staff. Inspectors also met with five members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and received an email from a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books and on display. They also looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the 97 responses to Parent View, including 24 free-text comments. There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaires for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Amanda Stringer, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Michelle Beard

Ofsted Inspector

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