

Simonstone St Peter's Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Simonstone, Burnley, Lancashire, BB12 7HR

Inspection dates 8–9 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- A warm, welcoming and caring ethos rooted firmly within a Christian context is the hallmark of this school. This view is shared by the vast majority of parents who support the school's work and are delighted with how well their children are cared for by the staff.
- The headteacher and other leaders provide influential leadership. They have an accurate view of the school's performance and use this well to ensure that the achievement of all groups of pupils is good and continues to improve.
- Governors contribute strongly to the school's success. They are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas to develop and their 'hands on' approach ensures they have the knowledge and expertise to hold the school to account and help it to improve further.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils enjoy school, their well above average attendance paying testament to this. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. This contributes very positively to the strong relationships between adult and pupils and pupils themselves that are based on mutual respect for each other.
- Teaching in the school is good and there is a clear focus on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children get off to a flying start in the early years and make good progress across Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards in writing are consistently above average and in reading and mathematics are often well above average by the end of Year 6.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress for pupils across all year groups sometimes slows in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always have the opportunity to work alongside and share the most effective practice of their colleagues.
- Points for development from the regular checks that leaders make on the quality of teaching are not always followed up in future monitoring.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils in all classes, including a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, she made short visits to classrooms and observed pupils working in small groups and individually to support their learning. She also attended worship and observed pupils at break times and on entry to the school at the beginning of the day.
- The inspector looked at pupils' books, including some of last year's work as well as their current work and the work they were doing in lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior and subject leaders, six members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and with pupils, both as a group and informally.
- She reviewed the school website.
- The inspector looked at a range of the school's documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school's own data on pupils' achievement, minutes of the governing body meetings, monitoring records, records of how the school uses its funding, especially money from the pupil premium and sports funding. In addition documentation relating to the behaviour and safety of pupils was analysed.
- She took into account the 49 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own questionnaire to parents. She also spoke to a number of parents during the inspection, both in person and on the telephone.
- There were 14 responses to the staff inspection questionnaire and these views were also considered by the inspector.

