

Inspection of St Luke and St Philips Church of England Primary School

Hancock Street, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 2LZ

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Samantha O'Connell. This school is part of the Cidari Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Peter Ashworth, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John McClelland.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being part of this welcoming school, which prides itself on supporting the community. Pupils embody the school's vision of respecting others. They appreciate that everyone is unique and understand the importance of treating others in a way that they would like to be treated themselves. This helps pupils to feel happy at school.

The school is ambitious for pupils to achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, a number of pupils have gaps in their learning that have not been addressed. This means that these pupils do not achieve as well as they should in a range of subjects. Furthermore, some pupils in key stage 2 do not have the knowledge that they need to be successful readers. Despite this, pupils work hard and behave well in lessons.

Pupils value the different trips that they experience. These include visits to outdoor adventure centres, the library and orchestral performances. The school ensures that many pupils access the range of clubs that it offers. These vary from family Zumba, martial arts, through to American football. Charitable activities, such as fund raising for a local hospice, help pupils to develop their understanding of empathy.

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

The published performance data in 2023 shows that by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly below the national average. Some of these pupils missed considerable amounts of time in school as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. That said, weaknesses in the school's previous curriculum also hampered how well pupils learned.

The school has taken action to improve the consistency with which mathematics and writing is taught. However, some pupils in key stage 2 have gaps in their understanding of important vocabulary. While pupils can read many of the words, they do not know what they mean. This has not been identified or addressed. Therefore, some pupils struggle to understand the important information in the texts that they read. This limits their comprehension and how well prepared they are for the next stage of education.

In subjects other than English and mathematics, the school has set out the important knowledge that pupils should learn in Years 1 to 6. In a small number of these subjects, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. The reasons for this are varied. Weaknesses in the previous subject curriculums have led to some of the gaps in pupils' knowledge. These gaps have not been identified and addressed, which hinders some pupils from making sense of new learning. Other gaps in pupils' knowledge stem from some teachers lacking the subject knowledge that they need to deliver the curriculum as intended.

The school has not set out the important knowledge that children in the early years should learn in some areas of learning. This makes it tricky for staff to know what they should prioritise when designing activities. As a result, some activities do not help children

build on what they already know. This leads to some children not being as well prepared for the demands of the Year 1 curriculum as they should be.

The school prioritises the teaching of phonics. The phonics programme is delivered by well-trained staff. Staff ably support those pupils who need extra help in learning phonics. New arrivals to the school who speak English as an additional language, learn phonics quickly and successfully. Parents and carers value the information that they receive from the school that helps them to support their children's phonics learning at home.

The school has effective systems in place to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND benefit from well-chosen resources that help them to access the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils' behaviour across the school is positive and learning is rarely interrupted. Children in the early years learn cooperatively alongside one another and follow class rules and routines. Previously, too many pupils have been absent from school. The school has put in place a range of effective strategies that have reduced the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

Pupils experience a range of personal development opportunities. Pupils understand that there are many different types of families in society. They learn about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The local governing body and trustees understand the weaknesses in pupils' achievement. They have worked to improve the school's capacity to begin to improve the quality of education. However, turbulence in staffing since the previous inspection has limited the impact of this. Staff are positive about what the school and the trust do to support their workload and well-being. This includes access to external well-being support and measures that reduce paperwork.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not check how well pupils have remembered and understood what they have been previously taught. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge that have not been identified. These gaps hinder their ability to make sense of new learning and they do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that teachers are well equipped to check that pupils' knowledge is secure before introducing new topics and concepts.

- The school has not identified the key knowledge that children in the early years should learn in some areas of the curriculum. As a result, a number of children have gaps in their knowledge and are not sufficiently prepared for the demands of the Year 1 curriculum. The school should ensure that they finalise their curriculum thinking so that it is clear what children in the early years should learn and when this knowledge should be taught.
- In a small number of subjects, some teachers do not have the knowledge that they need to teach the intended curriculum effectively. Some of the learning activities that pupils complete do not enable them to learn the important knowledge as well as they should. The school should make sure that teachers have the subject knowledge that they need to effectively deliver the curriculum, so that pupils achieve well.
- Some pupils in key stage 2 have gaps in their understanding of important vocabulary. These pupils struggle to comprehend the important information in the texts that they read. As a result, they are not as well prepared for the next stage of education as they should be. The school should ensure that there is increased emphasis on identifying and addressing the gaps in knowledge that limit pupils' reading comprehension.

How can I feed back my views?

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

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

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	140559
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10348298
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John McClelland
CEO of the trust	Peter Ashworth
Headteacher	Samantha O'Connell
Website	www.stlukesblackburn.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England primary school in the Diocese of Blackburn. The previous section 48 inspection took place in January 2024. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place by the end of 2030.
- The school is part of the Cidari Multi Academy Trust.
- The local governing body operates a breakfast club.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. As part of the deep dives, the inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, met with teachers and looked at pupils' work. The inspectors also looked at the curriculum and pupils' work in some other subjects. The lead inspector observed some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the local governing body, including the chair. He also spoke with the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer and a representative of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. They also considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons. They spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. They also considered the views of pupils shared through Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's online staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Robinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mike Tonge

Ofsted Inspector

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