

Bolshaw Primary School

Cross Road, Heald Green, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 3LW

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- There is a strong sense of community in the school. From the outset, in the Reception class, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are fostered and nurtured successfully through high levels of care and guidance.
- Pupils feel safe and secure and enjoy coming to school, and most attend well. Parents are confident pupils are kept safe and are well cared for.
- From broadly average starting points pupils achieve well. Many achieve the higher Level 5 in reading and mathematics in national tests at the end of Year 6, and standards in writing are improving.
- Pupils say they find learning fun, they behave well and are keen and enthusiastic in lessons. This is because the activities they are given are interesting and because there are often purposeful links between subjects.
- Pupils show good levels of imagination and talk with confidence when presenting their ideas and work.
- Overall teaching is good, particularly in mathematics. The best teaching is clear and imaginative with effective use of computers and regular opportunities for pupils to research topics and solve problems.
- The commitment and determination of the headteacher has ensured that despite significant changes in staffing there has been a focus on maintaining standards.
- Leaders and managers are clear about the further improvements they want to see and are effective in driving change. They correctly identify these areas through the monitoring of pupils' achievements and observations of teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although most pupils make expected progress, more pupils could make good and outstanding progress. One reason for this is that, on occasions, opportunities to challenge pupils to move on more rapidly in their learning are missed.
- Too few pupils achieve above expected levels in Year 2.
- There is not enough outstanding teaching.
- Governors need clearer systems to measure the impact of actions in the school's improvement plans.
- Leaders need to check more frequently that agreed actions are having the intended impact in driving improvement further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 17 lessons across the seven classes in the school. They also observed an assembly. They observed some of the lessons jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also looked at work in pupils' books in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Inspectors held a meeting with two governors and a meeting with a representative from the local authority. They held meetings with groups of pupils, with teachers who lead subjects including the deputy headteacher who is also the special educational needs coordinator, the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage and with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils from Years 1 and 2 read. They spoke formally to groups of pupils as well as speaking to pupils informally around the school, for example at lunchtime.
- When making the judgements inspectors took into account the 53 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own survey of the views of parents and a letter received from a parent. Inspectors also spoke to a small number of parents about their views of the school. They also considered the responses of 20 staff who returned the Ofsted inspection survey and the views of pupils who completed a school survey.
- Inspectors took into account evidence from the school's behaviour logs including exclusion records, evidence about how well pupils attend, self-evaluation documents and the school's development plan. Inspectors also considered other school documents and policies, some of which are available on the school's website.

Inspection team

Adrian Guy, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bolshaw Primary is slightly smaller in size when compared with primary schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives extra funding from the government through the pupil premium is well below the national average. Currently, there are no children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils in the school with a statement of special educational needs or who have extra staff support because they are at 'school action plus' is similar to the national average. There are a few pupils who have a declared disability.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, who have support with their work because they have been identified by staff as needing 'school action', is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased since the last inspection and is around the national average. Similarly, the proportion that speak English as an additional language is in line with the national average.
- Fewer pupils than average join and leave the school part-way through their education.
- There is a separately registered provider of before- and after-school and holiday care on the school site which was inspected in May 2012.
- Since the last inspection there have been significant changes to the staff at the school including a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and two middle leaders.
- The school meets the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all is consistently good and more is outstanding by:
 - using the best practice in marking across the school, so that pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their work and make even better progress
 - ensuring opportunities are taken to move pupils on to the next stage of their learning more rapidly, particularly in their writing.
- Ensure that all pupils make good or better than expected progress by:
 - ensuring teachers challenge more-able pupils so that they make good and outstanding progress
 - accelerating the progress which pupils make in Key Stage 1 so that a much higher proportion achieve above the national average in Year 2.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders frequently check that agreed actions are having the intended impact to drive improvement further and more quickly
 - making sure that governors take greater responsibility for checking the impact of actions in the school's improvement plans.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are expected for their age, although for a small minority their starting points are lower. They get a good start to school and make good progress in the Reception Year. As a result, they enter Year 1 with levels of achievement that are at least in line with, and for many above, average levels.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and confident learners. They are excited when given interesting things to find out and problems to solve. For example, in a mathematics lesson a group of boys was given the task of finding out how much it would cost to resurface part of the playground. They were animated in measuring and using their knowledge of area to solve this problem. The teaching assistant skilfully introduced the concept of volume by asking about the thickness of tarmac needed.
- By the time they leave Year 6 most pupils achieve the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics. Many achieve higher levels in reading and mathematics but fewer pupils achieve higher levels in writing.
- There are no significant differences in the achievement of girls and boys. Standards attained by boys were better than the national picture in 2012 while girls in Year 6 made better than expected progress. Support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs enables them to progress as well as their peers. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds do well and achieve as well as other pupils and sometimes better.
- The small numbers of pupils who are entitled to free school meals do well at the school. The school has used pupil premium funding effectively to support pupils with small-group tuition programmes.
- Although most pupils make at least expected levels of progress across the school, there are variations as they move between classes. For example, by the time they leave Year 2 the proportion of pupils achieving above expected levels does not reflect the good progress they made in the Reception class. This is because there is not enough challenge to move the more able pupils on rapidly in their learning in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils are articulate and imaginative. Older pupils read widely and come up with good ideas for their writing. However, on occasions they spend too much time planning their work rather than moving on and having a go and drafting their ideas, which can hold learning back and does not challenge pupils to make even better progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Inspection evidence confirms the school's view, and that of most parents, that teaching is good, most especially the teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in mathematics in Key Stage 2. At its best, teachers' strong subject knowledge and the use of skilled teaching assistants ensure work is at the right level and pupils are well supported.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is positive and often affirms what pupils can do. However, there is less consistency in the use of marking to help pupils make better progress. Leaders are aware that the best practice in identifying errors in pupils' work and showing pupils the next steps of how they can improve is not being shared across the school to help all teachers improve their practice.
- Teachers' use links between different subjects to stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm. For example, pupils in Year 6 were keen to investigate the facts surrounding Captain Cook's discovery of Australia. This led to some effective use of computers to produce short advertisements about Australia which showed pupils' impressive levels of imagination and articulation. However, not all links between subjects are as carefully considered as this example.
- Additional support for groups of pupils, for example in improving their knowledge of letters and the sounds they represent (phonics), is good. When inspectors listened to some pupils in Key

