

Anchorsholme Primary School

Eastpines Drive, Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire, FY5 3RX

Inspection dates 30 April–1 May 2013

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.

- This is a happy school where pupils feel safe and well looked after. They say that the school is 'like a big family'.
- Achievement has improved over the past two years. Most pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and reach the levels expected for their age.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start, and love talking about what they have learnt.
- The majority of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and want them to do as well as they can. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for pupils in lessons.
- Pupils behave sensibly and are considerate towards each other and adults. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy their lessons.
- The curriculum provides an exciting range of activities which helps pupils develop and extend their basic skills. It also gives them many opportunities to develop individual talents, and contributes well to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Leadership is strong. Senior leaders have taken highly effective action to improve teaching and achievement. They have developed an enthusiastic and dedicated staff team, who share their ambition for the school.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school. They have helped to drive improvement through the challenging questions they ask. The school is well-placed to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding and the best practice seen is not consistent across the school.
- Not enough pupils reach levels above those expected for their age.
- Although pupils' progress in mathematics is accelerating, pupils do not do as well in mathematics as in English at the end of Key Stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 27 lessons, including two joint lesson observations with senior leaders, and lessons in small support groups. Inspectors listened to pupils reading and observed the teaching of early reading skills. They also looked at examples of pupils' work to get a view of teaching and progress over time.
- Discussions took place with pupils, parents, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, a representative from the local authority, senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors took account of 54 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 44 staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' progress across the school, the school's evaluation of its effectiveness and its development-planning, records of the quality of teaching and learning, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documentation in relation to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Christine Potter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jonathon Yodaiken	Additional Inspector
Juliet Demster	Additional Inspector
Jeremy Barnes	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils in the school who are eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast- and after-school club.
- There have been significant staffing changes and extensive building work since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further, so that pupils' progress in mathematics continues to accelerate and more pupils reach levels above those expected for their age in both English and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that lessons always move at a brisk pace so that pupils do not lose interest and do not spend too long listening to the teacher when they are ready to get on with their own work
 - giving all pupils activities in lessons which are at just the right level for them, and are sufficiently challenging, especially for more-able pupils
 - further developing the way teachers use the systems to check how well pupils are doing, particularly in mathematics, to plan what pupils need to learn next and to provide extra help where necessary
 - increasing the opportunities to share aspects of outstanding teaching within the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They enjoy the exciting range of activities, both indoors and outdoors, such as the well-resourced 'Recycling Centre'. Children become confident and independent and are well-prepared for Year 1.
- Following a dip in standards in 2011 at both Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in mathematics, the school has taken decisive action. Achievement has improved strongly and continues to do so. Pupils in all year groups now make good progress. Although an intensive focus on mathematics has improved pupils' progress in this subject, fewer pupils reach the standard expected for their age in mathematics than in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Increasing numbers of pupils at both Key Stage 1 and 2 are now working at higher levels, but still not enough pupils reach standards above those expected for their age. The school recognises the need to accelerate progress further to make up for previous underachievement, particularly for the more-able pupils.
- Early reading skills are taught systematically. An above average proportion of pupils reaches the expected standard in reading words in Year 1. Pupils say they love reading and enjoy talking about their favourite books. They know how important reading is for all their other learning and for their lives ahead.
- Pupils apply their basic skills well in other subjects. They have opportunities to develop skills learnt in literacy lessons, such as when writing biographies about important people in Ancient Greece. Pupils' books show that they take a pride in their work and are independent and creative in the way they present it. They work hard and their books demonstrate the good progress they are making.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive good support and therefore they make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to provide additional teaching and support, which ensures that eligible pupils make better progress than that of other pupils in the school from their individual starting points. Gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils are closing. Those known to be eligible for free school meals reach the same level in English as that of their peers, and in mathematics, they reach levels which are approximately six months behind those of other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good relationships and the use of praise to encourage pupils are a strong feature of all lessons. Teachers question pupils skilfully to check their understanding and extend their learning. The teacher's questions encouraged Year 1 pupils to think of more exciting vocabulary as they mapped out a story.
- Teachers make it clear to pupils exactly what they are expected to learn. Pupils take part in assessing their own work against specific success criteria.
- Teachers also help pupils to understand the relevance of their learning to everyday life, for example, why it is important to understand the 24-hour clock. They help pupils write for different purposes and audiences. Pupils in Year 6 learned how to create suspense when writing a story in order to encourage people to read further. Lessons often begin with an interesting or exciting stimulus to fire pupils' imagination, such as an animation of 'The Piano', which encouraged pupils in Year 5 to include similes and description in their writing.
- Teaching assistants have a very clear understanding of different pupils' needs. They reinforce skills that pupils are finding difficult, teach specific topics or extend pupils' understanding within more investigative activities.
- Where teaching is at its best, lessons move at a brisk pace and pupils are engaged at an early

