

Werneth Primary School

Coppice Street, Oldham, Lancashire OL8 4BL

Inspection dates

8–9 May 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not been successful in securing good-quality teaching across the school. As a result, different groups of pupils, including the most able and boys in key stage 1, are not achieving the high standards of which they are capable.
- School improvement plans lack precision and ambition and are not helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning quickly enough.
- Governors are not holding senior leaders closely to account. Too few have an exact understanding of pupils' performance.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high. Frequently, pupils' individual learning needs are not met.
- Advice given to teachers on how they can improve is not as comprehensive as it could be. Teachers are not held fully to account for pupils' performance.
- The curriculum is developing. Leaders have not fully implemented procedures to monitor pupils' progress in subjects such as science.
- Opportunities for pupils to apply their calculation skills and to engage in investigative activities in science are somewhat limited, as are opportunities for pupils to refine their writing skills across the curriculum.
- Pupil premium funding does not have enough impact on improving disadvantaged pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders from the Pinnacle Learning Trust are working closely with senior leaders and are eager to move the school forward.
- Standards have improved since the previous inspection. At the end of Year 6 in 2018, pupils' progress in mathematics was well above average.
- Teaching assistants are very effective. They are trained well and have a good understanding of pupils' learning needs.
- All aspects of early years provision are good. Children are engaged in learning and make good progress.
- Pupils attend school regularly. They behave well, are respectful to others and say that they feel safe and enjoy learning.
- Relationships with parents and carers have strengthened. Parents are of the view that their children are safe and happy at school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by:
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are consistently high
 - ensuring that activities in reading, writing and mathematics are closely matched to pupils' different skills and abilities, especially those of the most able and disadvantaged pupils
 - making sure that ample opportunities are available for pupils to practise and refine their writing skills across the curriculum
 - improving outcomes for boys, especially in key stage 1
 - developing pupils' investigative skills in science, and problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - ensuring that improvement plans are precisely focused and implemented with a sense of urgency
 - developing the skills of governors to ensure that they have a good understanding of how well pupils are achieving, and they hold senior leaders firmly to account for raising standards
 - implementing procedures to closely monitor pupils' progress in subjects including history, geography and science
 - setting challenging targets for teachers and holding them more closely to account for pupils' achievement
 - ensuring that training and development and feedback to teachers on their practice are effective in helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how the school may improve this aspect of its work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The pace of change at Werneth School has been hampered by several factors. Since the previous inspection, there have been significant staffing disruptions. These have had an adverse impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. In addition, senior leaders' improvement plans lack precision and ambition. As a result, leaders have not moved the school forward quickly enough and have not resolved all the areas for improvement identified during the previous inspection.
- There are many positive aspects to the school. It is now beginning to move in the right direction towards becoming a good school overall. While still in the early stages, the Pinnacle Learning Trust is working closely with senior leaders to hasten the pace of change. For example, governance has been strengthened and a comprehensive training and development programme is being rolled out to help to improve the quality of teaching.
- Leaders responsible for subjects such as art and humanities are developing in their roles. At the time of the inspection, there was no subject coordinator for science. Leaders responsible for English and mathematics review the quality of teaching and learning regularly. As such, they assess the quality of work in pupils' books and observe teaching. However, feedback given to teachers on their practice is not precise enough to secure rapid improvements in teaching.
- Staff morale is mostly high. Almost all staff are proud to work at the school, which most say is much improved since the previous inspection. Staff who met with inspectors indicated that recent training and development are helping to improve standards in reading and writing. Newly qualified teachers who met with inspectors said that the support and advice that they receive from their mentors and senior leaders are helping them to improve their teaching. However, a sizeable minority of teachers are of the view that training and development do not challenge or support their teaching.
- Additional funding is used more effectively in some areas than in others. For example, funding to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used well and is helping to secure pupils' strong progress in a range of subjects. However, pupil premium funding is not used well enough. While pupils' progress is improving and was well above average in mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2018, plans do not clearly show the intended impact of spending on accelerating disadvantaged pupils' progress. Currently, progress is not consistently strong across the school.
- The physical education (PE) and sport funding is well spent to develop the skills of staff to teach various sporting activities and to train play leaders to lead games during lunch- and breaktimes. Funding is also used effectively to broaden opportunities for pupils to engage in sports and activities, including dance, swimming, cricket, basketball and football.
- Leaders support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the main principles of the major world faiths, including Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. Pupils benefit from

visits to local places of interest, theatres and museums. All pupils enjoy art and basic music tuition. A small group of pupils in Year 5 play the ukulele. Pupils have strong empathy with those less fortunate than themselves and raise money for various good causes. Pupils' appreciation of British values is good. They learn about the rule of law and British institutions and put democratic principles into practice as mentors, 'buddies' and school council members.

