

Feniscowles Primary School

Livesey Branch Road, Feniscowles, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 5EG

Inspection dates 29–30 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average, and rising in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. Teachers share the aims of lessons well with pupils, and as a result, pupils know exactly what they are learning about and this helps them to concentrate. The adults supporting pupils in each class do a good job. This enables all pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils behave well. They want to learn and do well. Pupils speak highly about their teachers and their school. Pupils feel safe in school and their attendance is above average. There have been no exclusions.
- The headteacher leads the school well. Clear plans are in place to ensure the school continues to move from strength to strength. The quality of teaching is regularly checked by the headteacher and subject managers and support is provided to ensure that teachers deliver high-quality lessons. The ability of leaders at all levels to bring about further improvement is good. The governors also visit lessons and have a good understanding about the key areas that need to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The work in lessons is not always hard enough for pupils who are more able. This slows the progress that these pupils make.
- There is too much talk and direction from the teachers in some lessons. As a result, pupils are not always given the opportunity to think and learn for themselves.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons and in addition visited various classrooms for shorter periods of time.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, senior leaders, and teachers with responsibilities for leading and managing subjects and key stages.
- Results from 50 on-line questionnaires (Parent View), were taken into consideration in planning the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, and looked at a number of documents including: the school improvement plan; the school’s data showing pupils’ current progress; documents relating to the school’s own view of its performance; records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Pritiben Patel, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Allyson Ingall

Additional Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British background. A small number comes from Indian and mixed heritages. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is below average.
- The percentage of pupils supported at school action is in line with schools nationally and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. Pupils needs relate mainly to speech, language, communication and behaviour, and emotional and social difficulties.
- The percentage of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is below average. This is funding given to schools by the government to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals, children of armed forces or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- This is a split-site school. There is a separate building for the Infants and Juniors.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that pupils who are capable receive harder work
 - ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to think and learn independently in all lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Reception class with skills typically below those expected of four-year-olds. A rich variety of activities and opportunities, together with good teaching enable children to make good progress, and they reach expected targets by the time they enter Year 1. Children make particularly good progress in reading because the sounds that letters make (phonics) are taught well. The outdoor environment is not set out as well as the indoor classroom in helping children to develop their number, communication and writing skills. Plans are in place to improve outdoor learning opportunities. Children greatly enjoy their time in the Reception class because staff are caring and supportive.
- At the end of Year 1 more pupils than nationally attained the expected level in the phonics test.
- Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average and rising. National tests at the end of Year 6 in 2012 in reading showed that boys' achievement was not as good as that of girls. The huge support provided on an almost daily basis by 'Reading Buddies' (volunteers from the local community) is helping pupils who find reading difficult to make good progress.
- Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2012 in mathematics were just above average. They showed that girls were performing less well in comparison to boys. Subsequent training for teachers and better questioning in class for girls is now resulting in all pupils making good progress.
- All groups of pupils achieve well. This includes pupils of Indian and mixed heritage backgrounds, as well as pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. This is because the performance of all pupils is checked regularly and those pupils who are not making the expected progress receive additional support so that they catch up quickly.
- Pupil premium funding has been spent on recruiting more staff who are providing individual support to pupils who are eligible to receive it. This is helping them to achieve well along with their peers.
- Due to the success of some of the school's new ideas such as, 'Big Maths' which develops pupils' mental recall of numbers, some pupils are beginning to make better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. A new supply of reading books with more interesting subject matter is helping all pupils to make better progress; they are keen to read them and sustain concentration more.
- Attainment is not higher for more-able pupils because they are not always given the harder work of which they are capable.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Inspectors agree with parents and pupils that teaching is good. An excellent range of pupils' work across different subject areas helps to create a vibrant learning environment for pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. This atmosphere helps pupils to learn because they want to work hard for their teachers.
- Support staff are clear about their roles. They work well with teachers and provide a good level of help for pupils, including those pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties, so that they all achieve as well as each other.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and are very enthusiastic about their lessons and this helps pupils to enjoy learning. For example, in an upper Key Stage 2 literacy lesson pupils were asked to plan their favourite meal. The teacher's delivery of the lesson was so full of energy the pupils listened to every word.
- Teachers mark pupils' work carefully. Pupils understand very well that the comments their teachers write in 'pink' tell them what they have done well, and the comments in 'green' are what they need to do next time to improve and 'grow'.
- Pupils enjoy reviewing each other's work and providing feedback for their classmates when they

are given these opportunities. They also enjoy sharing their learning with the rest of the class. For example, in an upper Key Stage 2 numeracy lesson pupils were learning about solving problems and one pupil thoroughly enjoyed sharing his understanding of how much the cake weighed with the class.

