

Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119172
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	395519
Inspection dates	10–11 July 2012
Lead inspector	Jean Kendall HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	286
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ralph Latham
Headteacher	Johaam Hale
Date of previous school inspection	6 November 2008
School address	Rutland Street Colne BB8 0QJ
Telephone number	01282 863225
Fax number	01282 865710
Email address	admin@colnepark.lancs.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Jean Kendall
Kevin Boyle
David Halford

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 20 lessons or part-lessons and saw all teachers teaching at least once. They carried out a full scrutiny of pupils' work in each class, spoke to pupils and listened to a number of pupils read. They also met with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's monitoring, self-evaluation, action planning, and policies. They took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection and the responses to 32 parental questionnaires that were returned, pupils' questionnaires and returns from staff.

Information about the school

Park Primary is a larger than average sized primary school, close to the centre of Colne. The school roll has increased significantly in the last three years and an extra class is being created in September 2012. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-above average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action is broadly average and the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. A higher than usual proportion of pupils joins or leaves the school after the start of the Reception year.

The school funds a nurture group, known as the Rainbow class, for pupils with additional needs in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided in two Reception classes. The leadership team has been strengthened recently with the appointment of a deputy headteacher, following a long-term vacancy for this post. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Aspects of its work are good, including the behaviour and safety of pupils and their social development. It is not good overall because pupils do not achieve as well as they could in reading and writing and aspects of teaching are too variable. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress from well-below average starting points. They make consistently good progress in mathematics to attain average levels in Year 6. They make slower progress in reading and writing and attainment in English has fallen to below average levels. The majority of pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards in reading and writing that are in line with or just below national expectations.
- Teaching is mostly satisfactory, with some that is good. The best lessons provide interesting work at just the right level to help pupils learn at a rapid pace. However, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough to sustain good progress over time. In less effective lessons, the pupils spend too long listening or practising what they know already.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they feel safe and well looked after in school. Pupils are polite and keen to do their best for their teachers, taking pride in their work. However, some lessons provide limited opportunities for them to develop independence and sustain concentration on challenging tasks.
- Leadership and management at all levels are satisfactory. Leaders have a clear view of what needs to be done to improve the school's performance, based on satisfactory monitoring and evaluation. However, the school lacks a consistent approach to key aspects of its work, including assessment, identification of next steps in learning and lesson planning. Consequently, there is variability in teaching and lack of continuity between classes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in reading and writing to at least national averages by:
 - closing the gap with age-related expectations in each year group
 - ensuring pupils are taught key skills in grammar, phonics, spelling, and reading systematically and progressively, throughout the whole school
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in longer pieces of writing
 - building on the work that has already begun to promote effective guided reading.

- Improve the quality of teaching to secure pupils' more rapid progress over time by:
 - developing consistent approaches to assessment, marking, and the identification of pupils' targets and next steps in learning
 - using assessments to plan activities that are matched closely to pupils' differing learning needs in each class and provide sufficient challenge for all pupils
 - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - providing opportunities for pupils to work on longer tasks independently and take responsibility for their learning.

- Ensure that leaders at all levels promote good teaching and consistent and effective approaches to assessment, marking, and target setting throughout the whole school.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Reception classes with knowledge and skills that are mostly well below the levels typical of children their age. Their language and social skills are particularly low. The nurturing, encouraging approach of staff helps children settle well and make good gains in their personal development. Children make satisfactory progress in other areas of learning, but attainment on entry to Year 1 is still below average. In the sessions observed during inspection, the teaching seen, for example in phonics (letters and the sounds they make), was accurate and explained clearly and children enjoyed activities. However, the pace at which teaching progressed was too slow to close the gap between children in this school and children of a similar age nationally.

The pace of learning across Key Stages 1 and 2 is similarly variable. While pupils make good progress in mathematics, their rate of learning is not rapid enough to close the gap with age-related expectations in reading and writing. Pupils make the best progress in lessons where they have time to extend their skills on challenging tasks. That was seen in a Years 5 and 6 lesson during the inspection, when pupils persevered with complex algebraic calculations, using and applying their mathematical knowledge. They enjoyed the challenge fully, as they developed their

reasoning skills. Pupils' progress slows in lessons where they spend long periods listening to the teacher, going over previous learning, or observing as individuals demonstrate their learning. Pupils' good progress in mathematics supports them to attain average levels or above at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Their progress in reading and writing is slower, although showing recent improvement and satisfactory progress from the start of the year in all classes. Attainment at Key Stage 1 has improved from below average to broadly average in reading and closer to, but still below average, in writing. Pupils in the current Year 6 demonstrate much higher levels of attainment than the previous 2011 cohort, when attainment was well-below average in English. The majority are reading and writing at levels expected for their age and are working at or above average levels in mathematics.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have made at least expected progress in the last year, with the introduction of targeted support programmes. That is an improvement on previous years, when attainment was below that of similar pupils nationally. Pupils in the 'Rainbow' class make good progress because teaching is vibrant and lively and matched to their specific learning needs well. All parents and carers who returned questionnaires feel their children are making good progress across the whole school and the vast majority feel their particular needs are met well. Inspectors found this to be the case for personal and social development, but found academic progress to be more variable and satisfactory overall.

