

# Ashton Primary School

Ainsdale Drive, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 1TU

**Inspection dates** 26–27 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The well-being of pupils is given the highest priority and the school is a welcoming, highly caring and supportive environment for pupils and their families.
- Pupils are keen to learn and are proud of their school. Their behaviour in lessons is often exemplary. They are polite and courteous. They appreciate the help and support they get from their teachers and other staff. They feel safe in school and free from bullying.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Teaching is well planned so that pupils find lessons challenging and fun. Accurate assessment of pupils' progress followed by swift action to support individuals makes sure that nobody falls behind for long. The well-structured opportunities for pupils to talk about their work and listen to each other help them to improve their communication and literacy skills.
- Leaders and governance are relentless in their pursuit of improvements in teaching and pupils' progress. They are successful in bringing greater consistency to the quality of teaching, which has resulted in pupils' improved performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Learning and teaching are not outstanding in enough lessons.
- The school's leaders are not yet focused closely enough on transforming good teaching into outstanding teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 14 lessons and scrutinised work in pupils' books. They observed assemblies, playtimes and the dining area.
- Meetings were held with leaders, staff, pupils, members of the governing body, a group of parents and a representative of the local authority.
- Documents looked at included the school's self-evaluation summary and improvement planning.
- Parents' views were taken into account through analysis of the most recent survey of parents carried out by the school, a meeting held with a small group of parents, the seven responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and a small number of letters sent to the lead inspector by parents.