- Senior leaders are currently reviewing the curriculum. They are doing this in order to raise the profile of science and other subjects, and to extend educational visits. Currently, there are limited opportunities available for pupils to practise and refine their writing skills across the curriculum. There are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their good calculation skills to problem-solving activities in mathematics and other subjects, such as geography. Pupils engage in after-school activities, including art, reading, drama, chess skills (encouraging pupils to challenge themselves in lessons), and baking clubs.
- Most parents and carers who spoke with inspectors were very positive about the school, indicating that the school has 'turned a corner'. A small proportion of those who submitted text messages and completed Parent View were less positive. Some expressed concerns in relation to the high turnover of teachers and the progress of their children. However, almost all parents are of the view that their children are safe and well looked after. The school's own surveys, which include the views of a larger number of parents, indicate that parents are positive about most aspects of the school.
- Since the start of the academic year, the school has worked closely with a school improvement partner, who has reviewed the quality of provision in early years and is working with the school to improve teaching. More recently, leaders have secured the support of a local teaching school to help teachers to raise standards in reading and writing. The Pinnacle Trust also leads a local teaching school alliance, which aims to support the school in making improvements. However, many initiatives are new, and some have not been fully implemented. Therefore, it is too soon to judge the full impact of this support.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is newly formed. However, several governors, including the chair of the governing body, were members of the previous advisory body. The Bright Tribe Trust was formerly the accountable body.
- Governors are committed to helping the school to improve. Their knowledge, understanding and links with the community are strong. Some of them have been involved in devising initiatives, such as environmental projects. These are helping to develop pupils' personal and social skills. However, governors do not hold senior leaders fully to account for improving the quality of teaching and learning. In addition, too few governors have a good understanding of pupils' performance and how it compares with that of other pupils nationally.
- Governors have not carried out thorough checks or asked searching questions in relation to the spending of pupil premium funding. Governors have a limited understanding of the impact of funding on improving eligible pupils' progress.

- Most governors are trained well and are eager to improve. The Pinnacle Learning Trust is determined to work with the school to improve the effectiveness of governance and has identified governors' training needs and provided training on data analysis. In addition, the governing body has been strengthened to include more members, including serving senior teachers who have experience in education.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. The school has an up-to-date safeguarding policy published on its website.
- Staff are conversant with the latest government guidance on keeping children safe in education, as well as with the school's safeguarding and associated policies. Inspection evidence indicates that induction procedures are thorough and closely linked to the school's strong safeguarding culture.
- Staff and governors have had 'Prevent' duty training, which is part of the government's agenda for tackling radicalisation and extremism.
- Clear procedures are in place for reporting and recording concerns. Staff are vigilant at spotting signs of neglect and/or abuse. Staff know what to do if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare or safety.
- Appropriate checks are made on staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. Risk assessments are carried out to ensure the safety and security of school premises and to make sure that pupils are safe when on school trips and educational visits.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. Teachers' expectations of pupils are not as high as they could be. Some teachers are new to the profession and to the school. These teachers are developing their teaching skills and their knowledge and understanding of pupils' different abilities.
- Where teaching is strong, teachers use effective questioning to check what pupils know. They use information on pupils' prior performance to provide support for less able pupils. Teachers challenge the most able pupils so that their learning moves forward quickly. However, too often in English and mathematics, learning activities are the same for all pupils. As a result, some pupils find work too easy, while others find it too difficult.
- Science books indicate that pupils explore a range of interesting topics. For example, in Year 5, pupils explore physical and chemical changes, such as ice melting, sugar dissolving in water, candle wax melting and water boiling. They also discuss the properties of different materials such as glass, rubber and metals. However, there is little evidence that pupils engage in investigative activities. They do not acquire the skills necessary to be successful in their scientific studies in high school.

