

Red Lane Primary School

Red Lane, Brightmet, Bolton, Lancashire BL2 5HP

Inspection dates

9 to 10 July 2019

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	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders' drive and commitment is shared by staff, trustees and governors. Together, they have created a safe learning environment at the heart of the community. Pupils aspire to the school moto: 'Believe, achieve, succeed'.
- Middle leaders have accurately identified the strengths and areas for further improvement in the subjects that they lead to ensure that recent improvements to pupils' learning are maintained.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully. Leaders provide opportunities that broaden pupils' horizons and raise their aspirations. Pupils are prepared effectively to be citizens of the future.
- Some teachers, especially in key stage 1, do not use assessment information effectively to identify the next steps in pupils' learning. In some classes, activities do not match pupils' needs well and progress stalls.
- The teaching of phonics is good. The proportion of pupils who achieve well in the phonics screening check is improving. However, pupils' limited vocabulary knowledge hinders their progress in reading.
- Parents and carers are happy with the care, guidance and support from staff. 'Nothing is too much trouble,' reflects the comments of many.
- Leaders in the early years have designed a curriculum that ignites children's curiosity. Children thrive in the nurturing environment that leaders and staff have created. As a result, children make good progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively by highly trained staff. These pupils make good progress.
- Leaders are committed to helping disadvantaged pupils to overcome barriers to learning, particularly in relation to their social and emotional development. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are making better progress than in the past.
- Leaders have designed a broad curriculum that promotes pupils' interest in the world around them. The curriculum, particularly in key stage 2, builds successfully on pupils' prior learning.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and well mannered. The strong relationships fostered by adults contribute to pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Pupils feel valued and safe in school.
- Progress is improving in writing, reading and mathematics in key stage 2. Despite this, attainment remains below average by the end of Year 6.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed further the actions to extend pupils' vocabulary and check that they understand the meaning of new words, including technical vocabulary across the curriculum, to aid their understanding in reading.
- Improve outcomes further, particularly in Year 2, by challenging more pupils, including the most able, to reach the standards of which they are capable in reading, writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Red Lane Primary School Academy joined a multi-academy trust (MAT) in August 2016. This led to some changes in the senior leadership of the school, including the appointment of a new headteacher. The headteacher's commitment to pupils and the local community is unwavering. Staff, governors and trustees of the MAT share her vision for continued improvement. Leaders have created a nurturing environment in which pupils thrive collectively and personally. Together with staff, leaders promote high levels of respect and cooperation. They work closely with families to raise aspirations for all. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school.
- The strong relationship between school and the community was tested during a recent fire, which seriously damaged large areas of the key stage 1 building and destroyed the early years provision, including all resources and equipment. Parents, neighbours and local groups rallied round to help leaders to rebuild and refurbish the building. The fact that the school remains open is a testament to the drive and dedication of leaders, staff and pupils.
- Leaders have not let these drawbacks hamper the journey to raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Future plans include precise actions, and success can be seen in pupils' improved attainment in national tests at the end of key stage 2. Year-on-year, more pupils are reaching the standards expected for their age as they leave the school. However, outcomes require improvement because, although they are improving due to better teaching, pupils do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable. This is particularly the case in key stage 1.
- Leaders promote a culture of improvement and reflection among staff. Training to continually improve teachers' knowledge, skills and understanding is given a high priority. Leaders' accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement ensure that the training they provide is focused and purposeful. Leaders provide appropriate support and guidance for individual staff. Teachers work with other colleagues, including those in the MAT, to share ideas and expertise. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving throughout the school.
- Leaders have been able to secure clear improvements to the teaching of mathematics, reading and writing. These improvements reflect the strength of leadership in these areas. They are also leading to all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, making much stronger progress than in the past.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum that is designed to ignite pupils' curiosity through a range of interesting experiences. Leaders have endeavoured to ensure that the curriculum is developed around the needs and interests of the pupils. They have also developed meaningful, cross-curricular links between different subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 develop their English and historical skills through studying the life of Rosa Parks.
- Leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge that they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. They check that subjects other than English and mathematics are taught well across the school. They evaluate the impact of the wider curriculum in embedding

pupils' subject-specific knowledge and skills, for example as historians and scientists.

- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has a good understanding of the individual needs of the many pupils with SEND who attend the school. The SENCo provides appropriate training for staff, which enables them to meet the needs of these pupils. Support is particularly effective for pupils who face challenges that relate to their social, emotional and mental health. Additional funding for pupils with SEND is spent effectively, and these pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Leaders ensure that the additional funding for the high proportion of disadvantaged pupils is used well. Leaders work with several agencies and charities to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the support and guidance that they need to overcome some of their barriers to learning.
- The additional funding for the sports premium is used effectively. Training for staff from sports coaches enables them to provide an increasing number of clubs and activities for pupils, including yoga and gymnastics. Pupils are successful in sports tournaments locally and at a regional level. Leaders also use the funding to promote the importance of living healthy lifestyles with pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is underpinned by the school's core values and is promoted extremely successfully through the curriculum. For example, staff plan a wide range of visits to local museums, places of worship and historical sites. Residential trips provide pupils with the opportunity to challenge themselves and develop resilience and independence. Pupils also benefit from holding a range of responsibilities and positions on committees in the school. Together, these experiences prepare pupils well for their life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- There are clear lines of responsibility in the structure of the trust. The local governing board reports termly to the board of trustees on the quality of education in the school. Members of the board of trustees and the local governing board have the breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding that they need to hold leaders to account. They fulfil their statutory duties well.
- Training enables governors to keep up to date with new initiatives. They have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas for further improvement. Governors check the information that they receive from leaders, for instance by meeting with external consultants and talking to pupils about their learning.
- Trustees and governors have a good knowledge of the challenges facing the school. They understand the needs of the local community. They take appropriate action to support leaders and families. This was particularly evident following the recent fire. They are proud to be associated with the school, which is at the heart of the community.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The safety and welfare of all pupils

are at the core of everything that staff do. All records relating to safeguarding are maintained meticulously.

- High-quality training contributes to staff's good understanding of safeguarding. They know how to identify any signs of neglect or abuse and they act swiftly if they have any concerns. Leaders work well with other agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive guidance and support when necessary. Staff receive regular training and weekly updates on any potential areas of risk for the pupils in the locality. This has helped to establish and maintain a culture of vigilance.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including online and when they are in the community. Pupils feel valued and safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have created a safe and nurturing learning environment. Displays in classrooms and around school are eye-catching and purposeful. They are used effectively by teachers to celebrate pupils' achievements and remind them of prior learning. Strong relationships are modelled by staff, which contributes to pupils' positive attitudes towards others and their learning. Pupils concentrate in class and take pride in their work because teachers make learning interesting.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and improving. Pupils now benefit from effective teaching in reading, writing, mathematics and across the curriculum. This improvement is reflected in pupils' stronger progress, particularly in key stage 2, although attainment remains below average.
- The high-quality training that teachers receive improves their subject knowledge and understanding. Teachers use their knowledge to ask probing questions and to draw out from pupils the reasons behind their ideas. Teachers appreciate the opportunity to work with colleagues, including other professionals in the MAT and in other schools locally. This is especially useful for staff who are new to teaching.
- Overall, teachers use assessment to accurately identify the next steps in pupils' learning. As a result, activities meet the needs of most pupils well, especially in key stage 2. However, in some classes in key stage 1, pupils' progress falters when activities are not matched well to their needs.
- Training for teachers has been particularly effective in the teaching of mathematics. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop a deep understanding of basic calculations. Pupils apply their knowledge and skills with increasing confidence to solve challenging problems, particularly in key stage 2. Attainment in mathematics is improving, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge ensures the systematic teaching of phonics, beginning in the early years. In Year 1, pupils use their phonics knowledge successfully to read unfamiliar words. They apply their phonics knowledge with increasing accuracy in their own writing. Support staff work with pupils who are struggling so that they catch up quickly.
- The teaching of reading is given a high priority across school. Pupils enjoy reading and talk confidently to adults about their favourite books. However, for some pupils their limited vocabulary hinders the progress that they make. Recent changes to the way

that reading is taught, particularly regarding strategies to improve pupils' vocabulary knowledge and understanding, have yet to impact positively on outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.

