

Griffin Park Primary School

Cavendish Place, Blackburn, BB2 2PN

Inspection dates

2 – 3 October, 2012

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Requires improvement | 3 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although pupils make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils who exceed expectations in Key Stage 2 is not high enough.
- Slower progress in mathematics and writing means that too few pupils are reaching Level 4 and higher in both English and mathematics.
- Some teachers do not consistently plan work which challenges pupils of all abilities and progress is not rapid enough.
- Teachers mark work regularly but do not always provide enough detail to inform pupils on how to improve their work and thereby accelerate progress.
- While there is evidence of good opportunities for extended writing in Year 2, pupils do not consistently have enough opportunities to develop their writing across Key Stage 2.
- Not all leaders and managers, including the governing body, have been consistently thorough in regularly monitoring performance to drive forward rapid improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The tracking of pupils' progress is detailed and used effectively to record achievement and regularly change targets to reflect the progress made.
- All staff know the pupils well and there is a holistic approach to supporting pupils and their families reflected in strong partnerships with external agencies.
- Pupils behave well and show respect for each other, staff and visitors to the school. They are polite and courteous and value their cohesive school community. Attendance is above average.
- There is a wide range of extracurricular activities, including the breakfast and after-school clubs which are used well. There are regular visitors to the school who provide opportunities for pupils to experience music and art across a range of cultures. Pupils say they really enjoy trips and residential visits which contribute well to their personal development.
- Leaders and managers have invested in new technology which provides up-to-date opportunities for independent learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 10 teachers and visited 16 lessons.
- Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, parents, a representative of the local authority and members of the governing body.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school's self-evaluation and development plan, records of pupils' attainment and progress, and pupils' work.
- Inspectors talked to parents. Inspectors took account of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Kirsty Haw

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Griffin Park is a smaller-than-average-size primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is higher than the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average.
- There are breakfast clubs, after school clubs and a Nursery, which are all managed by the governing body.
- The school holds Healthy School status, Eco schools Bronze and Active Schools Award.
- There has been significant but unavoidable turbulence in staffing, including the absence of the headteacher.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to increase the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 and higher in both English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring work provides greater challenge for the abilities of all pupils, particularly in mathematics
 - providing more detailed marking so that pupils know precisely how to improve their work and allowing them time in lessons to correct and edit their work in order to accelerate progress
 - increasing the opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum in Key Stage 2.
- Ensure leaders and managers at all levels improve the quality of teaching by:
 - rigorously monitoring and evaluating how effectively teachers are using the tracking of pupils' progress to inform the planning of lessons to meet the needs of all pupils
 - providing more opportunities for staff to share good and better practice across the school and with other schools.
- Ensuring the governing body works more effectively with the headteacher in measuring the full impact of performance management to accelerate whole-school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children settle very quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of effective transition arrangements. At the start of each day, staff in the Nursery and Reception classes provide a warm welcome; this is appreciated by the children and their families and helps to create a safe and happy environment in which to learn and play.
- Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally below those expected for their age. They make good progress as a result of a curriculum which provides adult-led and child-initiated opportunities. They have a range of learning opportunities both in the classrooms and in the outdoor areas, which have been improved upon since the previous inspection.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and enter Year 3 with skills that are broadly average. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. There is a gap between those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium support and those who do not receive funding, but this is narrowing and this demonstrates the school's satisfactory promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Progress in mathematics and writing is weaker and, as a result, too few pupils achieve Level 4 and higher in both English and mathematics. There has been some turbulence in staffing since the previous inspection but there is an improving picture in pupils' progress as staffing stabilises.
- From low starting points, children make good progress in speech and language through the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are able to link letters and sounds to work out difficult words. In the Reception class, inspectors observed children using touch-pads to recognise letters and practise copying the shape of the letters, and adults encouraged them to think about different words which began with those letters.
- By the time they join Year 3, pupils have acquired reading skills which are broadly average, and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 leads to most pupils reading skills being in line with national expectations by the time they leave school.
- Most parents are satisfied with the progress that their children are making at the school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- While there are examples of good teaching, there are too few lessons that are consistently good or better.
- In lessons where pupils make good progress, assessment is used well to plan work which is matched to the needs of different abilities. There are a range of activities that ensure a brisk pace to learning and capture pupils' imaginations and the pace of learning is brisk. The teaching assistants are well deployed and all of this ensures good attitudes to learning and good progress. They play a valuable part in supporting different groups of pupils. This ensures that pupils who are disabled, have a special educational need or who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory, and occasionally, better progress.
- For example, in a Year 3 English lesson, the teacher used a carousel of activities which were adapted to support the weaker pupils and stretch the more able. Pupils recalled their visit to a park the previous day to help them to use their imaginations when writing their own Paddington Bear adventure. The teaching assistant was well deployed and used good questioning techniques to extend pupils' learning, which enabled all pupils to make good progress.
- When teaching is weaker, lesson plans lack rigour and activities do not meet the range of abilities precisely enough. Too much time is spent on whole-class teaching when the more able could begin to work independently. When teachers' explanations are too long, the pace of

