

Newton Bluecoat Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Newton-With-Scales, Preston, PR4 3RT

Inspection dates 14–15 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.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well, attaining above-average standards.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Teaching is consistently good with some aspects outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are polite, very caring and say they feel very safe in school. They like school as shown by their above-average attendance.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body have successfully focused over the last three years on improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement. As a result the school has improved considerably without losing its existing strengths.
- There is a very good range of activities for pupils to take part in before and after school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils do not get enough chances to show they can get on with their own work and learn on their own.
- Some of the marking does not help pupils know how to move their work on to the next level.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to improve their good writing skills by practising them in subjects such as history and geography.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there are many opportunities for children to develop their writing skills well in the classroom but far fewer in the outside area.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. Additional short visits in lessons were carried out to look at important issues such as how well pupils get on with their classmates and how well they behave.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils (randomly chosen), members of the governing body and with senior staff. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them about the types of books they enjoy and why.
- Pupils' current work and available work and assessment from the previous academic year were scrutinised, including information which showed how well pupils do in English and mathematics.
- Thirty-nine responses were received to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Most members of staff completed the voluntary staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Yates, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sue Sharkey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a below-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil-premium funding (pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The school meets current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school has achieved many awards including Healthy Schools status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To improve pupils' achievement further, raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by:
 - planning into lessons more opportunities for pupils to show they can get on with their own work and learn on their own
 - making sure that marking not only helps pupils understand how to move to the next level in their work but also that they respond positively to the comments made
 - sharing the very best practice in teaching that leads to outstanding teaching.
- Extend further the quality of curriculum in English by:
 - ensuring that in the Early Years Foundation Stage there are more opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills in the outside area
 - providing more challenging opportunities for pupils in the rest of the school to practise using their good writing skills in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typically expected for their age. Good teaching ensures that children do well, especially with regard to their personal development and basic skills, so they start Year 1 with slightly above-average skills for their age. Children really enjoy the many experiences they are given and respond very well.
- Good progress continues in the rest of the school. Attainment has risen significantly over the previous three years for all groups of pupils. It is above average in English and mathematics and the school has accurate information that indicates above-average attainment continues to be the norm.
- Pupils do well with their reading; they make good progress, with attainment above average at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Good teaching of phonics (knowledge of letters and the sounds they make) and enjoyable class reading sessions, which were confirmed by the pupils, are helping pupils to read well.
- Pupils can talk sensibly about how they feel some aspects of their work might be improved. However, comments made by teachers when they mark pupils' work do not consistently give them clear information about precisely what it is they need to do to improve further. There is little evidence to show that pupils follow up their teachers' comments.
- Pupils have good writing skills but there is little to suggest that they are given regular challenging opportunities to use them well in subjects across the curriculum. However, there is evidence of good practice in the school. In Year 3, for example, pupils are challenged to write postcards about what it might be like to be an explorer in the Amazon rain-forests. One pupil's response included the following observation, 'Exploring the rain forest is really fun but you do get tired in the evening from all the exploring.'
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do as well as other pupils because of the good support they receive in lessons.
- Pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals make good progress, and there is no gap between what they achieve compared with other groups of pupils.
- Most of the parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire felt their children make good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good across the school and sometimes outstanding, which is why pupils are making good progress and achieve well. Teachers know their pupils well and have a very caring approach. This fosters very good relationships that lead to pupils enjoying everything they experience at school. Teachers use information about how well pupils have learned to help them plan future lessons.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage teaching is of a good quality. The staff work well together as a team with activities very well planned to meet individual children's needs. For example, celebrating Divali allows children not only to develop their awareness of cultures different from their own, but also for them to use a wide range of skills. While a good emphasis is given to incorporating the outside area into all aspects of learning, opportunities are missed for children to use and develop their early writing skills in the outside area.
- Where teaching is outstanding, teachers make sure pupils are given plenty of opportunities to work things out for themselves and organise their own work well. For example, in Year 2, pupils are challenged effectively to work out themselves how to use their numeracy skills in solving money problems, with teacher intervention only coming if pupils are struggling. They then go on to work out how to respond to a mathematics challenge.
- Not enough of the teaching is outstanding, however. Where teaching is not as strong, there is

some over direction and not enough opportunities for pupils to work things out for themselves.

- While there is evidence to show that pupils do make good progress in developing their writing skills, teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to improve these skills by practising them in subjects across the curriculum.
- Reading skills are taught well and all teachers provide time during the school day for pupils to read for pleasure.
- Support staff are used well and the good work they do helps to make sure that pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs receive support that is effective.
- Most parents agree that their child is taught well and inspection evidence supports this view.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and courteous. They get on well with each other and take a pride in their school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are keen to learn, willing to take part and try out new things.
- According to Parent View and the school's own survey of parental views, most parents say their child is happy to come to school, that the school is safe and that behaviour is good. Staff also agree overwhelmingly that the school is a safe place for pupils and encourages good behaviour.
- Pupils say they feel very safe and can readily identify ways of keeping themselves and their friends safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet.
- Pupils know what bullying is and what to do about it. They say that threatening behaviour or persistent name calling is very rare and would be 'dealt with' by the teachers if it occurred. They are in no doubt that any of the adults would support them if they were worried, and they feel confident to ask for help.
- All pupils spoken to during the inspection say they enjoy coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school well and receives good support from the leadership team. The accurate identification of the school's strengths and weaknesses has resulted in improvement in the school's performance since the previous inspection. These include improvements in teaching and in pupils' attainment. Good procedures are in place to check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Good management of the performance of staff has brought about improvements and continues to do so. The staff questionnaires indicate that staff think highly of the training they have to help them improve their teaching skills.
- All leaders and members of staff have the needs of the pupils at the centre of all they set out to do. They successfully maintain a very strong caring environment firmly linked to the school's Christian foundation. A key part in this is the way the school promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The curriculum is of a good quality and there is a very good range of activities before and after school including a gardening club. While basic skills have a high priority the school's curriculum is far wider than that. However, planned opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects are not extensive enough.
- Teachers who have responsibilities for the subjects of the curriculum carry out their duties well.
- The school has good systems in place to check how well pupils are achieving and teachers use the information well to make sure all groups of pupils make good progress.
- All leaders make sure that all pupils, regardless of background or need, have full access to everything the school has to offer.
- Child protection and safeguarding have a high priority. Leaders make sure that requirements are met.

- In recent years the school has been well supported by the local authority. This support has now been reduced to 'light touch' because the local authority recognises the school is now a good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides good challenge and support to the school. It oversees arrangements for the performance management of staff effectively and ensures the school makes good use of available resources, including additional government funding for pupils entitled to free school meals or those who are looked-after pupils.

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	119805
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	405890

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Walker
Headteacher	James Bird
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2011
Telephone number	01772 684415
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