

Rainford Brook Lodge Community Primary School

Rufford Road, Rainford, St Helens, WA11 8JX

Inspection dates 13–14 February 2013

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leadership and management are outstanding.
- The senior leadership team is meticulously organised and ensures that data on pupil achievement is used to good effect when planning lessons and allocating resources.
- As a result of good teaching pupils make good progress throughout the school. Many make outstanding progress in Key Stage 2 in mathematics and reading, and attain high standards by the end of Year 6.
- All staff are focused on doing their best to raise levels of achievement continually. A well-thought-out system to assess the effectiveness of teachers ensures that helping pupils to succeed is a core priority for the school.
- Behaviour is outstanding; pupils are positive and considerate, and do their best to achieve to the best of their ability. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and they care for and respect each other. They feel safe because the school provides a supportive environment in which they thrive.
- Governors have an intimate knowledge of the school; they are supportive and ambitious, and take on every aspect of their role in earnest. They know where the school's strengths are and are committed to working with the headteacher to improve standards continuously.
- The vast majority of parents are of the opinion that the school provides a good level of education for their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The achievement of boys in mathematics and writing in Key Stage 1 is not as good as in reading and could be better. Overall achievement in Key Stage 1 is not as good as in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Lessons do not always stretch more-able pupils or provide enough opportunities for them to work independently and find things out for themselves.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also visited parts of lessons and observed small-group activities including the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics).
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils from Years 3, 4, 5, and 6 and inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.
- Inspectors met with a number of staff including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject leaders. Inspectors also met with eight governors and a representative from the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with a consultant who works with the school.
- Inspectors took account of 28 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), surveys carried out by the school, 23 staff questionnaires and one letter from a parent.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work with the headteacher and deputy headteacher and looked at school documents including data on pupils' progress, the school improvement plan and self-assessment, reports from the school improvement partner and consultant, teacher monitoring files and minutes of the governing body meetings. A range of documentation was scrutinised relating to safeguarding, including behaviour logs and policies.

Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Judith Tolley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage, and no pupil speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is much lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much lower than the national average.
- The governing body manages a breakfast-club which was observed during the inspection. Governors also manage a pre-school and after-school service.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is a member of the Edge Hill Premier Partnership and has gained a number of awards including the Healthy Cities Award and the Investors in People Award.
- Since the last inspection a number of staff have left the school and a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed as well as two newly qualified teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment for all pupils in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1, especially for boys, so that they are at least as good as in reading by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing and comprehension skills in all subjects and topics that they study
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to engage in problem-solving activities which are challenging and enable them to achieve to the best of their ability.
- Move teaching from good to outstanding across the school by:
 - making sure that all teachers plan tasks in lessons that always stretch and support all pupils to learn more
 - providing more opportunities across the curriculum for pupils, especially the more-able to find things out for themselves and work more independently.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is not outstanding because attainment in mathematics and writing by the end of Key Stage 1 is not outstanding and boys' performance in 2012 was not as good as it has been.
- Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage having attended the nursery adjacent to the school. On entry their skills are at a level expected for their age. Their personal, social and emotional skills, and their reading and writing are especially strong.
- Pupils make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and reach above average standards overall by the end of Year 6. Many pupils make outstanding progress in mathematics and reading to achieve well above average standards by the time they leave school.
- The school uses data and tracking information well to identify any pupils who are not performing to the best of their ability. All boys who underperformed in mathematics and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 have been identified and provided with additional support, including small-group teaching activities. The school's data show that these pupils are making good progress; in some instances they have exceeded their targets. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 are now working at a standard which is at least that expected for their age.
- Reading is strength across the school; this is because the school strongly promotes reading and provides pupils with many opportunities to read. Pupils who read for inspectors were keen readers and had developed a love for books. Less-able readers demonstrated that they could use the skills that they had learned in phonics to sound out and read unfamiliar words.
- The small minority of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are making good progress. This is because of the effectiveness of carefully targeted funding for 'booster' groups and one-to-one mentoring.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress. The school has ensured this through training specialist staff who provide group support. This has contributed well to raising levels of achievement for these groups, especially in mathematics and writing across both key stages.
- Writing, while a strong subject for the vast majority of pupils, still remains a priority for the school. The school's monitoring of writing shows that most pupils are now attaining levels which are at least as expected for their age.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection and, as a result, pupils' learning and progress are now good. Because of good teaching the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in mathematics and reading at Key Stage 2 is much higher than the national average.
- Teachers set high standards and have high expectations of pupils; as a result of this they enjoy learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very strong and pupils' behaviour in class is never less than good.
- Teachers plan their lessons carefully aiming to engage the interest of all pupils and to help them to become confident learners. However, in some lessons the more-able are not fully stretched and opportunities are missed for them to engage in independent learning, and in activities more tailored to their abilities.
- Teachers often provide pupils with opportunities to come to the front of the class, to show what they have learnt and how they have solved problems. However, in mathematics teachers do not always take advantage of such opportunities to provide real challenge for pupils.
- Teachers are eager to identify as many opportunities as possible for pupils to develop their technical skills in writing. They are working at ensuring that these skills are developed in all

areas of the curriculum but occasionally miss chances to do so.