stage in independent activities. Teachers plan carefully for pupils of all abilities, and the work is challenging for them all. Pupils in Year 6 mathematics revision lessons solved open-ended problems using calculation skills at different levels for different pupils. The activities generated intense mathematical discussion as the pupils enthusiastically tackled the problems.

- Teachers have regular one-to-one meetings with pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to discuss what they have done well or found difficult. A Year 3 pupil showed her increased confidence in subtraction, but also discussed her difficulties with multiplication. Where these meetings are most effective, information recorded by teachers is used to plan precisely what pupils will do next and what extra help they need, and pupils learn exactly what they need to do to improve.
- However, in a few lessons the pace is slow, because pupils spend too long listening to the teacher when they are ready to get on with their own work and consequently they lose interest. Lessons are not always planned carefully enough to make sure that the work is at exactly the right level of challenge for all pupils. In particular, pupils who are more able sometimes find the work too easy.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are welcoming, friendly and polite. They are keen to be acknowledged as 'Anchors Children' through passports which promote aspects such as confidence and fairness.
- Pupils like to take responsibility. Older pupils look after younger children at lunchtimes. Pupils feel valued and respected and, in turn, respect others and appreciate their talents.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They say that the school is a 'fun place to learn', and know that the teachers will help them if they are upset or are finding things difficult. Most behaviour in lessons is good, but pupils become restless and there is some minor misbehaviour when lessons do not move quickly enough or the work is too easy.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school. They feel that behaviour is mostly good. There are very few incidents of bullying or racism, and these are always dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and how to stay safe in situations beyond the school, including when using the Internet. Parents agree that the school keeps their children safe.
- Children with behaviour problems benefit from well-planned programmes which successfully improve their personal development and learning.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is consistently above average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear ambition for the school. They provide strong leadership; they inspire and share their vision clearly with other leaders, staff and governors. Many staff have successfully taken on leadership roles and they are all equally keen to do the best for all pupils. Actions taken have secured rapid improvements over the past two years.
- Leaders are honest and accurate in their judgements about the school. They know what still needs to be done, plan prompt and effective action to tackle weaknesses and are working hard to improve the school further.
- Senior leaders have high expectations of staff and have worked effectively to improve teaching. They regularly watch lessons and look at pupils' work to check on the quality of teaching. They give teachers very clear guidance and training to help them improve their skills. Teachers work together well as a team, but do not always have sufficient opportunities to share and benefit from aspects of outstanding teaching.
- The school has introduced new procedures for checking on pupils' progress. Leaders now have a far more detailed and accurate picture of how well pupils are doing. However, the system is not yet being used consistently well by all teachers to identify where pupils need extra help, nor to

plan precisely for what they need to do next, particularly in mathematics.

- The curriculum provides a wealth of exciting and memorable experiences, which are linked well to classroom activities and stimulate pupils' imagination and extend their learning in all subjects. Music is part of daily life in school, with many pupils learning to play musical instruments and taking part in the highly successful school choir. Pupils reflect deeply on their own lives and those of others, including those of other faiths and cultures, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is strong.
- The majority of parents are highly supportive of the school's work. The school is keen to involve them as part of the community.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority is providing strong support for the school, which is helping to drive and sustain improvements.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure that equal opportunities are promoted well and that there is no discrimination of any kind within the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well. They receive detailed reports from the headteacher and have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. They are kept well-informed about the outcomes of performance management and decisions relating to pay progression. They understand what the school's performance data are showing and ask challenging questions which help drive improvement, especially if they think that pupils are not doing well enough. They ensure that decisions about the use of resources are in the best interests of the pupils, and that pupil premium funding improves outcomes for eligible pupils.

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	119249
Local authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	411932

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	617
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Millington
Headteacher	Graeme Dow
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2009
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