- Improvements to the teaching of grammar, spelling and punctuation have impacted positively on pupils' writing. Pupils apply their knowledge effectively in their own writing across a range of subjects. For example, in Year 6, teachers use texts linked to aspects of history they have researched to emphasise grammatical issues in a text. Teachers use probing questions to check pupils' understanding of texts. Pupils use increasingly challenging grammatical structures in their own writing to good effect.
- Highly skilled support staff are deployed effectively in order to support pupils with SEND. This enables most pupils with SEND to access their learning alongside their peers. Additional training for staff enables them to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff are particularly skilled at developing pupils' resilience and independence.
- In subjects beyond English and mathematics, teachers plan experiences for pupils that stimulate their curiosity. For example, in history, pupils visit a local motte-and-bailey castle to gain insights into life in medieval England. Teachers use experiments in science to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in this subject.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils feel safe and valued. They are confident that adults will listen to them if they have any worries. Pupils told inspectors that there is always someone with whom they can talk, particularly the school counsellor and the headteacher.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take, including homophobic and racist bullying. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that bullying is rare and that, when it does happen, it is dealt with swiftly by staff.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Leaders work with national charities to develop pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe in challenging situations, including online.
- Leaders provide an exciting range of experiences and opportunities for pupils, including for those who are disadvantaged. For example, a variety of clubs and activities, from the scientific to the creative, are included in the enrichment activities that are offered each week. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about yoga, cooking and woodwork clubs.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully. Pupils spoke reflectively about a recent visit to a local mosque. They described how beautiful they thought it was. Pupils also benefit from a range of opportunities to deepen their cultural awareness. For example, pupils described with enthusiasm the school choir's recent performance in a competition against other local schools. They were equally excited about the production of 'Mary Poppins', which key stage 2 pupils recently performed for parents and guests. Leaders also work closely with a local university to broaden pupils' horizons.

- Pupils are developing a good understanding of British values. Leaders and staff promote respect and understanding for others' beliefs and cultures through the school's core values of kindness, responsibility, resilience, perseverance, cooperation, respect, independence and aspiration. Pupils in Year 2 spoke passionately about the prejudice faced by Rosa Parks, and how important equality is for everyone to live harmoniously.
- Pupils are proud of their school and keen to contribute to school life. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously as 'buddy readers', monitors and members of committees. Pupils talked movingly of the help and support they received from the local community when the school lost all the equipment and resources in the fire. A pupil in Year 6 commented: 'This school is a special place and I will take lots of happy memories away with me when I leave.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite and well mannered. An ethos of care and consideration for others encourages their positive behaviour. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which they reinforce consistently.
- Pupils are confident that any misbehaviour is dealt with appropriately by staff. Pupils understand that actions have consequences. Most pupils make the right choices about their own behaviour and have a good understanding of how their behaviour affects others.
- Pupils who need additional support to behave well are given the appropriate guidance that they need for their social and emotional development. For example, they receive help from external agencies or from the specialist nurture provision within school. The number of fixed-term exclusions has reduced. No inappropriate behaviour was seen during the inspection.
- Pupils conduct themselves sensibly around school, at lunchtimes and at playtimes. They talk happily with their friends and organise games, which they play well together. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously as role models for the younger pupils, particularly at lunchtimes.
- Pupils' attendance has improved for all groups of pupils. Leaders and staff use effective systems to work with families to improve attendance and punctuality. As a result, pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school has reduced considerably this academic year.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Historically, results from national assessments have indicated that pupils have underachieved at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the tide is turning. More pupils achieved the expected standard in all three subjects in 2018. The unvalidated assessment information for 2019 indicates further improvement in pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, and in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Despite these improvements, attainment for pupils at the end of key stage 2 remains below national averages.
- The unvalidated assessment information for 2019 indicates that pupils' progress in key

stage 2 in reading and mathematics is also improving and is broadly in line with national averages. However, there has been a dip in the progress pupils make in their writing. This dip is particularly pronounced for disadvantaged pupils. Nonetheless, there are improvements overall, and standards are improving across key stage 2. Current pupils' progress in books is strong, although at times teachers' expectations are not high enough to ensure that pupils, particularly the most able, reach the standard of which they are capable in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Early assessment information for 2019 shows that, at the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has dipped and remains below the national average. Teachers in Year 2 do not routinely use assessment information effectively to design learning opportunities that meet pupils' needs. Work in pupils' books shows that for some pupils, particularly the most able, activities do not routinely build on pupils' prior knowledge effectively, including reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress falters and is not as consistently strong as it is in key stage 2.
- In phonics, pupils make good progress in developing their phonics skills because of high-quality teaching. An increasing proportion of pupils achieve well in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1, and this was broadly in line with national levels in 2019. Pupils who are struggling are given the help that they need to catch up in Year 2.
- The school's assessment information for current pupils indicates that improvements in the quality of teaching are having a positive impact on pupils' achievements, especially in key stage 2 and in mathematics and writing. The proportion of pupils who have secure knowledge and skills in each subject increases well as they move through the school. This is supported by the work that inspectors saw in pupils' books. Pupils take pride in their work. Improvement in reading is evident, although at times pupils' narrow vocabulary impedes their understanding of the text. Overall, most pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils with SEND, including those with social and emotional needs, make good progress because of the early identification of their needs and the effective additional personalised help that staff provide.
- Progress for disadvantaged pupils is improving but is not consistently good because of a lack of challenge. The early results of key stage 1 assessment in 2019 show improvement in key stage 1 attainment for disadvantaged pupils, particularly in mathematics.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, pupils demonstrate an improving acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding. The well-designed curriculum helps pupils to build progressively on what they already know, understand and can do. This contributes to pupils being better prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

Good

- Provision for the early years has risen from the ashes of a devastating fire during the Autumn term. The fire destroyed the building and resources for the youngest children in the school.