- However, in some lessons teachers talk for too long and control lessons too rigidly. This was seen in an upper Key Stage 2 class where the class teacher was exploring different ways that words can be used in a literacy lesson. However, there was too much talk from the teacher and consequently pupils did not start their independent learning tasks on time. The step-by-step direction limited pupils' abilities to think for themselves.
- The activities for more-able pupils are not always pitched at the appropriate level. As a result, work is sometimes too easy. For example in an upper Key Stage 2 numeracy lesson pupils were learning about 'fractions'. The more-able pupils said they found converting fractions easy and yet they still received the same introduction from the teacher. The work in pupils' books also demonstrates that the level of difficulty is not always correct as most of the work has been completed easily and correctly. This lack of challenge slows the progress that pupils make.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- Pupils say behaviour is good and inspectors agree. Pupils are polite, courteous and helpful. They greatly value their teachers. This was illustrated well when one pupil, representing the view of many said, 'Teachers are special, they want to help us to learn'. Their enjoyment of school is also demonstrated by their above average attendance. Many people including staff, pupils and governors talk about the importance of the 'Feniscowles Family' where looking after one another is important.
- Vulnerable pupils too receive the good care and support they need. For example, the parent of one such pupil explained that her child, 'couldn't wait to get back after the summer holiday, ... all the staff make the school a happy place'.
- The school places great emphasis on promoting the personal development of pupils. Values such as caring, sharing and friendship are explored by pupils and demonstrated through displays of their work in school.
- Pupils relish the good opportunities they have to show responsibility, for example, as play leaders who organise games at lunch times, as members of the Eco-group recycling materials, and as members of the school council.
- When lessons are less successful and there is too much teacher-talk and direction, a small number of pupils begin to lose interest. A gentle reminder from the teacher ensures that pupils behave well again. Pupils very much enjoy, 'Golden Time' which is when they have time to participate in activities of their choice as a reward for behaving well. They say they do not like being on the 'Black Cloud' which is where their names go if they misbehave.
- Pupils say they feel safe and they would share their concerns with an adult in school if they had any. They have a good understanding about how to keep themselves safe. For example, they know why it is important to wear fluorescent jackets when crossing the road in the evening. Pupils know that if they come across anything unsuitable on the Internet, they need to click the dolphin, 'Hector the Protector' on the computer screen who will black out the screen.
- There have been no exclusions in school. There have been a small number of racist incidents which have been dealt with effectively. Pupils say that bullying is rare and if it occurs then staff sort it out quickly. There is a worry box for pupils to share any concerns they may have.

The leadership and management is good

- The headteacher sets high expectations for staff and pupils. She has the full support of her staff and together they work well as a strong team.
- Staff know pupils individually and value their differences. Equality is promoted and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils have equal access to all that the school has to offer. Systems

to track the progress that pupils make have improved and are used to ensure that all pupils make progress. Those falling behind are identified and supported so that they catch up in their learning.

- Teachers' performance is managed well. Lessons are monitored regularly and feedback is given to teachers to improve their practice. Teachers are held to account for the progress that pupils in their class make. If teaching is less than good then suitable help is provided for the teacher including specific training, as well as opportunities for teachers to plan lessons and teach alongside their colleagues.
- Subject leaders have a good understanding of their areas of responsibility. They monitor lessons, check teachers' planning as well as lead training for their colleagues to bring about improvement in their subject areas.
- The school's self-evaluation of itself is broadly accurate. Correct priorities have been identified to bring about further improvement.
- Good progress overall has been made since the last inspection. Standards in writing for the older pupils have improved considerably and pupils are provided with useful opportunities to check their learning in lessons.
- Parents and the local community show much support for the school. This is demonstrated extremely well in the numbers of people who support readers in school on a daily basis.
- The curriculum is carefully planned. Topics are used so that pupils learn new skills and knowledge in a way that is easier for them to understand. There is a strong emphasis on developing good personal skills including pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. A good range of activities outside lessons meets the wide range of interests of pupils well, including chess club, dance, choir and basketball.
- The local authority works well with the school. It has supported staff in improving the quality of teaching and learning and has correctly identified that more-able pupils need harder work in all lessons, and all pupils need more opportunities to learn and think for themselves.
- Safeguarding meets legal requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors provide both support and challenge. They keep up to date with training and have a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further, particularly in relation to improving the progress of significant groups within the school. Governors visit lessons and make a good contribution to recruiting new staff as well as managing the performance of the headteacher. They know exactly how the pupil premium funding has been spent and are measuring how well this is helping eligible pupils to achieve.

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	119163
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	403373

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	390
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	M Banks
Headteacher	Elizabeth Hargreaves
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2008
Telephone number	01254 201054
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