## Inspection team

Gillian Salter-Smith, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. A smaller than average proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small number speak English as an additional language.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils joins or leaves the school mid-key stage.
- The school has a special education resource facility for up to 10 pupils with speech and language impairments between the ages of four and seven years. Pupils are fully integrated into mainstream classes.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school shares the site with the Preston West Children's Centre and Ashton Stepping Stones childcare facility which are not managed by the governing body.
- The school meets current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further so that learning is outstanding in more lessons by:
  - providing more-able pupils with suitably challenging tasks in every lesson
  - giving pupils more opportunities to follow up their own interests and carry out independent projects
  - finding more ways for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to practical problem-solving activities and real-life situations
  - making more imaginative use of teaching assistants in order to maintain a good pace to learning and involve pupils actively in learning earlier in lessons
  - focusing professional development and monitoring activities of all staff more tightly on moving teaching and learning that is good to outstanding.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' progress has accelerated significantly since the previous inspection and achievement is now good. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has risen and is at least average by the end of Year 6.
- In 2011, attainment was stronger in English, particularly writing, than in mathematics. Some indicators such as the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 or higher in both English and mathematics were above average. The proportion making at least the expected progress of two levels was better than the national average. In 2012, attainment in both English and mathematics improved, especially for the higher Level 5 in mathematics.
- Most children's skills and development are well below those expected for their age when they join the Reception class. They make good progress in improving their personal, social and emotional development and their communication, language and numeracy skills in particular because of the good focus on using talk and play to develop these skills. However, many pupils do not reach age-related expectations before they enter Year 1.
- Pupils continue to make good progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 in response to the effective teaching. In Year 5, pupils are currently making good progress but have not yet caught up fully on previous underperformance. The school is aware of this and is focusing additional resources and support successfully.
- The teaching of letters, and the sounds they make, gives younger pupils a secure basis from which to learn to read. Weaker readers are well supported throughout the school. Carefully chosen books are analysed closely in well-planned sessions of guided reading and regular reading at home is encouraged. As a result, pupils make good progress in their reading and enjoy a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books.
- Progress in writing is rapid and accelerating. The work in pupils' books shows very good progress over time with pupils in Key Stage 1 developing well-formed handwriting and well-structured sentences by the end of Year 2. Pupils often write with great enthusiasm because of the links to the themes and topics they find interesting. Pupils in Year 4 planned enthusiastically and wrote well-composed stories, their imaginations fired by the stimulus of war-time pictures. A dedicated writing table in every classroom encourages pupils to write for pleasure. Weak spelling evident in some pupils' work in Key Stage 2 has been recognised by the school and additional sessions that are helping to improve pupils' accuracy in spelling have been introduced.
- Progress in mathematics is good and improving. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking when working out tasks. A consistent approach to calculations and problem solving supports pupils' progress. Regular assessment helps teachers to plan tasks that are usually matched to pupils' different needs. However, opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to practical problem-solving activities and real-life situations are not extensive.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress, including those with speech and language impairment who are registered with the special education resource facility. These pupils are taught alongside their peers for most of the time and are well supported by teaching assistants and additional staff who tailor work effectively to meet their needs.
- All other groups of pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for pupil premium, those who speak English as an additional language and those who join the school mid-key stage make good progress. The close attention paid to monitoring the progress of every pupil provides equality of opportunity to all pupils.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teaching is usually good and some is outstanding. As a result, pupils' learning and progress have accelerated since the previous inspection and achievement is now good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are highly supportive. Pupils say that the help they get from teachers and other staff is one of the main reasons why they enjoy school and learning. Pupils' behaviour is managed well so that disruptions to learning are very rare.
- Teachers use their accurate ongoing assessment of pupils' progress to plan lessons and ensure that gaps are closed. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils who had not grasped the concept of number bonds up to 100, benefited from additional practical tasks to demonstrate the links, while other pupils moved on to different work. In most lessons tasks match pupils' needs well and there is a good pace to learning.
- In most lessons, strong emphasis on speaking and listening, pupils' active participation in a range of interesting tasks and cooperative pair work all support pupils' growing confidence in their abilities as learners. In an outstanding literacy lesson in Key Stage 2, pupils improved their story writing, based on an expedition into space, through exploring their thoughts and feelings. Expressive language was modelled well by the teacher and pupils discussed and expanded their ideas and range of language which they were then able to use in their writing.
- Pupils know how to improve their work because it is marked regularly, they have clear guidance on what to do to improve and they are usually given time to make improvements. Pupils' find their individual targets for literacy and numeracy helpful in making sure they keep in mind what they must do to improve. Pupils are used to reflecting on their own progress, recognising when they might need more practice or help.
- Pupils registered with the special education resource facility are well taught and fully integrated into mainstream education.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because in a few lessons learning is held back because tasks given to the more-able pupils are not always challenging enough; the pace of learning slows when pupils sit and listen for too long and teaching assistants are not used imaginatively to get pupils actively involved in learning in lessons quickly enough. Although pupils usually settle to tasks and get on without the direct supervision of adults, the opportunity to follow their own interests and work on independent projects is limited.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils enjoy school and are keen and eager to learn. Behaviour in lessons and attitudes to learning are good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils settle to tasks quickly and concentrate well. They enjoy working in pairs and talking about their work with each other. Learning is rarely disrupted.
- A small number of pupils who have difficulty in managing their own behaviour are very well supported in learning to take responsibility for their own actions. As they move through the school they develop a greater commitment to the school's values and high expectations.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and helpful. They are proud of their school and they take on responsibilities with a mature attitude. School councillors, play leaders, and lunchtime helpers are all keen to do a good job.
- Pupils say there is no bullying. They know about different types of bullying and are confident that staff are there to help them if they need it.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in many circumstances, including when using modern technology.
- Rates of attendance have improved immensely since the previous inspection and are above average. Where poor attendance has related to difficult family circumstances, the school has ensured that relevant support has been provided.
- The school records incidents of poor behaviour but does not always record the impact of the actions taken by the school on the pupils' subsequent behaviour.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The relentless determination and ambition of the headteacher, leaders and the governing body have secured significant improvement in pupils' achievement and more effective teaching and learning since the previous inspection.
- Staff work well as a team with clear shared aims to enable every pupil to be happy in school, enjoy learning and achieve their best. Leaders and staff work very effectively to provide a highly caring environment and, where it is needed, help pupils and their families to overcome difficulties that prevent them from getting the most out of school. The before- and after-school provision is valued by parents and pupils. Staff work closely with the children's centre to provide a smooth transition for children into the Reception class. Parents value the many opportunities for their involvement in the education of their children and, in some cases, in adult educational courses run from the school site.
- Leaders' high expectations of all staff are underpinned by rigorous management of performance that is tightly linked to the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.
- Professional development has been well focused on the school's priorities and led to improvements in teaching. From a position where the school was highly dependent on the local authority or external consultants to provide in-service training, staff have grown in confidence and now make a considerable contribution to professional development and the sharing of best practice. It is now timely for leaders to focus staff on moving from good teaching to becoming more aware and aiming towards outstanding teaching and learning. The local authority now provides 'light touch' support for this good school.
- The curriculum is well planned to support good progression in reading, writing and mathematics. The well-planned themes and topics, and the visits and visitors associated with them, make classroom activities vibrant and interesting to pupils.
- Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very well supported by a broad curriculum that includes a wide range of extra-curricular sporting and musical activities.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
  
- **The governance of the school:**
  - sets high expectations of staff alongside being highly supportive of school activities
  - takes on a strategic role and has a clear view of how the school should develop
  - has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because most governors take on a clear role in monitoring the school's performance and reviewing improvement planning
  - brings a good range of expertise to the role.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119238
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	405844

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	187
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dawn Fearn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Barraclough
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	October 2010
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