- Mathematics teaching is improving. It is particularly strong in upper key stage 2. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Years 2 and 6 were preparing for national tests. In Year 6, teachers focused on strengthening pupils' long division and multiplication skills and consolidating their understanding of mixed fractions. Both teachers and teaching assistants have strong subject knowledge in these areas. They work well together to engage pupils, most of whom are eager to demonstrate their good calculation skills. However, workbooks reveal that pupils apply their skills to problem-solving activities infrequently. As a result, too few attain the higher standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils' writing skills are improving, although their attainment is low. In key stage 1, teachers typically focus on developing pupils' speaking skills, their ability to write accurately and their use of interesting vocabulary. This was evident in Year 2, where pupils were writing instructions for crossing a road. Most pupils knew that their sentences should include instructions such as taking care when crossing the road and looking out for traffic. Pupils were less clear about the use of imperative verbs such as 'stop' and the use of suffixes to change the ending of words such as 'walk' to 'walked'.
- Pupils with SEND benefit from effective teaching and good support, both in class and during small-group intervention activities in reading, writing and mathematics. Staff are familiar with pupils' individual learning needs. The teaching activities that staff prepare are based on data and information drawn from regular pupil progress meetings.
- Teaching assistants are trained well. They interact with pupils positively and are playing a significant role in improving the quality of teaching and learning. This is evident in the support given to pupils in class and through small-group intervention activities. Teaching assistants' strong subject knowledge in religious education (RE) and personal, social, health and citizenship education helps to ensure that pupils make strong progress in these areas.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school has a very positive ethos. Pupils said that they feel cared for and safe at school. They enjoy finding out new things with their friends. Those new to the school, and the country, settle into school quickly.
- Pupils are almost always engaged in learning when they find it interesting and challenging. Some pupils lack resilience and are quick to seek help from teachers when they find calculations and spellings too difficult. Senior leaders have developed various initiatives to improve pupils' confidence to challenge themselves and learn from their mistakes. For example, work to promote pupils' emotional and mental health and pastoral work across the school are helping to develop pupils' resilience.
- Pupils have many opportunities to develop and refine their leadership skills. They can do this through various team-working and orientation activities during residential learning in Year 6. There are also opportunities for them to take on other leadership roles, including as ambassadors, lunchtime monitors, school council members and 'befrienders', who are also playground leaders.

- Pupils regularly learn about road safety, including how to cross the road safely. They learn about safe and unsafe situations through the personal, social, health, citizenship and emotional aspects of the curriculum. In addition, visitors from various services, including the police, social services and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), talk to pupils about various dangers and risks.
- All pupils have a well-developed understanding of internet safety, which they acquire through lessons, assemblies and events such as internet safety day. When asked about internet safety, older pupils explained to inspectors that: 'If you see anything bad popping up on your device, tell an adult', 'If you see nasty posts or if someone is being mean, report it', and, 'Never share personal information with anyone because they could hack into your account.'
- Pupils said that racism is: '[when] you make fun about someone's culture, skin colour, religion, language or physical appearance.' Pupils were adamant that there is no racism in school. Pupils' knowledge of homophobic bullying is less well developed. Pupils indicated that bullying is rare and always dealt with swiftly. Pupils said that they feel safe in school. If pupils have concerns, they know that they can talk to any member of staff and that their concerns will be dealt with immediately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are very welcoming and respectful towards each other and to adults. Almost all pupils were eager to talk to inspectors about their learning. Werneth is a calm and well-organised school. Pupils are appreciative of their good facilities, spacious and well-resourced classrooms, and new outdoor play areas. Pupils conduct themselves well when moving around the school. They are considerate and enjoy helping adults and their peers. Pupils are orderly during lunchtimes, despite the large number of pupils for different sittings. Pupils are well behaved during lessons.
- Pupils are of the view that behaviour is usually good. Younger pupils explained that although some pupils sometimes misbehave, all are aware of the consequences. This includes spending time on the 'thinking chair'. Almost all staff who completed the inspection questionnaire are of the view that behaviour is good, indicating that they are well supported in managing behaviour. When pupils infringe the school rules, staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently.
- Most parents who completed Parent View, submitted text messages and completed the school's own surveys of parents' views, indicated that behaviour is good. Parents who spoke with inspectors were positive about pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning.
- The school keeps comprehensive records of pupils' behaviour, which indicate that staff are vigilant in reporting concerns. All incidents are followed up with parents and reported to the local authority when necessary. Records show that behaviour is continually improving. Inspection evidence indicates that behaviour is typically good over time.
- No group of pupils is disadvantaged by poor attendance. The school works closely with families to ensure that parents are aware of the importance of good attendance. Initiatives such as, 'better late than absent' have also raised awareness of the