Quality of teaching

Teaching has a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning over time. There is some good teaching, for example, in mathematics and in the promotion of personal, social, and moral development. Teachers, often, plan lessons that interest pupils and are relevant to their experiences and classrooms provide a stimulating and lively environment. All parents and carers who returned questionnaires feel their children are taught well, referring particularly to how much children enjoy school and also to the 'happy learning environment'. However, the inspection found that activities do not always meet the varied learning needs of all pupils in the class. That means that some pupils spend too much time going over what they know and can do already. Key skills in grammar, phonics, spelling, and reading are not taught systematically enough from year to year to ensure teaching builds on prior learning. That is being addressed partially through structured guided-reading sessions and a focused approach to phonics teaching, introduced this year, which are having a positive impact on learning.

In the good lessons observed during the inspection, teachers gave clear, concise explanations and activities were planned well to provide challenge for all pupils. That was seen in a literacy lesson in Year 5 and 6, when pupils collaborated in groups to write a description of a mythical creature. All pupils were actively engaged and contributed a lengthy imaginative piece of writing, using a range of vocabulary and linguistic styles for effect. Where teaching is less effective, pupils spend too long listening passively or responding to short, undemanding tasks. Opportunities for them to develop writing skills on longer pieces of writing are limited.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, generally, make better progress in intervention groups and the 'Rainbow' class, where teaching is targeted to their specific needs. Pupils in the 'Rainbow' class have specific learning targets and are supported well to achieve them. However, the use of assessment, marking, and target setting is inconsistent throughout the rest of the school. Different approaches are used in different classes, meaning that some pupils have a good understanding of their learning targets and know how they can improve their work, but others do not. Teaching assistants, often, make a good contribution to pupils' learning in intervention programmes, but they are not always briefed well enough and were often under-deployed in the lessons seen on the inspection, as they observed lengthy whole-class teaching.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is good. The pupils' all-round personal development is given a high priority, helping them to develop confidence and self-esteem and promoting positive attitudes to learning. They rise to challenges and collaborate well in lessons, showing good leadership and teamwork skills. Pupils are keen to do their best and are fully cooperative in lessons. However, they are not always given sufficient opportunity to work on longer tasks independently and take responsibility for their own learning. A very small minority of parents and carers feels that lessons can be disrupted by bad behaviour. However, pupils have every confidence in teachers to deal quickly and effectively with inappropriate behaviour, should it occur, and they do their best also to support pupils who struggle, indicating pupils' good behaviour over time. Behaviour was good during the inspection and there was no evidence of disruptive behaviour.

Pupils feel safe and are cared for well by all staff in the school. They behave with respect and consideration toward each other and play happily together. Pupils have a good awareness of different types of bullying and know how to keep themselves safe, for example, when using the internet and on the roads. They say that bullying is rare in their school and behaviour records corroborate their views, showing very few incidents of bullying of any kind. Fixed-term or permanent exclusions are used rarely, with none in 2010. Pupils who have social and emotional difficulties are supported very well to help them manage their behaviour, in the Rainbow class and elsewhere in the school. Parents and carers who returned questionnaires were 100% confident that their children are safe and looked after well. They say, for example, that the school provides 'high standards of care' and are full of praise for the way teachers have developed children's self-confidence and self-esteem, saying they are 'praised and encouraged them all the way'. Attendance has improved over the last few years and is broadly average.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership team has been strengthened with new appointments, after a lengthy period without a deputy headteacher. Self-evaluation identifies key strengths and weaknesses in performance and leaders and the governing body are clear about improvements needed. Action has already been taken to promote a more structured approach to the teaching of reading, through the purchase of new resources, regular guided reading and

systematic phonics teaching. Performance management of staff is well embedded, with clear targets related to pupils' performance. The staff receive relevant and professional development to support the development of their skills. However, the role of key stage and subject leaders in monitoring and evaluation is not well established. The evaluation of teaching is overly optimistic, when pupils' achievement over time is considered. While there is some good practice, approaches to assessment, lesson planning, and pupils' level target setting are too variable between classes. Pupils enjoy a curriculum that is broad and balanced, with good enrichment from visitors to the school and trips. Key skills are promoted adequately, but are not taught rapidly or systematically enough throughout the whole school.

Other aspects of leadership are strong. The school is highly inclusive and staff are encouraging, helping pupils develop as well-rounded individuals. The promotion of equality and diversity underpins the work of the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural skills and understanding are developed effectively and the promotion of their safety and well-being are strengths of the school. Consequently, pupils feel happy and secure and develop good attitudes to learning. Safeguarding arrangements meet all requirements. Staff and the governing body have a strong resolve to tackle the issues requiring improvement quickly. The downward trend in attainment in English has already been halted and pupils in all classes are making more-rapid progress than previously. Those improvements and the good practice that exists in the school demonstrate that the school has the capacity to sustain improvement.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



12 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Park Primary School, Colne, BB8 0QJ

Thank you for your enthusiastic welcome when we came to inspect your school. We have judged your school to be satisfactory overall and there are some things your school does well. The staff care for you and make sure you are safe and happy. They help you to develop good personal and social skills. You make a good contribution to your school also, through your good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. That makes your school friendly and welcoming and helps everyone feel valued.

It is clear that you enjoy many lessons, particularly those that are linked to your interests. Although some lessons are good, we think teaching could be better. We have asked teachers to help you make better progress by teaching key reading and writing skills more regularly and building on what you know already. We have also asked them to give you more time to work independently on challenging and interesting activities.

Some of you are very clear about your learning targets. However, not all of you know how you can improve your work. We have asked teachers to make sure all of you are clear about the next steps in your learning.

You school leaders are going to make sure that teaching is consistently good throughout the school. Staff are keen to make lessons as interesting and effective as possible. We have every confidence that you will do your best in lessons and hope you continue to enjoy learning. We would like to wish you all every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jean Kendall
Her Majesty's Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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