

Brookfield Community Primary School

Watling Street Road, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 6TU

Inspection dates 12–13 February 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

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to make sure all pupils make consistently good progress from their starting points.
- Marking is not used effectively enough by all teachers to let pupils know how they might improve their work, and teachers' questions do not always provide pupils with the challenge to think harder.
- Governors do not have in place strategies to make sure that additional funding provided for pupil premium pupils is used as well as it should be.
- The progress made by pupils in writing is not as good as in reading and in mathematics. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills well in all areas of the curriculum.
- Middle leaders are not effectively involved in monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, through dedicated leadership and despite staffing disruptions, has made sure the school is a very welcoming one where the level of pupils' personal care is high on the agenda.
- Pupils' behave well, relate well to one another and feel safe. Attendance is above the national average.
- Reading is a successful area of pupils' learning by the time pupils leave. The teaching of early reading skills is organised well.
- The school has identified that pupils' writing needs to be improved and has begun to address this weakness so that there are now signs of some improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons. The headteacher took part in a joint observation of teaching with one of the inspectors. Additional short visits in lessons were carried out to look at issues such as how well pupils get on with their classmates and how well they behave.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random, members of the governing body and with senior staff. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them about the types of books they enjoy and why.
- Pupils' current work and assessment data were scrutinised, including information which showed how well pupils do in English and mathematics.
- Ten responses were received to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The school had carried out its own surveys of parents and carers views and this information was taken into account during the inspection.
- Most members of staff completed the voluntary staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Yates, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mujahid Ali

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very low.
- 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 above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has achieved many awards including Investor in People status.
- Since the previous inspection there have been numerous disruptive changes to staffing, including long term absence. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more of it is good or better by:
 - ensuring lesson planning provides activities well matched to pupils' needs and reflects a high level of expectation
 - making better use of marking so that pupils know what is needed to move them on in their learning in all subjects
 - making better use of questioning to challenge pupils' thinking further
 - ensuring that there is not too much teacher talk that takes away the time for pupils to complete the work that they are asked to do.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring middle leaders are more involved in evaluating pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in the school.
- Ensure that the governing body has strategies in place to enable it to know that pupil premium funding is used for the purpose intended and the way it is used is effective in improving the progress of the pupils it is intended for.
- Ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills by providing them with more opportunities to write in a range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because teaching is not strong enough to make sure that pupils make consistently good progress as they move through the school. There is variation in pupils' achievement from year to year. The latest Year 6 test results, while broadly average in English and mathematics this year, show that achievement in writing lags well behind that in reading and mathematics. The school successfully raised the attainment of higher ability pupils in mathematics in 2012 and this has been maintained this year.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics has declined in the last two years, reflecting the difficulties the school has had with the lack of stability in staffing. However, inspection evidence shows that pupils are now making better progress. There are clear signs of improvements in the teaching of early reading skills, demonstrated by Year 1 pupils exceeding what is expected in the latest national test of early reading skills.
- Children start school with skills that are below those expected for their age. They settle well into school life. They make good progress at times, especially in their personal development but this is not consistent across all areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year they are working below the expected levels.
- Progress across Key Stage 2 is good at times but not consistently so, especially in writing. There are some good examples of pupils being challenged to write at length and to use their writing skills in other subjects, but not by all teachers. Inspection evidence and the school's own assessment information show that current attainment in Year 6 is broadly average.
- Attainment in reading is above the national average at the end of Year 6. Pupils can read with fluency and understanding. Older pupils say that they love reading.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make the same progress as others in reading and mathematics and their attainment is broadly average. However, there is a significant gap between their achievement in writing and that of other pupils in the school, and their attainment in writing is below average. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. Their needs are identified quickly and they are given good support so that they make good progress when teaching is good. As with other pupils, their progress slows when teaching is weaker.
- The small number of parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire felt that their children make good progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- In too many lessons, teachers do not have a good understanding of what it is they want pupils to get out of the lesson, with work set that is not closely matched to pupils' needs. As a result, work is sometimes undemanding. At times too much teacher talk at the start of a lesson means that time is not used well and pupils do not have sufficient time to complete their tasks.
- Good features of teaching include skilled use of the school's behaviour management systems and the supportive relationships staff have with their pupils.
- Where teaching is good, teachers are quick to pick up on difficulties when pupils are not making good progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson where pupils were asked to interpret graphs, the pupils' learning was held back by the wording of a question in a commercial text book. The teacher realised what the issue was and made sure it was addressed quickly and effectively. Where teaching is not as strong, teachers do not intervene quickly enough.
- While children in both the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Year 1 engage in a wide range of learning experiences, at times these lack sufficient challenge because teachers have not identified clearly what they want the children to learn and made sure that the activity provides for that learning.
- Pupils make good progress in reading so that by the time they leave in Year 6 they achieve

above average standards. The skills of reading are well-taught and structured, with good use made of teaching assistants. Younger pupils are effectively taught to recognise letters and the sounds they make.