important relationship between regular attendance and good achievement. Good attendance is celebrated during assemblies. Awards and raffle prizes are given for the best attenders. Current attendance is broadly in line with the national average and is improving. Fixed-term exclusions are exceptionally rare.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment at the end of both Years 6 and 2 was low in reading, writing and mathematics in 2018. Few pupils attained either the higher standard in key stage 2 or at greater depth in key stage 1. Pupils' progress was average in both reading and writing. It was above average in mathematics at the end of key stage 2.
- Senior leaders have implemented a range of actions and initiatives to improve outcomes for pupils. For example, rewards have been introduced to encourage pupils to read at home. Tailored interventions are in place to improve pupils' reading, writing and mathematics. New partnerships have been forged to help to improve teachers' skills in developing pupils' grammar, punctuation, spelling and writing. However, disruptions to teaching and a lack of urgency in implementing plans have had an adverse impact on pupils' progress and achievement, both of which require improvement.
- Inspection evidence, including work in pupils' books and the school's own data and assessment information, indicates that pupils' progress is inconsistent across the school and in a range of subjects. Procedures to monitor pupils' progress in science, geography and history are not fully implemented. Pupils' workbooks in these subjects show similar inconsistencies in their progress as in other subjects.
- Pupils are making stronger progress than previously, although in some year groups they are making weak progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is especially so for the most able pupils, who are not challenged sufficiently. In most classes, boys' performance is below that of girls, particularly in reading and writing.
- Pupils' progress in reading is improving in most classes. Older pupils read with passion and good intonation. They enjoy reading books by different authors in various genres. Reading records indicate that most pupils read frequently, both in school and at home. Younger pupils who find reading difficult are developing their phonic skills and knowledge to sound out and read unfamiliar words. The proportion of Year 1 pupils who were secure in the national phonics screening check in 2018 was below average. However, outcomes have improved significantly since the previous inspection, and continue to do so.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2018, pupils' attainment in mathematics, especially that of boys, was close to average. Pupils enjoy mathematics and have good calculation skills. However, opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to problem-solving activities are somewhat limited. As a result, too few attain the higher standard in mathematics.
- In most classes, pupils' progress in writing is weaker than in other subjects. Workbooks show that improvements have been made this year and pupils' writing skills are developing. However, too few opportunities are available for pupils to practise and refine their writing skills in subjects such as science, history and geography.

- Pupils' attainment in grammar, punctuation and spelling at the end of Year 6 in 2018 was broadly average. Workbooks show that teachers consistently check pupils' spelling, which is improving across the school. Books also show that pupils' grammar is weak in some classes, as is their use of tense and singular and plural verbs, nouns and adjectives.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2018, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who achieved the expected standard and greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics was particularly low when compared with other pupils nationally. Their progress was average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Currently, disadvantaged pupils' progress is below that of their peers in most classes.
- Workbooks indicate that pupils with SEND make strong progress in most classes from their different starting points. They benefit from good specialist teaching, as well as from learning alongside their peers. In addition, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has ensured that pupils' learning and social and personal development needs are clearly identified. The right support is in place to secure their full engagement in lessons.
- Pupils' progress and attainment are strongest in Year 6. Currently, most pupils are attaining the expected standards in reading and mathematics. While writing is weak, most pupils are working at the expected standard for their age. Most Year 6 pupils are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to be successful in their learning in high school.

Early years provision

Good

- All aspects of early years provision are good. This includes leadership and management and the quality of teaching and learning. Children learn in stimulating indoor and outdoor learning and play areas. They have access to a rich variety of resources and materials.
- Staff know children well and have a good understanding of children's different skills and abilities. The very strong bonds that staff have with children, and their good links with families, help to ensure that children make strong progress in the different areas of learning. Staff are trained well and have high expectations of the children, who are curious and engaged learners.
- Children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with weak skills in several areas of learning. Children's speaking and listening skills are much lower than those typically expected for their age. A large proportion of those who entered the Nursery class in 2018 spoke no English. In addition, a large group of children, new to the country, and all non-English speakers, entered the Reception class mid-term. The staff's experience and knowledge in working with such children ensure that children settle in quickly and make the same strong progress as their peers.
- All groups of children, including those with SEND and disadvantaged children, make good progress in acquiring reading, writing, number and social skills. Although it was below average in 2018, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development has increased over time. School assessment information and work in

children's books indicate that almost all children made good progress in 2018. They continue to do so this year.