learning is too slow.

- Work is marked regularly but it is not always detailed enough to help pupils to know exactly what to do to improve their work. Occasionally, the next steps for building upon their achievement lacks clarity and teachers do not always allow time in lessons for pupils to make corrections to their work and/or improve their work.
- There are regular specialist teachers who visit the school and this provides pupils with the opportunity, for example, to learn to play an instrument. During the inspection, pupils were clearly enjoying playing a range of drums and this was developing their concentration skills and their ability to work as a team.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- Pupils are polite and courteous towards each other, the staff and visitors to the school. This ensures a cohesive school community which is valued by parents and their families. The caring ethos is apparent in lessons and around the school at all times.
- Older pupils are caring towards the younger children. The prefect system and school council are used effectively to deal with any pastoral concerns but have yet to embed consistency in exploring pupils' views on their learning.
- Parents and pupils believe that the school environment is safe and they are secure in the knowledge that should problems arise staff will take time to support not just their children but the whole family. Pupils learn how to stay safe beyond the school environment and this is promoted through trips and residentials, which the pupils clearly enjoy.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils have an understanding of different types of bullying and they say that bullying is very rare in their school. They are very clear that should bullying arise it would be dealt with appropriately and that they could turn to any member of staff if they had a concern.
- When families need support, the school engages effectively with a wide range of external agencies.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength. This is because these aspects are built into the ethos of the school, the planned curriculum and the good range of extracurricular activities in which many pupils take part.
- Most pupils are punctual to school at the start of the day, which helps pupils' progress. Pupils' attendance is higher than the national average and this reflects how much they value their school community and enjoy coming to school.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher provides effective leadership and has a clear vision for driving school improvement. A period of unavoidable turbulence with staffing has slowed the pace in improving the quality of teaching in the last two years but there are clear signs that teaching is now improving.
- Leaders and managers are clearly committed to the school but not all are rigorous enough in monitoring the impact of strategies that they have implemented to secure improvements across the school.
- The local authority regards their support to the school as 'medium touch'. The school has secured external expertise to provide support in improving the teaching, particularly in mathematics.
- Teachers now have ownership of the tracking system, which is used to closely monitor pupils' progress and set challenging but realistic targets for pupils. However, leaders and managers do not yet monitor closely enough how well teachers are using this information to precisely plan lessons to meet the needs of all ability ranges and thereby maximise pupils' progress.
- Safety and safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.
- The curriculum engages pupils in a range of learning opportunities but there is not sufficient

recognition of pupils' particular interests to inspire their learning. Some Key Stage 2 teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length, and this slows pupils' progress in writing. There are good extracurricular opportunities for pupils to extend their learning beyond the normal school day with pre-school and after-school clubs which help to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- There are many opportunities for staff to engage in professional development but there are too few opportunities for staff to share best practice within the school and beyond.
 - The governance of the school:
 - governors ensure that the pupil premium funding is used to support those for whom it is intended, ensuring that they make similar progress as other pupils
 - leaders and managers promote equality of opportunity effectively by tackling discrimination
 - governors have yet to measure fully the impact of performance management across the school on driving whole-school improvement.
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What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 119116 |
| Local authority | Blackburn with Darwen |
| Inspection number | 403370 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3-11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 226 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Alan Barnes |
| Headteacher | Catherine Clayton-Young |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18-19 March 2008 |
| Telephone number | 01254 57724 |
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