Inspection team

Yvonne Mills-Clare, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Simonstone St Peter's is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British and no pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or pupils with special educational needs are below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional 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.
- At times the school accesses the alternative provision offered by Hendon Brook school to address the specific needs of some pupils.
- There is a before and after school facility located at the school which is not managed by the governing body and did not form part of this inspection. A separate inspection report for this provision can be found on the Ofsted website.
- 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement further so that it is outstanding by:
 - embedding opportunities for staff to work alongside and share the most effective practice with their colleagues
 - ensuring that areas for development identified following the monitoring of teaching form the focus for future observations, to ensure skills are consistently developed and embedded in day to day practice.
- Ensure that the school's good practice in reading, writing and mathematics is extended to all other subjects, by:
 - further developing existing assessment systems to ensure teachers have the information they need to build on pupils' knowledge and skills when planning lessons in all subjects
 - offering pupils a choice of how to record their work in order to develop further their basic skills and their creativity.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders and governors set a clear direction for the school. They have a determined focus on ensuring the school continues to move forward, while retaining the caring, 'family feel' that parents value. The effective review of data showing the school's performance clearly identifies the areas for improvement. These are tackled effectively to maintain the school's high standards since the last inspection.
- Staff morale is high and, despite the many extra responsibilities that a small school brings, subject leaders are knowledgeable about their subjects and resolute in their quest to ensure pupils do as well as they can. As a result they make an effective contribution to ongoing improvements.
- Staff use the detailed information about pupils' achievements to identify any pupils who are at risk of falling behind in reading, writing or mathematics. Teachers are held rigorously to account through regular meetings to check on the progress of all pupils and action is swiftly taken should any pupil be in danger of falling behind. This demonstrates the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The performance of teachers is regularly reviewed and targets set are closely linked to the headteacher's targets, priorities for the school and the progress of pupils. Staff attend regular professional development training, and support is planned if necessary. Feedback is given to staff alongside any actions staff need to take to improve the progress of their pupils. However, the points identified are not checked for improvement and so there is a danger that the pace of improving classroom practice can be slowed.
- The curriculum is varied and caters well for the individual needs and interests of pupils, particularly in the development of the arts. However, current assessments in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics are not as well-developed in identifying pupils' progress as those for English and mathematics and this can slow progress at times.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to be involved in a range of clubs and activities and pupils are appreciative of the many trips, visits and visitors provided by the school.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school and contributes effectively to pupils' good behaviour and the very positive atmosphere that pervades the school. This promotes empathy and tolerance in its pupils and prepares them very well for life in modern Britain.
- The school uses its extra funding wisely. The pupil premium funding enables the small number of disadvantaged pupils to achieve well and make similar progress to other pupils through timely, well-targeted support.
- The primary sport and physical education funding has been used effectively to pay for sports' coaching from experts. This support gives teachers the opportunity to enhance their own skills. A range of after school sports' clubs and team sports are also provided for the benefit of all pupils.
- The local authority has provided light-touch support for the school and agrees that this is a good school. It offers effective support at the request of the school, such as providing training and support for governors and other leaders.
- In monitoring the attendance of any pupils in alternative provision, the school meets regularly with the placement school, speaks weekly with key workers and is in regular contact with families.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well led and knowledgeable. A wide range of skills and experience are represented and members are fully committed to supporting the school, while at the same time holding leaders fully to account.
 - Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance, reviewing data presented by the school and from external sources. They check the school's work by linking with subject leaders, through the headteacher's full and comprehensive reports and by working with pupils in the school. They are fully aware of the quality of teaching in the school and understand how teachers' performance can affect their progression through the pay scale.
 - Governors understand how the pupil premium is used and keep a close eye on the progress of the pupils supported by this funding or by the alternative provision accessed by the school to ensure they continue to progress well.
 - The safety of its pupils is paramount to the school and governors are fully aware of their statutory duties regarding safeguarding and have made sure the school's arrangements meet statutory requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, open and friendly. Relationships are very strong and are based on mutual respect for adults and each other. When attending worship in the adjacent school hall they stay sensibly in their 'crocodile' when crossing the road. Older pupils relish being 'buddies' to the younger children starting school, enjoying playing with them at playtime.
- Pupils of all ages behave well both in lessons and at play. Attitudes to learning are good, but occasionally a few pupils do not concentrate as well as they could.
- The school is bright and welcoming. Classrooms and shared areas are clean and uncluttered and contain colourful displays. Pupils are proud of their school, looking smartly dressed in their school uniforms.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe at school and responses from the majority of parents are in agreement. Pupils understand the different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. Pupils say that any instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively by teachers.
- Pupils enjoy opportunities to play and socialise with their friends. They make full use of the expansive grounds, whether playing football, using the climbing equipment chatting to others or searching for conkers by the trees. They line up sensibly at the end of break times and enter school refreshed and ready to learn.
- Attendance is well above average demonstrating how happy pupils are to be in school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and focuses on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers generally set high expectations and plan lessons that build up the skills pupils need to improve further. In a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson for example, the teaching assistant was effectively deployed to work with a group of pupils who needed a little more explanation about the previous day's lesson. Those helped in this way returned to their seats happy and confident that they could now carry out that day's tasks. This kind of bespoke, personalised support is based on the accurate assessment of pupils' prior learning, and helps to ensure that all pupils do as well as they can. However this practice is not currently shared across the school.
- Reading is strongly promoted across the school and pupils of all ages read well. The good teaching of phonics ensures that more pupils than average achieved the required standard in Year 1 in the screening check for phonics (the letters and the sounds they make). Regular sessions to read in groups and individually with adult support, both at home and at school, engender the enjoyment of reading spoken about by the pupils. These sessions, together with a focus on developing pupils' comprehension skills ensure that pupils develop the skill in understanding a wide range of texts when reading for enjoyment or research.
- In mathematics, teachers manage the mixed age groups increasingly well, through their knowledge of their pupils, the activities they set for them and effective questioning that challenges pupils to reflect on their learning.
- Work in pupils' books, both current and from last year, shows that it is generally neat and well presented, pupils taking a pride in their work. They produce a good quantity of work, particularly in writing and mathematics. Work across other subjects is equally neat, but while teachers choose themes and topics to enthuse and motivate pupils, some of the topic work seen does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop basic skills and those relating to creativity when recording their work.
- Teachers' marking clearly identifies what pupils do well and how to improve their work. Teachers make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and the steps they must take to be successful. Often for younger pupils these are verbal, but as they move through the school the steps are written, giving pupils the opportunity to assess how successful they have been in their work.
- Teaching assistants and other adults provide good support for those with special educational needs or requiring extra help.