Stage 1 read they found good evidence that pupils' knowledge of phonics is helping them to read unfamiliar words.

- Pupils were positive about their lessons and said that the teacher makes their learning 'fun'. This is evident in their enthusiasm and attitudes they show in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- During the inspection pupils' behaviour was consistently good and in some lessons outstanding. They showed a willingness to help each other and displayed genuine cooperation when given tasks that required them to work together. In lessons most pupils are highly motivated, keen to learn, responsive to all adults and they regulate their own behaviour.
- This highly positive environment for learning means teachers are able to teach with few or no disruptions to the lessons and pupils learn quickly, with nothing preventing their progress. The caring support for pupils who have difficulty in managing their emotions and behaviour enables them to work well in lessons. Their behaviour is managed well. The majority of parents were positive about the behaviour of pupils and pupils themselves said that behaviour was good.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors were adamant that they are kept safe in school. They know about the dangers of the internet, road safety and how to stay safe when the older pupils are given permission to walk home from school independently.
- Official figures for 2010 to 2012 show that overall pupils' attendance improved from below to above average. Current information shows that the picture has dipped slightly. This is due in part to increased absence at the time of the Norovirus outbreak and increased periods of extended absence by a small number of families which the school is monitoring closely.
- Following a survey of pupils' views the school has worked with pupils to ensure they understand the different forms that bullying can take. Although it is not common, pupils are confident that if bullying occurs it will be dealt with by adults. Similarly, where instances of name-calling arise, including remarks about people's skin colour or religion, or the inappropriate use of the term 'gay', pupils are confident that this is dealt with effectively by staff.
- Although the picture of exclusion is above the national average for a primary school, concerted actions by the school's leadership show there is a declining trend with far fewer exclusions this year.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the last inspection there have been significant changes of staffing at the school and a completely new leadership team is now in place. The headteacher has successfully steered the school through these changes, maintained standards in mathematics and focused on bringing about improvement in English.
- As well as the school's strengths, leaders and governors are aware of the school's weaknesses and these are clearly prioritised in the school's action plans. However, the current criteria by which progress and improvement can be measured make it difficult to judge the impact of the actions being taken.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching and learning through a range of activities such as lesson observations and checking pupils' work. These monitoring activities have enabled them to ensure the correct priorities are identified for improvement. However, greater frequency is still needed in the timing of these checks to ensure that all teachers are following school policy.
- The local authority has monitored the progress of the school during a period of considerable staff turnover. They have provided clear information to governors about the challenges the school faces and the improvements needed. They have provided leadership support for the new headteacher and brokered partnership working with other successful local schools.
- The strong emphasis placed on ensuring there is a rich and diverse curriculum which engages pupils has been successful. Pupils' understanding of diversity has been enhanced through

learning about different cultures and communities so that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well provided for.

- The school seeks the views of parents and pupils through surveys, a parents' forum and the pupil council. These are, on the whole, positive and parents who spoke to the inspectors commented favourably about the school.
- Suitable systems for assuring improvements in the quality of teaching are in place. Information about pupils' achievement is used to set targets for improvement and inform decisions about teachers' pay progression. Action has been taken to deal with previous underperformance.
- Policies for ensuring that the school promotes equality of opportunity for all pupils are securely in place and requirements relating to the safeguarding of pupils are met.
- The school's senior leaders and governors have considered carefully how they spend the small amount of money received through the pupil premium. Additional help for small groups of pupils, as well as supporting access to extra-curricular activities, means that these pupils are fully included and achieve well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - With the headteacher, governors have worked to ensure they are asking the right questions about the school's performance. To further support this they have established a standards committee to scrutinise pupils' achievement more closely. They are clear about the priorities for improvement but accept there is more to do to ensure that they hold the leadership to account for the progress being made against all the actions in the school improvement plan. They have agreed appropriate and clear targets for the performance management of the headteacher and are sure that the new system of teachers' appraisal is linked to pupils' progress. They have accessed appropriate training to ensure their safeguarding and other duties are met.

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	106029
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	413217

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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann McMillan
Headteacher	Lynda Brown
Date of previous school inspection	9 January 2008
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