

St Barnabas C of E Primary Academy

Parkhouse Street, Openshaw, Manchester M11 2JX

Inspection dates	22–23 June 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

- Leaders have a clear vision and high expectations. Their drive for improvement is shared by a committed staff and governing body. Consequently, the quality of teaching has rapidly improved since the last inspection.
- Children in the early years get a good start to their education. They make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school, particularly in writing and mathematics because of the quality of teaching they receive. They make good progress and are well prepared for secondary school. Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is above the national average. Very few pupils are persistently absent.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge allows them to make effective use of links between curriculum subjects to make learning interesting.
- Leaders' strong and effective promotion of good conduct and fundamental British values means this is a school where all pupils are welcome and each person is treated with respect.
- Governors have an in-depth knowledge of the school because of their rigorous questioning of senior leaders and the comprehensive information they receive.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school; they appreciate the improvements that have been made to the education and welfare of their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough pupils make more than expected progress to reach the highest standards.
- The quality of presentation varies because teachers do not always adhere to the school's handwriting policy.
- Governors do not hold middle leaders to account stringently enough for their work.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed to promote pupils' understanding of investigation and enquiry in science.
- Pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar are not as strong as their other academic skills.
- There are not enough opportunities to enhance children's enquiry and speaking skills in the early years.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that governors hold middle leaders to account more fully for pupil outcomes in their subjects
 - further developing staff training.

- Improve the quality of teaching to accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that spelling, punctuation and English grammar are taught more effectively, particularly in key stage 1
 - enhancing the teaching of science across the school so that pupils deepen their understanding and skills of scientific enquiry
 - ensuring that the quality of handwriting and presentation in pupils' books is consistently high.

- Improve the early years provision by further developing children's speaking and enquiry skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Senior leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because of their frequent and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. The principal has rapidly strengthened the senior leadership team since returning to her post last year and improved its effectiveness by the appointment of a vice-principal specifically to improve teaching and learning. Senior leaders, together with governors, have developed a clear vision for improvement that they share with staff. Senior leaders' determination and commitment has motivated staff and led to sustained improvement in the quality of teaching, particularly the teaching of writing.
- School improvement planning is clear and effective. Plans are detailed and include appropriate priorities based on leaders' accurate evaluations and the contribution of staff, governors and pupils. Regular evaluations of progress drive continued improvement in the school at a strong pace.
- The pupil premium grant is managed well to provide appropriate support for disadvantaged pupils. A middle leader with specific responsibility for the coordination of pupil premium support ensures it is targeted where it has best impact. Consequently, the progress of disadvantaged pupils, including the small number identified as most-able, is accelerating. Gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils, particularly in reading and writing, are narrowing. Pupils who are looked after by the local authority receive effective support in their learning.
- Leaders' good use of the additional sport funding promotes pupils' greater involvement in sport and improves teachers' confidence and skills in teaching physical education. Specialist teachers and coaches provide expert training for staff and pupils alike during physical education lessons. An increased range of opportunities provided by the funding promotes pupils' wider experience of sports, including archery, outdoor adventurous activities and the opportunity to complete national gymnastic awards. Additional training allows some older pupils to become play leaders who support the purposeful play of younger pupils. Consequently, pupils, including those who have special educational needs or disability, increase their participation in sport and adopt healthier lifestyles.
- Parents are kept well informed by leaders' regular and effective communications. The school's own surveys show parents' overwhelming support for their work. A small number of parents would like pupils to receive more homework. Leaders have responded quickly to this and are currently undertaking a review to ensure homework continues to be appropriately linked to learning.
- This is a caring school where pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is nurtured well. This is particularly evident in how leaders choose carefully some aspects of the curriculum, including music, to engage with pupils' cultural heritage and interests. All pupils are treated with understanding, care and respect because leaders strongly promote fundamental British values and equality irrespective of pupils' faith, gender identity or special educational needs or disability.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. It is complemented by a wide variety of clubs that develop pupils' sporting, artistic and academic interests. These include a debating club that develops pupils' linguistic and communication skills and which has had some success in local debating competitions. Pupils have many opportunities to experience wider modern British society through a variety of educational visits and residential trips. Consequently, pupils are well equipped for the next stages of their education.
- The leadership of early years, English, mathematics and other subjects, including computing and music, is strong. Subject leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities because of effective training and support. They use their detailed knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects gained from rigorous monitoring to bring about improvements. Middle leaders responsible for subjects regularly report in writing to governors about the impact of their actions but are not regularly held to account by governors about their reports' findings.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance of the school is effective. Governors share senior leaders' vision and commitment to improvement and hold them stringently to account. Governors know their school well because many visit often and attend parent-teacher progress meetings.
 - Governors ensure value for money by closely monitoring the impact of pupil premium and sports funding.
 - Governors hold senior leaders to account but do not challenge the work of middle leaders with the same rigour.