The achievement of pupils is good

- From starting points that are slightly below those expected when children join the school in the Reception class, pupils achieve well across the school. Standards by the end of Year 6 are consistently above average, often significantly so in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils achieve well across Key Stage 1. Small cohorts of pupils can create great differences in standards from year to year. Nonetheless, pupils generally reach standards that are slightly above average. An average number of pupils reach the higher Level 3 by the end of Year 2. This represents good achievement from their starting points. An above average percentage of pupils in the 2014 Year 1 national screening check on phonics reached the required standard.
- Across Years 3 and 6, pupils continue to build on this good progress. Unvalidated data of test results for 2014 indicate that most pupils made the expected rate of progress and an above average proportion did better than this.
- Standards in reading and mathematics are high. Pupils are confident readers, demonstrating a range of skills to tackle unfamiliar words. Older pupils talk about the books they have read and the authors they particularly enjoy. They read widely and regularly both in school and at home. In mathematics, as a result of information and assessment gathered from the previous lesson, particularly for the older pupils, short, sharp, bespoke support is put in place to ensure pupils' understanding is secure and they remain confident and resilient.
- The school has focused on the achievement and attainment of boys, whose achievement lagged behind that of the girls, particularly in writing. In a small school, variations in cohorts can make differences appear greater. Nevertheless, the school has introduced books, themes and topics to motivate boys and the 'Dads and Lads' initiative to address this disparity. This is proving to be effective and gaps between the attainment of boys and girls across the school have closed steadily.
- There are very few disadvantaged pupils. In 2013 in Year 6 there were too few pupils in this group for a meaningful comparison to be made between their attainment and that of others in the school or nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their individual starting points. They are well supported by teachers, and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution in ensuring they achieve well.
- The most able pupils make good progress and achieve high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013 and 2014 an above average proportion of pupils achieved at the higher Level 5, significantly so in 2013. They often complete more difficult work in lessons and respond well to the expectations of their teachers.
- The thorough tracking and effective programmes of support put into place by the school in order to ensure all pupils achieve well, demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.

The early years provision is good

- The majority of children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are more recently, slightly below that typical for their age, but this varies from year to year.
- Children get off to a flying start. Adults from the school visit children in their homes and in pre-school sessions prior to children starting in the school. This helps to ensure that children settle quickly and are willing learners. As a result, by the time children enter Year 1 most children are working at the expected level for their age, with an increasing proportion leaving with skills which exceed this. This represents good achievement and they are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Children are very well cared for and relationships are strong from the outset. As a result of feeling safe and secure, children quickly develop independence and resilience.
- Teaching is good. All adults have high expectations of the children in their charge and plan activities that interest and enthuse. This paves the way for developing the good learning behaviours they carry with them through the rest of the school.
- All staff assess the children formally and at 'choosing times'. This ensures that staff are fully informed of what each child knows and what they can do. These are then used to good effect to ensure children are sufficiently challenged and supported in their next steps in learning.
- Parents are invited to contribute to their child's 'Learning Journey' record at home, forming a real home school partnership which parents value.

- Children concentrate well, listen to adults and each other. They are open and friendly with visitors and are eager to show them their work. Following a visit from a parent who is a builder by trade, children were having great fun dressing in hard hats and wellington boots and demonstrating building skills in the outdoor area.
- Leadership is good. Children are taught well, but are also nurtured and valued in a well- resourced bright and welcoming environment.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	119428
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	448506

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Aizlewood
Headteacher	Sally Smith
Date of previous school inspection	26 May 2010
Telephone number	01282 771147
Fax number	01282 771147
Email address	head@simonstone.lancs.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