- In both the Nursey and Reception classes, children enjoy engaging in role play, exploring the properties of various materials in the malleable area, reading, using technology, measuring and counting, and engaging in sand- and water-play. In such activities, children clearly display the characteristics of effective learning.
- Children enjoy honing their artistic and creative skills and expressing themselves. This was evident in the Nursery class as children settled into a range of different activities linked to the book 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. After reading the book, some children set about creating their own caterpillars and butterflies, using various materials including beads and plastic tops. Other children responded to 'how' and 'why' questions linked to the book. The most able children wrote the word 'caterpillar', which they proudly shared with their peers.
- Children's behaviour is good. They take turns and share play equipment. They play safely on their wheeled toys when outside. Recent investment in the outdoor play area is reaping rewards and is helping to develop children's coordination, balance and gross motor skills. Children follow instructions closely. They join in with singing, clean up with the minimum of fuss and like to share their views during snack time. Staff ensure that learning time is used well. For example, as the Reception children wash their hands in preparation for lunch, they count in 2s, 5s and 10s, up to 100, and are encouraged to talk about what they have been learning.
- Phonics teaching is strong, and supports children well in acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge that they need to read. This was exemplified in a Reception class, where children were practising 'ch' and 'sh' sounds and identifying high-frequency words such as 'sip' and 'slip'. Children were eager to demonstrate their understanding by putting simple words into short sentences.
- All parents who spoke with inspectors were very positive about their children's learning and progress. Parental engagement is strong. Parents come into classes each morning. They attend Eid and Christmas assemblies, and participate in phonics sessions and half-termly parent workshops, which are usually craft- and/or language based. Typically, parents comment that: 'My child is now speaking in sentences', 'The school is really amazing', and, 'Teachers show love and are very caring towards our children'.
- Staff look after children well, making sure that all welfare requirements are met. Safeguarding is effective. The same well-established procedures in operation in key stages 1 and 2 operate in early years.
- Although it is rising, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development by the end of Reception Year is below average; few children make outstanding progress. In addition, boys' progress is not quite as good as that of girls. Leaders have prioritised improvements in these areas, which are included in the school's development plans.

School details

Unique reference number	140597
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10087867

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	485
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Ambrin Shah
Principal	Conrad North
Telephone number	0161 770 5333
Website	www.wernethprimary.org.uk
Email address	info@wernethprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 January 2017

Information about this school

- In February 2019, the school joined the Pinnacle Learning Trust, which was established by The Oldham Sixth Form College and The Hathershaw College. The school was formerly part of the Bright Tribe multi-academy trust.
- Werneth School is larger than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- All children in the Reception classes attend full time. Children attend the Nursery classes on a part-time basis.
- In the last two years, extensive internal refurbishments have taken place, including a new reception area, meeting rooms and a library. Outdoor learning and play areas for

children in early years have been fully renovated. Play areas for pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have also been improved.

- Several new teachers have been employed since the previous inspection, including three newly qualified teachers. Both the senior leadership team and governing body have been reorganised.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils learn to read. Two observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised in class and separately with senior leaders.
- Inspectors read 26 text responses submitted by parents during the inspection and met informally with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered 21 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 24 members of staff were also considered. There were no responses to the pupil survey. Inspectors scrutinised the school's own surveys of parents' and pupils' views.
- Meetings were held with five governors, including the chair of the governing body (who joined the discussion via speaker phone). A meeting was held with the chief executive officer and the chair of the multi-academy trust. A telephone discussion was held with the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors met with various school leaders, including those responsible for English, mathematics, assessment and art. Meetings were also held with leaders responsible for the early years provision, provision for pupils with SEND, safeguarding, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included the school's checks on the quality of teaching and reviews of its own performance, development plans, information about pupils' progress, records of pupils' attendance and behaviour, and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sandie La Porta	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Lucas	Ofsted Inspector

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