- Governors regularly evaluate their own performance. They take appropriate actions to address any identified gaps in their knowledge or practice, they provide suitable induction for new governors and they attend appropriate training, including that related to radicalisation and extremism.
- Governors rigorously monitor teachers' performance management.
- The governing body ensures that the school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding, including the careful checking of the suitability of all adults who work in the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Checks relating to safeguarding are thorough and all records are kept meticulously. Any concerns regarding the safety or welfare of children are quickly and appropriately acted upon. Consequently, the school has a culture of safety where pupils' welfare is a priority. Leaders and teachers are vigilant in protecting pupils from the dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism because they have appropriate training.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers' high expectations and secure subject knowledge have raised pupils' aspirations and achievement, particularly in writing. Teachers' use of cross-curricular links enable them to make learning interesting while also ensuring pupils develop their understanding. For example, in one writing class in key stage 2, the teacher used current affairs and the principles of democracy to inspire pupils and develop their understanding of persuasion.
- The teaching of reading and writing has improved greatly in quality. Pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding over time because concepts are developed systematically and build upon what they have learned previously. For example, pupils in one class developed their skills in using a thesaurus purposefully to enhance their vocabulary and to improve their story's setting.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics has improved due to improved subject leadership. Mathematics is taught systematically so that pupils build upon prior learning and deepen their understanding. On rare occasions, however, pupils do not fully understand the skills they need. Consequently, some pupils require further support from teachers to begin their work which slows their initial progress.
- Teachers use questioning well to probe deeply pupils' understanding and develop their reasoning and knowledge across a wide variety of subjects. Consequently, pupils are confident to explain their answers and often copy the teachers' styles of questioning when working in groups. For example, in upper key stage 2, some pupils discussed whether or not a country was neutral during the Second World War. They probed their reasons behind choices to help them check their answers.
- Pupils are proficient readers due to good support from staff and a number of trained volunteers from the local college. Teachers monitor home reading activities with rigour to ensure pupils receive the support they need and make good use of the school breakfast club and support staff to provide extra help where it is needed the most. The most able pupils achieve well due to well-planned, challenging activities. Pupils deepen their understanding and confidently undertake more complex problems and challenges.
- Skilled and committed teaching assistants support learning well leading to good progress for disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils.
- Phonics – the sounds letters make – is taught well. Teachers and teaching assistants have appropriate training and secure subject knowledge. As a result, all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress.
- Teachers regularly make good use of homework to consolidate and extend pupils' learning using themes which link to work in class, including the development of reading and mental calculation skills.
- The quality of teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics is effective; pupils make good progress in computing, music and Spanish. However, in science, handwriting, and spelling, punctuation and English grammar, the quality of teaching is less consistent across the school. The quality of presentation in books varies because expectations are not always high enough.
- Punctuation is not taught well enough, particularly in key stage 1, which leads to some underachievement later in key stage 2. Although all pupils regularly undertake practical science investigations, some teaching does not consistently promote the development of systematic scientific enquiry. In particular, pupils are not consistently given opportunities to use observations and conclusions to develop and deepen knowledge and understanding.

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 are proud of their school and enjoy coming because they say teachers and teaching assistants help them to understand their learning in lessons. Parents share this viewpoint and are overwhelmingly supportive, particularly about the excellent support offered to families during difficult times.
- Pupils know how to stay safe and look after themselves because of the good-quality teaching they receive. They speak confidently about staying safe while online. Pupils are confident about how they can stay safe within their local community. A range of visitors to school, including theatre groups and cycle trainers, has enhanced pupils' knowledge.
- Pupils maturely and effectively take on extra responsibilities. Academy councillors contribute to school improvement by attending some governing body meetings and by leading assemblies on healthy eating.
- Pupils are well supported to become good citizens. They have a good understanding of democracy because of the effective promotion of fundamental British values by leaders and teachers.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported in their learning.
- The school has good relationships with outside agencies, and is proactive in referring any concerns that may place children at risk of harm and in following up actions to ensure pupils remain safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and each other. They welcome visitors and willingly engage in conversations about their work and school life.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. Attendance is above average for all groups of pupils. School leaders rigorously and robustly pursue unauthorised attendance in line with national guidelines. Very few pupils are regularly absent from school.
- Exclusion of pupils due to poor behaviour is used rarely by leaders and only as a last resort. The frequency of exclusions continues to fall because of the consistent and effective implementation of the school's behaviour policy. Leaders' appropriate evaluation of the circumstances leading to an exclusion means pupils receive appropriate support when they return to school; consequently, very few receive a second exclusion. A range of awards are used effectively by leaders to celebrate and recognise both positive academic and social behaviour. Pupils wear school award badges proudly on their uniforms and save the virtual funds they earn towards whole-class celebrations.
- Pupils have a good understanding of all types of bullying and say that it is rare. Pupils have strong views about racism and say that it does not have a place in their school. They are confident that if any bullying or misbehaviour does occur, adults would rapidly take actions to address it.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are typically good because of the quality of teaching they receive and the clear guidelines and high expectations set by leaders and staff. On the rare occasions that learning is disrupted, adults deal with it effectively.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection and work in pupils' books shows this improvement is being sustained and enhanced as pupils move through the school.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points in their understanding of phonics because of the good teaching they receive. As a result, an average proportion of pupils achieve the expected standards in phonics.
- In 2015, pupils achieved well in reading, writing and mathematics but standards in spelling, punctuation and grammar were significantly below the national average. Last year, pupils in Year 6 made expected progress in mathematics but progress was lower than expected in reading and writing. Disadvantaged pupils made better progress in mathematics than in writing.
- The work in the books of pupils currently in school shows much-improved outcomes in nearly every year group, particularly in mathematics and writing. Better-quality teaching, brought about by appropriate training and sharper accountability, has clearly improved pupils' outcomes so that they are now good. According to the school's extensive monitoring and leaders' accurate assessment, approximately eight out

