

Cherry Fold Primary School

Cog Lane, Burnley, Lancashire, BB11 5JS

Inspection dates 24–25 January 2013

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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress, especially in writing. Pupils' standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6 are below average, particularly in writing.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good enough to help all pupils catch up fully where they have fallen behind. There are variations in its quality between year groups.
- Teachers do not always make writing activities exciting enough and there are not enough chances for pupils to write about subjects they enjoy in different parts of the curriculum.
- School leaders and the governing body are making some improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. However, they know that there is even more to do to iron out inconsistencies in teaching. They are aware of the need to find more ways to share what works well in teaching both within the school and in partnership with schools further afield in order to help pupils make faster progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' progress is improving, especially in reading and mathematics. Teaching is helping more pupils to catch up when they have fallen behind. Some teaching is outstanding, particularly for pupils that receive special help and support in the nurture room. Teaching is strongest for the older pupils and in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school does a great deal to help parents to support their children's learning. Staff provide very good care and support for pupils who face difficult circumstances in their lives
- Pupils behave well and enjoy learning. Their positive attitudes are evident in their good and improving attendance. Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in many different situations including when using modern technology.
- Leaders and the governing body are determined to make further improvements. They have high ambitions for the pupils and the school. There is good morale among staff who work well as a team towards the school's aims and priorities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 22 lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the executive headteacher. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked about their reading with pupils from Years 1, 2 and 6. Work in pupils' books was scrutinised.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body, representatives of the local authority and groups of pupils.
- An inspector met and talked to a small group of parents on the first morning of the inspection. Inspectors took account of parents' views through scrutinising a survey of their views carried out by the school in 2012. There were not enough responses to the online survey (Parent View) to enable the results to be displayed.

Inspection team

Gillian Salter-Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nina Heron

Additional Inspector

David Woodhouse

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Cherry Fold is larger than an average-sized primary school.
- A well-above average proportion of pupils are eligible for pupil-premium funding (additional funding provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and the children of service families).
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There is a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds and of these a few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school at times other than is usual.
- A breakfast club operates each morning.
- The 'Place2Be' project operates from the school for three days per week. Its staff support the emotional well-being of pupils and their families.
- The school provides additional support during the school day for pupils in need of specialist help for emotional and behaviour difficulties through the 'nurture room' facility.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These set the minimum standards expected for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection the school has been led by two acting headteachers. An executive headteacher was appointed in September 2012 and spends half of the week in Cherry Fold and the other part of the week in Barden Primary School. During the rest of the week the school is led by the deputy headteacher. The school works in partnership with staff and governors of Barden Primary School to share support and training.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is at least good and the amount that is outstanding so that pupils' learning and progress are consistently good, by:
 - making sure that tasks get the most out of all pupils whatever their abilities, particularly the more-able pupils
 - ensuring that teachers take pupils' different rates of learning into account when they plan lessons so that pupils spend less time listening to teachers as a whole class when they could be busy doing tasks that help them to do their best
 - giving pupils more opportunities to try out and find out things for themselves so that they learn to manage their own learning
 - using questioning more astutely to get pupils to think more widely and deeply
 - making sure that pupils understand the guidance they receive from teachers and that they use it to improve their work, especially in writing.
- Raise attainment and improve the rate at which pupils are making progress in writing, by:
 - making writing activities more relevant and exciting so that more pupils, especially the boys, enjoy writing
 - making sure pupils are given more help in how to structure their writing to give them confidence to write
 - giving pupils more chances to practice writing when working in different subjects and encouraging pupils to keep in mind what they need to do to improve their writing when they

are given this opportunity

- improving the quality and presentation of handwriting and making sure that pupils learn the correct skills and techniques from an early age.

- Improve the effectiveness of leaders in improving teaching by finding more ways to share what works best in teaching, both within the school and through partnerships with schools further afield.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Most children start school with skills much lower than those typically expected for their age, particularly in communication skills. Progress is not yet consistently good between year groups throughout the school, although progress is improving and attainment is rising, especially in reading and mathematics. Even so, pupils' attainment is still below the national average when they enter Year 1 and by Year 2 and Year 6, especially in writing.
- Staff have worked successfully to provide reading and mathematical activities that pupils find enjoyable and challenging. From an early age, children gain confidence in recognising letters and the sounds they make. Pupils use these skills effectively to recognise and understand words so that across the school they enjoy reading stories and books relevant to their age and interests. Staff have successfully fostered enjoyment of reading, especially among boys.
- Achievement in writing is improving but not as quickly as in reading and mathematics. Pupils make reasonable gains in the techniques of punctuation and sentence structure in literacy lessons but only occasionally does their writing reflect real enthusiasm and enjoyment. Pupils' handwriting is not always well formed and work in their books is not all well presented. Some pupils have difficulty in using writing implements correctly.
- The school keeps a close eye on the progress of every pupil and different groups of pupils, reflecting their commitment to equality of opportunity. Improved systems to track pupils' progress are helping to spot when pupils are falling behind and staff quickly put extra support in place to help them catch up. As a result no group of pupils is underperforming.
- Pupil-premium funding is used astutely to provide extra staffing to support these pupils in their learning and their emotional well-being. In 2012, pupils who were known to be eligible for free school meals attained better standards in reading and writing by the end of year 6 than other pupils in the school, less so in mathematics. Their progress was better than other pupils in the school in English.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to others, as do the small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups. The additional support provided by the school, including in the nurture room and the Place2Be, helps pupils facing difficulties in their lives to do their best.
- The very few pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress. Boys and girls make similar progress in their learning; although boys' standards in writing are lower than girls. Pupils who join the school in the middle of a key stage settle in well. They are often behind in their learning and effective support helps them to make a good start on catching up.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently good in all year groups and, as a result, overtime, teaching requires improvement.
- Where teaching requires improvement, teachers do not take into account the different rates of learning when planning lessons. As a result there are times when pupils are not fully stretched and challenged, especially the more able. There are times when pupils listen to teachers' explanations for too long when they could be doing tasks that are more helpful to them and more appropriate to their different learning needs.
- Some lessons do not give pupils enough chances to try things out and find things out for themselves. Teachers' questioning does not always encourage pupils to think more deeply. In some lessons, pupils need more help in how to structure their writing to give them confidence to get started on their writing.
- Although teachers' marking of pupils' work is frequent and often sets out what has been done well, it is not always helpful. Teachers' comments are sometimes too lengthy and complex.