- Teachers use skilful questioning to encourage pupils to use their imagination. In a Year 1 English class pupils were exploring how an imaginary super-hero might rescue someone from a fire. They eagerly discussed this in pairs, and then skilfully articulated their questions to a 'real' super-hero when she came into the class.
- Where teaching is at its best, learning moves on at a brisk pace and pupils have opportunities to engage in discussions. In such lessons pupils work well together and show consideration for the views of their class mates. In an English lesson in Year 6, pupils listened to each other's views very considerately when debating the arguments for and against the humane 'putting down' of rescue centre dogs.
- Pupils know well how to improve their work. Marking is helpful and gives good guidance to pupils. The best marking allows opportunities for pupils to comment on teachers' suggestions as well as to assess for themselves how well they think they have done.
- Teaching assistants and other adults provide good support; one-to-one support is particularly effective for those children who have complex learning needs. The best planning ensures that teaching assistants can provide their support as near to the start of lessons as possible.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The overwhelming majority of pupils, staff, parents and governors are positive about standards of behaviour and safety. Pupils are calm, considerate, inquisitive and very welcoming towards visitors. They are proud to be ambassadors for their school when out on visits, when meeting pupils from other schools and when engaged in charity activities in their community.
- Attendance across the school is above average. Relationships between pupils are supportive and respectful; they relish the opportunity of taking on board responsibilities through the school forum and the role of prefect.
- Pupils are aware of most forms of bullying and say that behaviour in the school is almost always good. Some say that bullying is unheard of and are clear that if it were to happen that it would be treated seriously and dealt with immediately.
- Exclusions of any kind are very rare. Pupils can define racial discrimination well. They know that it is wrong to treat people less favourably because of their religion or skin colour, and they understand why the school takes all form of discrimination seriously.
- Behaviour is managed consistently well by all staff who communicate their expectations clearly to all pupils. Pupils uphold the school's expected standards of behaviour and look forward to the many opportunities, such as 'Golden Time', available for recognising good behaviour.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of safe and unsafe situations and make a significant contribution to the safe and positive learning environment of the school. They say that visits from, for example, fire-fighters and police officers help them to keep safe.
- Pupils' understanding of cyber-bullying is especially well-developed. They know how to stay safe while using the Internet and never to give their personal details to strangers through, for example, social networking sites.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, supported by a very able deputy headteacher, is relentlessly leading a committed and cohesive staff towards his goal of outstanding overall school effectiveness. He has communicated a very clear vision through the school's development plan which identifies the steps that need to be taken in order for this goal to be achieved.
- One of the main focuses is on raising the level of achievement for all pupils in writing, particularly in relation to grammar and punctuation. This was evident during the inspection when many English lessons had a focus on improving pupils' technical skills in constructing sentences,

writing persuasively and, for younger pupils, using adverbs and connecting sentences.

- Outstanding leadership and management ensure that all training and professional development opportunities for staff are closely linked to school priorities, including improving the quality of teaching. Newly qualified teachers say that they have been supported well in developing their teaching practice and that they benefit from informal advice and support from colleagues.
 - Leadership of the curriculum is outstanding. Pupils, who are provided with many memorable and exciting experiences, say that they enjoy mathematics, English and the topic work that they do in history, geography, religious education and science.
 - The curriculum is further enriched through focus weeks, which have included famous artists and world-changing events. For one week annually, all year groups learn about different South African freedom fighters. This links to recent exchange visits which have provided a strong link with a South African school.
 - The school promotes equal opportunities well and provides a broad range of after-school activities which have a good take-up rate by both boys and girls.
 - Good relations are fostered between people from different backgrounds, cultures and religions, and discrimination is challenged through developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
 - The school is vigilant in maintaining the safety and welfare of pupils. It ensures that all statutory requirements for safeguarding are met.
 - The local authority provides light touch support for the school which also takes advice from an external consultant.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are trained and informed well and very clear about their role. They challenge the headteacher, set him stretching and regularly reviewed targets and have an intimate knowledge of the school. They ensure that the pay of all staff is closely related to performance. All governors come into the school on a regular basis and, therefore, they are well aware of any actions taken to raise standards continuously. Governors authorise the school's pupil premium spending and know how it is helping to raise levels of achievement for entitled pupils. They understand how the performance of teachers is being managed and are aware of actions being taken to improve teaching.
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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	104780
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	400739

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	164
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr I Beaton
Headteacher	Mr S Hanley
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2010
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