- Teachers use questioning appropriately to test pupils' understanding. However, opportunities to challenge thinking further are sometimes missed because teachers too readily accept initial responses.
- Writing skills across the school are not taught well enough. However, the school has identified that improvement is needed and an increased focus on writing skills, spear-headed by the newly appointed deputy headteacher, is beginning to help raise pupils' achievements. Older pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in other subjects and in topic work.
- The new marking policy is not being used consistently by all teachers in helping pupils to understand how well they have done and what they need to do next and this slows their progress.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support learning, especially for less able pupils and those with emotional and social difficulties. In line with other pupils, progress is sometimes inconsistent because expectations about what they can achieve are not as high as they could be.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- There is a positive ethos in the school.
- Pupils get on very well with each other and with the staff.
- The school's own survey of parents and carers views as well as the responses to the Parent View questionnaire and the staff questionnaire show that the school provides a safe environment and that pupils enjoy school and mostly behave well.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is mostly good. Pupils are polite, mostly well-mannered and are keen to talk about what they are doing. However, there are a small number of pupils whose behaviour at times is very challenging. When pupils behave in this way, staff deal with the situations very well.
- Pupils are proud of their school. For example, pupils (trained in food hygiene) enjoy being healthy food servers in their special uniforms at lunch-time and say they like having the responsibility to do this. Older pupils take their responsibilities very seriously in helping to look after younger children during lunch-times.
- A scrutiny of records and observations during the inspection demonstrated that behaviour over time is good rather than outstanding.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school can be seen in their above average attendance and the punctual way they arrive at the start of the day.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and are confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by the school. They recognise dangers when using the internet and know how to avoid these problems. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They are confident that should any ever occur, adults would deal with it fairly.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, staffing issues such as the headteacher working at times without any senior staff, having to teach full-time and staff absence, have impeded school improvement. As a result the leadership and management of the school have not been fully effective in securing consistently good teaching.
- The headteacher has been successful, not only in maintaining a strong school ethos, despite staffing disruptions, but also in making improvements to pupils' achievements especially with regard to pupils' reading skills and in the progress made by pupils, including the more able, in mathematics.

- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural programme of support for pupils plays a key part in ensuring pupils' personal needs are met well.
- Performance management has played an important part in helping to improve some aspects of teaching, and staff appreciate the training they have received. For example, they have a better understanding of the best methods to teach letters and the sounds they make. However, because some aspects of performance management have been disrupted by staff changes, it is not yet as effective as it could be. Middle leaders are not sufficiently involved in helping the headteacher in evaluating the quality of pupils' learning and the quality of teaching and, as such, their skills are not used to full effect to move the school forward.
- The newly appointed deputy headteacher is taking on an increasingly important leadership role and has already brought about improvements in the quality of pupils' writing. It is too early to judge the full impact of these improvements.
- The staff questionnaires indicate that staff think highly of the leadership of the school and of the provision made for their professional development.
- Leaders make numerous efforts to ensure that no pupils, regardless of background, or need, are denied access to anything the school has to offer. Equal opportunities are pursued well generally. However, strategies to use pupil premium funding to raise the standard of writing of those pupils eligible for free school meals have not yet been thought out fully, although it is used well to provide extra support in reading and mathematics.
- Child protection and safeguarding have a high priority. Leaders ensure that all requirements are met and that the building is a safe environment where learning can take place.
- Pupils are taught a broad range of interesting topics based on a school theme. However, not enough is done to ensure sufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills. Pupils say they enjoy lessons and the good range of extra-curricular activities on offer.
- The local authority provides good strategic support. In the time since the previous inspection, it has provided good support to the headteacher with regard to addressing staff disruption.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved since the previous inspection. The governing body discharges most of its legal responsibilities well. The safeguarding of pupils is a high priority and governors ensure that the implementation of all policies in this respect is robust. However, while they do keep a close check on the school's budget, they do not make sure that pupil premium money is used to good effect for the purpose intended. Governors have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use the school assessment data to judge the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. Governors have a good understanding of how performance management is carried out. They seek assurance that salary levels are closely linked to performance and that teaching which is less successful is addressed.

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	119226
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	401822

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	158
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Davies
Headteacher	Jayne Verity
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2010
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