

Walton-le-Dale Community Primary School

Severn Drive, Walton-le-Dale, Preston, PR5 4TD

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- While the overall quality of teaching has improved since the school's previous inspection, it is not yet consistently good and pockets of weak teaching remain.
- Not all of the teaching is challenging enough to enable all pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- By the time they leave the school, pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics is not as high as it should be given their starting points.
- Although more pupils than previously are making good progress, not enough are making the rapid progress needed to raise attainment by the end of Key Stage 2.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught well and make good progress in all aspects of their work.
- Reading has a high profile and is taught well. As a result, pupils are making increasingly good progress in this aspect of English.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe. Their behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have implemented more rigorous processes for checking on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. This has resulted in more lessons being taught to a good and better standard and increasingly more pupils making good progress.
- The school provides a wide range of out-of-school activities and stimulating educational visits which enhance pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons, three of which were conducted jointly with members of the school’s senior leadership team. Inspectors made shorter visits to intervention sessions for pupils with special educational needs and those who require additional help with aspects of their work.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and analysed their work. They held three formal discussions with pupils and spoke to others informally in lessons and at breaks and lunchtime.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and analysed a range of school documentation. This included safeguarding records and those relating to pupils’ behaviour and attendance; minutes of the meetings of the governing body; records of the monitoring of teaching and pupils’ learning; the school’s self-evaluation summary and improvement plan; assessment information and records of pupils’ progress; and teachers’ planning.
- Inspectors took account of the 30 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and additional written comments from parents.

Inspection team

Margot D’Arcy, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Anthony Buckley	Additional Inspector
Peter Martin	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is below the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low compared to the national average. No pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school site is used to provide before- and after-school childcare, which is not managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to raise pupils' attainment and enable all to make at least good progress, particularly in writing and mathematics. To do this the school should ensure that:
 - all groups of pupils are provided with challenging and motivating work that builds upon what they already know
 - the pace of learning in all lessons is brisk so that learning time is maximized
 - pupils have more opportunities to undertake mathematical investigations to enable them to understand the relevance of mathematics to everyday life
 - pupils have more opportunities to work collaboratively and develop independent learning skills
 - all support staff have a clear understanding of how to move pupils' learning on
 - marking and feedback to pupils provide consistently precise information and targets about how they can improve their work
 - leaders' and managers' monitoring and evaluation of lessons remain sharply focused on the impact of teaching on the learning of all groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage children's skills and knowledge are typical for their age. They make good progress in developing early literacy and numeracy skills and develop very well personally, socially and emotionally. By the time they begin Year 1 their attainment is above average.
- Over time, standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 are typically average. The school's most recent (unvalidated) national test results for Year 6 pupils indicate that standards in reading are slightly above average, while in writing and mathematics they are broadly average. Although these results reflect notable improvement from the previous year when attainment fell to significantly below average, they are not as high as they should be given the pupils' above-average attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. There are no specific groups of pupils achieving significantly more or less well than others.
- Throughout the school, pupils' progress in reading is showing good improvement. This is due to better teaching of reading, including very effective methods for teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make) by teachers and well-trained support staff. As a result, pupils are developing effective skills in blending letters to read words. By Year 6 most are fluent readers and have good understanding of texts.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is less strong than in reading. In the 2012 national tests only three quarters of Year 6 pupils made the expected progress. The proportion making better-than-expected progress was also lower than has been achieved by pupils nationally.
- In the 2012 mathematics tests the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving the higher level was below average and only marginally better than in 2011. While most pupils made the expected progress, few made better-than-expected progress compared to pupils nationally.
- Pupils' work and the school's data show that progress in writing and mathematics is inconsistent between classes and year groups. At both key stages more pupils than previously are making good progress, reflecting the impact of the school's improvement strategies. However, not enough pupils are working at levels higher than those expected for their age, despite being capable of doing so.
- Pupils in receipt of the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs generally progress at the same rate as others. These pupils learn well and make good progress during small-group intervention programmes targeted to their needs. In class their learning is more variable, being dependent upon the quality of teaching and support they receive.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching has improved since the previous inspection it is not yet of a consistently good enough quality to raise pupils' achievement as rapidly as is needed.
- During the inspection almost two thirds of the teaching observed was good or better, with strengths in both key stages and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In the Early Years Foundation Stage skilled staff ensure that children have lots of opportunities to learn through self-initiated play and more structured activities led by adults. While there is evidence of teaching that requires improvement at both Key Stages 1 and 2, the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is generally stronger.
- The impact of improvements to teaching and learning are evident in pupils' work and the school's data. These show increasing numbers of pupils making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments of pupils' learning are becoming more accurate, but the effective use of this information to match work to pupils' needs is not securely embedded in all classes.
- The most significant feature characterising teaching that requires improvement or is

inadequate relates to work not being matched accurately enough to pupils' abilities. Teachers' expectations of more-able and middle-ability pupils are not high enough, limiting their progress. Occasionally, the work given to lower attainers is too difficult.