Pupils are not always expected to make the next steps to improve their work.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and caring. Staff create a warm and supportive atmosphere in classrooms where pupils feel secure and are keen to learn and do well.
- Some good teaching is found in all year groups but it is stronger overall for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where teaching is good, lessons are purposeful and tasks are well planned to get the most out of every pupil so that learning proceeds at a good pace. Good opportunities for drama, role play and talking with partners give pupils the chance to talk through their ideas about stories and characters. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were entranced by the 'character' of the Sheriff of Nottingham and questioned 'him' closely. This helped prepare most pupils to write about the character of Robin Hood.
- Pupils have clear targets to aim for in their learning. These are not always used to guide improvement when pupils write in different subjects across the curriculum.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff do a great deal to help parents to support their children's learning. Teachers plan learning activities and for play that excite and interest the children. Staff interact well with children and usually encourage children to talk about what they are doing and to spend plenty of time trying out their early reading, writing and number skills. Frequent checks on children's learning help staff to get the best out of the children and to give extra support to those children who need it. Children enjoy playing and learning both indoors and outdoors. As a result pupils' progress is improving year-on-year.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported by experienced teaching assistants. In the nurture class, outstanding teaching recognises pupils' individual needs and makes sure that tasks are interesting, fun and challenging; those pupils taught in the nurture class make really good progress in learning new language skills and gaining confidence in social skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behave well in lessons and they are keen to learn. They work well in pairs and support one another. They enjoy most lessons, especially reading and activities in mathematics that are meaningful to them.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is sensible, calm and orderly. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well with each other. Pupils feel safe in school and say there is very little bullying. They know about most of the different types of bullying and what to do if it happens. They are confident that staff will quickly help to sort out any problems they have.
- Pupils enjoy the breakfast club and they behave sensibly, playing happily alongside each other and helping with the daily 'chores'.
- Pupils joining the school settle in quickly and are made to feel welcome.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in many different situations, including when using the internet and modern technology.
- The school council works well to make improvements to the school. They made a successful appeal to the governors for additional funding to purchase a wider range of reading books.
- Attendance has improved steadily since the last inspection and is in line with the national average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The executive headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together. They set high expectations of pupils and staff and ensure that the school is a welcoming place where every pupil is very well cared for. They are well supported by subject leaders, staff and governors.
- Leaders are strongly determined to improve pupils' achievement. They have had some success in improving teaching and, as a result, pupils are beginning to learn at a faster rate, especially in

reading and mathematics. However, the quality of teaching requires improvement because it is still too variable. Opportunities for staff to share with each other what works well in teaching are beginning to make a difference to the quality of teaching and leaders are aware that it is time to develop this work further in order to benefit from the expertise that exists both within and beyond the school.

- Frequent checks on pupils' progress hold teachers to account and identify where additional support is needed for pupils who have fallen behind. Checks on teaching are rigorous and lead to support that is well focused on individual staff needs, but this is not yet leading to consistently good teaching.
 - Staff training is planned in response to school priorities. Increasingly, staff are confident in leading school-based training and are beginning to share what works best with each other.
 - Appraisal and performance management of all staff are used rigorously to reward good performance and are based on an accurate review of teaching and progress.
 - The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well and pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Progression in reading, writing and numeracy skills are planned for. Much has been done to help pupils enjoy reading, for example, the more exciting books in the library, well-planned reading sessions and greater involvement of parents. However, the curriculum is not yet giving pupils enough chances to write about different subjects or about subjects that really appeal to them.
 - The school works effectively with parents and does a great deal to help them to support their children's learning.
 - Safeguarding arrangements securely meet requirements.
 - The local authority keeps a close check on the performance of the school and provides good support for improving teaching, learning and leadership.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are experienced and bring a good range of skills to their role. They have undergone useful training. They know how the school is performing in relation to other schools across the country and keep a close check on its performance. They are aware of the quality of teaching across the school and are involved in decisions that reward teachers for good performance. They support a rigorous approach to the underperformance of staff. They understand how pupil-premium funding is spent and check on its impact on the most vulnerable pupils. Governors are fully aware that teaching and pupils' achievement require improvement and have made useful long-term strategic decisions to overcome former difficulties caused by unforeseeable changes in the leadership of the school.
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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	133622
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	406538

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	323
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Keane
Headteacher	Simon Smalley
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2011
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