

Devonshire Road Primary School

Devonshire Road, Bolton, Lancashire, BL14ND

Inspection dates 6–7 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- The headteacher has successfully led the school which has improved since the previous inspection. Almost all the pupils now make good progress in their learning.
- Good quality professional training for staff has ensured that teaching is consistently good in the large majority of lessons with some now outstanding.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress due to the effective teaching and the special arrangements school makes for them.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They say they feel safe and that bullying is rare. Excellent relationships in lessons create a positive climate in which pupils can learn.
- Attendance has improved steadily in recent years and is now above the national average.
- The school's continuing improvement shows it has a good capacity to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although marking overall is good, in some classes it does not always give pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.
- The new curriculum has yet to make a significant impact on improving pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- In a small number of lessons, the work set by teachers is sometimes too easy or too hard and, therefore, the pace of pupils' learning slows.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons, including a joint observation with the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and members of the senior and middle management teams.
- There were 11 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to take into account in planning the inspection. Twenty six staff questionnaires were also scrutinised.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read, spoke to them about their learning and looked at work in their books. They looked at a number of documents, including the school’s own tracking data on pupils’ current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Robert Pye, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Terry Bond	Additional Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average and the proportion of those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- There is a high proportion of pupils from different minority ethnic groups compared with national averages. These are mainly of Pakistani heritage with a small number from India and Eastern Europe. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher took up her appointment in January 2011. Since then there have been significant changes to the senior leadership team and teaching staff, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher.
- The school has achieved awards, such as Healthy School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding and pupils' progress increases by:
 - making better use of marking so that all pupils have a clearer understanding of how to improve their work
 - checking during lessons that work is closely targeted to the pupils' ability.
- Ensure subject leaders check that the new curriculum has a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Throughout the school learning is good. Pupils say they enjoy school and are motivated to learn by the energy and enthusiasm of the staff, who encourage them to take an active role in their learning.
- Most children start school with skills that are below those typically expected for their age. They do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and so start Year 1 with broadly average skills for their age. Progress in developing reading skills for these children is exceptional because of the high quality teaching of phonics (the knowledge of letters and sounds to help read unfamiliar words).
- The school has successfully built on the progress in reading in the Early Years Foundation Stage and put in place a structured approach to teaching pupils to read throughout the school. Each class chooses a favourite novel and new books have been provided to match pupils' interests and enthusiasm. Pupils now read extensively to find information as well as for pleasure.
- By the end of Year 2, attainment has risen sharply to above average. By the end of Year 6 attainment is in line with the national average, but improving rapidly as shown in the school's own data, inspectors' lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work. Progress for pupils in Years 1 to 6, including those from different ethnic groups is good. However, not enough pupils make better progress than this because the work set in some lessons does not always challenge them enough to do their best. Pupils at an early stage of learning English also make good progress in their learning.
- Improvements in keeping track of pupils' progress is enabling teachers to have a closer eye on individuals' progress. The good support provided in lessons has helped to accelerate the progress of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, so that they do as well as other pupils.

The quality of teaching

is good

- All lessons are planned to include lively methods of teaching, such as the use of computers and interactive white boards to enhance pupils' learning. Classrooms are attractive with displays celebrating pupils' achievements across different curriculum areas as well as providing prompts to guide learning. Other strengths include the good relationships and the way in which teachers organise lessons and resources to help pupils learn well.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers make learning exciting. Staff encourage independence, offer advice and extend learning activities by making use of accurate checks on children to help them judge what is right for each child.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is consistently outstanding because teachers take into account individual pupil's understanding, plan work to match abilities and, where appropriate, adjust their teaching during lessons to ensure that all pupils are challenged to do their best.
- An example of such teaching was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson. Pupils explored how to understand 'ratio' with a view to making fruit cocktails. The teacher recognised that each pupil had a different level of knowledge and understanding with regard to ratio and ensured that the work set was within each pupil's capability. As the lesson progressed, new challenges were set enabling them to make rapid progress. However, in a small number of lessons, the work set for pupils is too hard for some or too easy for others. When this happens the rate of learning slows down.
- The best lessons in Key Stage 1 and 2 move at a brisk pace with teachers setting a time for pupils to complete a task and sustain concentration. Pupils are often encouraged to share ideas with a partner or within a group. However, some pupils sit back and let their partner do most of the work and so their learning slows.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and are very clear about what they intend to teach and why. They share this information with the pupils, often linking it to the pupils' personal targets. Marking mostly helps pupils recognise what they have done well and what they need to do to further improve, but sometimes teachers' comments have little effect because they are not specific enough or always followed up.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school environment is warm and friendly. There is a strong sense of respect. Pupils are generally polite and courteous to each other and to their teachers. Relationships for most are exemplary and there is no discrimination or harassment.
- Pupils say they are happy in school, enjoy lessons and have positive attitudes to their work. They make comments about how much behaviour has improved over the past two years. They particularly like having the choice of an increasing number of play time activities and the school's own 'Radio Station' that broadcasts radio shows as well as providing background music during lunchtimes.
- Pupils say they feel safe. Special activities such as 'Play in a Day' enable them to understand what is meant by bullying, including internet and cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is very rare indeed.
- The great majority of parents who expressed a view consider behaviour to be good and that their children are safe in school. At play times behaviour is good with younger pupils playing alongside older ones. However, documentation provided by the school shows that up to July 2012 there has been a higher proportion of minor accidents than is usual on the playground. Swift action to reduce accidents is currently being taken by the leadership team and includes greater training for staff and increased provision of facilities that give more structure to the pupils' play.
- Attendance has steadily improved and is now above average because pupils enjoy going to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is highly ambitious for the school and together with the new deputy headteacher has shown great determination in driving forward improvements and raising pupils' achievement.
- Staff work closely as a team sharing information about pupils and areas that need improving. Staff morale is high because they agree about what has been done to make the school more successful and what still needs to be done.
- The school's leaders have put in place clear systems to improve the quality of teaching. They accurately assess each teacher and only a few variations in quality remain. These are being resolved through close checking on teachers' performance and appropriate training to ensure staff continue to develop their skills.
- Middle leaders are also being trained to become more effective in their work. They have been instrumental in evaluating the curriculum and making positive changes that have recently been put in place. Although it is too soon to judge the impact of change on pupils' progress this curriculum is meeting more closely pupils' different needs.
- The curriculum helps pupils to develop their skills and capabilities although as yet the promotion of pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fully embedded.
- The school plans well to ensure all pupils have equal opportunity to take part in what it has to offer. The school's excellent systems to check on pupils' progress are used well to identify and follow up on the effect of the support provided for pupils at risk of falling behind in their learning and those identified as having special educational needs.

■ The local authority has provided good support for the school during the changes in leadership.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body are very actively involved in the school and visit regularly. Analysis of data plus detailed information from the headteacher ensure they are well informed about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. They challenge decisions, including those related to spending, and ask questions to check that changes and spending are having a positive impact on outcomes for all groups of pupils. Changes are enabling pupils eligible for pupil premium to make better progress. They provide effective support to the headteacher. The governing body ensures that safeguarding requirements are met.
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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	105154
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	404967

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	377
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Porter
Headteacher	Pamela Barnes
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2010
Telephone number	01204 333614
Fax number	01204 333615
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