- Other features characterising weaker teaching are too slow a pace, for instance when teachers talk for too long, leaving insufficient time for pupils to complete the planned work. Overall, pupils do not have enough opportunities to work collaboratively or to develop as independent learners.
- In mathematics good emphasis is given to the development of basic numeracy skills and calculation. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply these skills to solve problems or to understand the relevance of mathematics to everyday life.
- Where the teaching of mathematics is good or outstanding, pupils have good opportunities to work collaboratively to solve problems. The pace of learning is brisk and teachers constantly check pupils' understanding and provide further explanation or support to rectify misconceptions.
- Learning in mathematics is too slow when teachers set low-level tasks. Examples include Key Stage 2 pupils cutting out shapes to stick onto worksheets or tables they had drawn into their books, and more-able pupils engaging in lengthy recording methods below their skill level. A number of Key Stage 2 pupils, mostly boys, reported that they found mathematics easy.
- Extensive training for teachers and support staff has ensured secure subject knowledge and skill in the teaching of reading. Excellent teaching of phonics was observed in the Early Years Foundation Stage. At Key Stages 1 and 2 effective teaching is securely promoting the development of pupils' skills and their enjoyment of reading.
- The teaching of writing is variable. Appropriate challenge for pupils of different abilities was clearly evident in some lessons and in pupils' workbooks; both reflect that some pupils make good progress. Timetabled lessons for 'sustained writing' are also having a positive impact on progress. However, lesson observations and pupils' books show that teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage skilled support staff make a very good contribution to teaching and learning. Elsewhere the impact of these staff in class is inconsistent. Some are well briefed and ensure the right balance between support and challenge. Others are too quick to provide pupils with answers or solutions and do not ensure that all pupils are sufficiently involved in the work that has been set. A number are highly competent in teaching specific intervention programmes, which are having a good impact on promoting the learning and progress of lower attainers and pupils with disabilities and special educational needs.
- While marking has improved, some does not give pupils enough information about how to improve. Pupils' awareness of their targets for improvement remains variable.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- Pupils' well-developed sense of morality and mature social skills result in typically good behaviour, both in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils say that behaviour is mostly good. They appreciate that some pupils need help with their behaviour and recognise the school's work in supporting them. They report that teachers deal patiently and fairly with pupils who occasionally misbehave in lessons.
- Pupils understand that there are different types of bullying, such as cyber-bullying, and know what to do if they experience it or observe it happening to others. They say that there is little bullying or name-calling. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe.
- Pupils say that they enjoy school. They report that most lessons are interesting but that sometimes the work is too easy.
- In lessons pupils are keen to learn. Most listen carefully and apply themselves to their work. When given the opportunity, they work well with a partner or in small groups. Where the work is not matched closely enough to pupils' needs, most continue to apply themselves to the tasks

they are given but some lose interest, make little attempt to answer questions and engage in chat that is unrelated to their work.

- Pupils' attendance is above average and punctuality is good. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection more robust procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning have been implemented. Leaders and managers now draw on a much wider range of evidence to evaluate the school's effectiveness and to inform decisions about how to improve teaching and pupils' achievement.
 - More rigorous moderation strategies, both in-house and externally, have led to greater accuracy in teachers' assessments. Systems for interrogating assessment information have also improved and are enabling the school to better determine the progress of individual pupils and groups. This information is used to inform the regular pupil progress meetings with class teachers and to decide where to target intervention and support in order to improve teaching and pupils' achievement.
 - The implementation of more rigorous strategies to monitor teaching and pupils' achievement has led to improvements in both areas. The school's view of itself is also much more accurate. However, occasionally evaluations of the quality of teaching in lessons are still too positive.
 - The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination effectively. The progress of all groups is monitored rigorously, including those in receipt of the pupil premium. The school's spending plan for this money includes criteria for evaluating the impact of the educational and other interventions, such as family learning support.
 - The school keeps parents well informed and provides good advice to help them support their children's learning. The majority of parents are very happy with the school's provision.
 - The school's procedures for safeguarding meet government requirements.
 - The curriculum has been reviewed to provide greater links between subjects and ensure that the key skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology are developed across the curriculum. A good range of visits and extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum and provides appropriate opportunities for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - After the previous inspection the school decided to broker external support rather than buying into local authority support. The local authority has not, therefore, been directly involved in supporting the school's development but has kept a watchful eye on its performance from afar.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors have an astute understanding of the school's effectiveness and high expectations for its improvement. To this end they have undertaken a wide range of training and are becoming significantly involved in many aspects of monitoring the school's performance. They challenge and hold school leaders to account very well.

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

Unique reference number	119286
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	405848

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Pierrie
Headteacher	Christine Entwistle
Date of previous school inspection	15 and 16 February 2011
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