- Leaders in the early years have a good understanding of how young children learn. They ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills and understanding to support children's learning well. Teaching in the early years is consistently strong because of the guidance and training that staff receive. Staff appreciate the opportunity to work with other colleagues, including those from the MAT and other local schools, to share their ideas, knowledge and expertise.
- Leaders and staff have created a safe and nurturing environment which has been designed carefully to provide children with the opportunity to develop independence and excite their curiosity. The carefully selected resources are used effectively to support purposeful learning. Well-planned activities, including in the outdoor area, contribute effectively to children's learning across the breadth of the curriculum.
- Many children start school with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. Leaders work with professionals and other agencies to support children, including those with SEND and/or those pupils who are disadvantaged, effectively. All children make good progress. Most children who attend the school Nursery and then the Reception class reach a good level of development and are prepared well for Year 1.
- Leaders have developed a range of activities that involve parents in their children's learning. Staff work with other professionals to provide opportunities for parents to develop their skills and help them to prepare their children for school. For example, parents are given advice on children's toilet training and oral health, as well as routines and how to develop independent skills.
- Children settle quickly into well-established routines in the early years. Leaders gather assessment information from a range of children's activities. They accurately identify the next steps in children's learning. Technology is used well to share with parents what their children are learning at school. Teachers provide ideas for how parents can help their children at home. For example, teachers regularly send stories and activities home in handy drawstring sacks that have been made by staff.
- Children are happy and engaged in their learning. The youngest children join in enthusiastically with traditional stories, finger rhymes and games. At lunchtime, they chat happily about the things that they like to eat, such as fruit and cucumber, to keep themselves healthy.
- In Reception, staff use their skills and knowledge effectively to improve children's learning. For example, while reading a story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk', staff discussed new words to expand children's vocabulary. Good relationships are modelled so that children recognise the value of positive behaviour. Leaders have accurately identified that language acquisition and communication is the key barrier to learning for many children. Actions to extend these skills are effective. Staff use questions effectively to encourage pupils to explain their ideas clearly. They utilise every opportunity to develop pupils' communication skills further. For example, children confidently explained what a bean needs to grow, including a stake to help it to grow straight and tall. Other children spoke with enthusiasm about the strawberries that they are growing at home, explaining that they weren't ripe yet, so you should not eat them.
- Reading is given a high priority in the early years. Phonics is taught well, and children use their phonics knowledge with increasing accuracy in their own writing in Reception.

Leaders and staff provide opportunities for children to practise and refine their writing.

- Leaders have ensured that safeguarding procedures and routines are understood by staff and that they contribute to children's ongoing safety and welfare. Risk assessments are detailed and appropriate.

School details

Unique reference number	143030
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10087890

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	506
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Craig Graham
Head of School	Rhian Driver
Telephone number	01204 333 580
Website	http://www.red-lane.bolton.sch.uk
Email address	office@red-lane.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized primary school. At the time of the inspection, the school was situated on two sites due to fire damage to the early years and key stage 1 building.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language, although the proportion is increasing.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above average. The proportion of pupils supported by an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The school became a member of the Base Academy Trust with one other primary school on 1 August 2016.
- This is the school's first inspection since becoming an academy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classrooms with leaders to observe teaching, pupils' learning and behaviour, including the provision for the youngest children in temporary accommodation on a separate site.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils during lessons and at playtimes. They also met formally with two groups of pupils and heard some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, head of school, middle leaders and members of staff. They also met with three members of the MAT's board of trustees and a member of the school's local governing board. The lead inspector also had a conversation with the school's improvement partner by phone.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding. They took account of school information about pupils' outcomes and scrutinised pupils' work with leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the 34 responses to Parent View, including 10 free-text comments. The lead inspector also spoke with one parent by telephone. There were no responses from staff or pupils to Ofsted's questionnaires.

Inspection team

Amanda Stringer, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michelle Joyce	Ofsted Inspector
Rob Bourdon-Pierre	Ofsted Inspector

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