of ten pupils are attaining what is expected for their age. Similarly, the rates of progress that pupils make are increasing rapidly.

- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress from their starting points because of the quality of support and care they receive.
- Disadvantaged pupils' rates of progress and levels of attainment in all subjects are improving rapidly, particularly in writing and reading. As a result, achievement gaps between them and the non-disadvantaged pupils in school and nationally are narrowing.
- The proportions of most-able pupils in all year groups are much smaller than those seen nationally. However, those in each cohort regularly receive appropriate levels of challenge in the work that is set for them. This is matched by high expectations from teachers. Consequently, most-able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress from their starting points and reach levels of attainment at least in line with those expected for their age.
- Achievement in key stage 1 has improved significantly for the last two successive years.

Early years provision

is good

- The leader responsible for early years provides strong leadership for her department. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and plans appropriate improvements, including developing children's critical thinking, evaluation and enquiry skills.
- The quality of teaching in early years is good and improving. This is because of highly effective monitoring and support from leaders and the careful evaluation of information to identify where improvements are necessary. Leaders ensure assessments are accurate by regularly checking them with other providers and external quality assurance professionals.
- Teachers and other adults have established good partnerships with parents. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and are confident that staff will act quickly to address any concerns. Nearly three quarters of children entering Nursery do so with levels of development below those which are typical for their age. High proportions of children enter the early years with English as an additional language. Children from all groups, including the disadvantaged, those who have special educational needs or disability and particularly those who joined the school in the Nursery, make good progress from their starting points.
- Over three quarters of children currently achieve a good level of development at the end of Reception. This is well above the national figures seen in 2015. This is because of the quality of teaching and care they receive from the outset and the strong focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills and standards of behaviour. This ensures children are well equipped to access learning in key stage 1.
- Teachers make effective use of both indoor and outdoor space to provide stimulating and focused activities that are closely linked. Activities capture pupils' interest and provide both excitement and learning. For example, pupils were excited, during their current study of dinosaurs, to find one had visited their class during the night and laid an egg. They are eagerly waiting for the egg to hatch.
- Children are polite and courteous. They welcome visitors to their classrooms and are keen to show what they have been learning. They play well together and effectively develop their inquisitiveness and social skills to become avid learners because of adults' encouragement and good use of questions. However, leaders rightly identify the need to enhance children's skills of reasoning and enquiry in order for them to achieve the highest standards. Adults consistently demonstrate respect and courtesy to pupils which pupils copy with gusto.
- Children are kept safe because well-trained and vigilant staff implement the school's safeguarding policies with rigour and act quickly and appropriately to deal with any concerns.
- Leaders ensure that welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	137866
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10012142

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Harold Rostron
Principal	Lucy Gough
Telephone number	0161 223 3593
Website	www.stbarnabascofeacademy.org.uk
Email address	admin@stbarnabascofeacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 March 2014

Information about this school

- St Barnabas is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is twice the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is much higher than average.
- A high proportion of pupils join and leave the school other than at the normal time.
- The school operates a breakfast club during term time that is managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not meet the requirements for publishing information about the reporting of the implementation of its special educational needs policy on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a range of lessons and looked at pupils' work. They listened to pupils reading and talked with pupils about their lessons and school life. Inspectors took account of the 10 responses to the online pupils' questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with the principal, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and a number of staff from different roles in the school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and the management of the school, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- The inspectors spoke with parents and staff and considered the school's own information about the views of parents. There were four responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View, too few to undertake any analysis.
- Inspectors took account of 17 responses made by staff through the staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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