

# Sudell Primary School

Sudell Road, Darwen, Lancashire, BB3 3EB

**Inspection dates** 6–7 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Attainment in English and mathematics for the past two years has been well below average at the end of Year 6.
- Expectations of what pupils can learn are not always high enough. All pupils, especially the more able, are often set work that is too easy for them.
- The quality of teaching is not consistent across the school. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to work on their own or collaboratively.
- Pupils have not been provided with enough opportunities to apply their basic skills in writing and mathematics in other subjects.
- The checking of teachers' performance by senior leaders is too infrequent, so teachers do not benefit from regular support to improve. Governors do not hold senior leaders to account in this area of school improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- As a result of recent improvements in teaching and the additional support given to different groups of pupils, standards of attainment are now improving.
- The specialist teaching given to younger pupils in the reading programme is outstanding.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage due to teaching which is consistently good and at times outstanding.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium are now making much better progress as a result of the effective way the school is using this funding.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are well mannered and display positive attitudes to learning.
- Recent action taken by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, ably supported by governors, is beginning to improve achievement and the quality of teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons taught by eight teachers. A joint observation was undertaken with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' exercise books.
- Discussions were held with representatives of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, senior leaders, and other staff and pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the school's documentation for gaining an accurate view of its performance, safeguarding information, the school development plan, governing body minutes, behaviour records and displays around the school.
- Inspectors looked at ways in which the school checks the progress of pupils.
- There were insufficient responses on Parent View (the online questionnaire) to evaluate. The inspectors evaluated a questionnaire recently sent to parents by the school and checked 23 staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Desmond Stubbs, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average. In this school, the pupil premium applies to pupils eligible for free school meals (the pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children that are looked after).
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is at least good by making sure that:
  - teachers' expectations of what pupils can learn are always high enough
  - pupils have regular opportunities to work on their own and collaboratively.
- Improve standards in English and mathematics for all pupils by:
  - consistently providing all pupils with challenging work, especially the more-able pupils
  - providing regular opportunities to apply their basic skills in mathematics and writing across the curriculum.
- Improve the impact of school leaders by:
  - undertaking more frequent checks of teachers' performance in order to provide teachers with more information on how they can further improve their teaching
  - governors being more rigorous in their challenging of the school's work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- In the past two years, the attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 has been well below average, especially in English.
- In Key Stage 2, rates of progress vary from class to class. As a result, the proportions of pupils who make expected or better than expected progress from their varying starting points is below average.
- Evidence from lesson observations and the checking of exercise books, together with the information held by the school about pupils' attainment and progress, shows an improving picture in all subjects. However, there are still too few pupils who exceed nationally expected progress, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils are beginning to make rapid progress in reading. Pupils are enthusiastic about their reading and the school does much to encourage reading for pleasure.
- Children join the school with skills that are below those typically expected for their age. By the end of the Reception year, children have made good progress.
- The success of teaching pupils their letters and sounds is reflected in the results of the national phonics check in Year 1, which were above the national average in 2012.
- The improving picture of attainment continues throughout Key Stage 1, leading to a year-on-year increase in the standards attained by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is in line with that of their peers nationally as a result of well-managed support.
- The progress of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has previously been well below average, especially in English. This is now improving and these pupils are making better progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment is approximately half a year behind that of their peers who are not eligible for the pupil premium in English and one term behind in mathematics.
- The closing of the gap between pupils eligible for a free school meal, pupils with special educational needs and other pupils is a strong indication of the effective promotion of equality of opportunity.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it has not been consistently good over time and some weaknesses still remain. Occasionally, expectations of what pupils can achieve and the amount of work they can produce are not high enough.
- Pupils are not always set work at the right level for their ability and when this happens, pupils do not make enough progress. This is particularly the case for more-able pupils, who are often set work that is too easy.
- In some lessons, pupils do not make as much progress as they should because the teacher spends too much time explaining the work and what has to be done when it is clear that pupils understand and are ready to move on. Consequently, pupils have less time to practise their skills and not enough opportunities to think for themselves.
- In the Reception class, children settle quickly. Teaching is consistently good and at times outstanding. Lessons are well planned and provide a wide range of activities to develop all areas of learning. Children are excited about their learning; this was particularly evident in a lesson where the children had an opportunity to 'make African music'. They listened attentively and showed good levels of concentration.
- In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills and attitudes by learning with a partner or in a small group.

- Other adults give good support during group activities. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, when an adult worked with a group of more-able pupils on a more challenging task separate to the rest of the class, these pupils made good progress. At the beginning of lessons however, these adults are not always used effectively.
- Steps have been taken to give pupils more opportunities to practise their basic skills across all subjects. These changes are now beginning to have an impact on pupils' achievement but opportunities are not yet regular enough.
- Some younger pupils benefit from one-to-one reading lessons as part of a support programme. These pupils make rapid progress as a result of outstanding teaching and this is beginning to have an impact on reading generally.
- Marking is inconsistent across the school. In Year 6, pupils receive clear guidance on how their work can improve. In other classes, marking lacks clarity in how precisely the pupils can make their next step in learning.
- Pupils generally enjoy their lessons. They particularly enjoy 'challenging themselves in mathematics and learning new methods'. They know their targets in English but these are generally too easy and do not help them to make good progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The attitudes to learning of pupils throughout the school are very positive. Pupils are proud of their school.
- The behaviour of pupils in class and around the school is good. Pupils are polite and welcoming. One pupil commented that 'everyone is friendly'. On the playground, a range of equipment provides purposeful play opportunities with play leaders supporting younger children.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly at the beginning of lessons and clearly feel secure. They engage happily with adults and get on well with one another.
- Pupils are rightly proud of SABAR (Sudell Anti Bullying and Racism squad). This group effectively tackles issues about bullying and racism and has greatly improved behaviour.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and proud of the responsibilities they take on, such as head girl or boy, play leaders and learning friends.
- The behaviour records show that incidents are well managed. Senior leaders regularly check the impact of support that is put in place for pupils who find it difficult to behave. Pupils say that 'teachers sort out any problems'.
- Parents are positive about the behaviour of pupils.
- Pupils have a good understanding of e-safety and cyber bullying. They enjoy the many visitors who come into school and the lessons that help them deal with the potential dangers in everyday life.
- Attendance is slightly below average but this figure is affected by several cases of longer periods of absence due to illness. The school has a wide range of strategies that are used to encourage high attendance.

### **The leadership and management** require improvement

- Senior leaders do not check the performance of teachers frequently enough; as a result, the quality of teaching in English and mathematics has not been checked sufficiently each year to bring about rapid improvement since the last inspection.
- Teachers' performance is checked against how much progress their pupils make and how well they fulfil their duties. The outcomes of these checks are used to decide when teachers progress up the pay scale; however, guidance for teachers on how to improve their practice is less frequent and therefore not yet fully effective.
- The headteacher and her staff have created a very safe environment in which pupils are happy and secure. The attainment and progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils are carefully

checked. This information is now used more effectively by senior leaders to give support at the earliest opportunity and is one of the reasons why pupils' achievement is improving.

- All areas of the curriculum are covered and some links are made between subjects to make learning more relevant for pupils. The school realises that further work is needed to accelerate pupils' progress by the provision of regular opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical and writing skills in other subjects.
- Pupils enjoy many educational visits which provide them with first-hand experiences. The school offers a wide range of clubs after school, which enriches the curriculum.
- The school promotes the cultural diversity well. Pupils have opportunities to talk about their customs and backgrounds and the work of the SABAR squad in particular makes a significant impact on the school's social, moral, spiritual and cultural education.
- The school's work with parents is excellent. The school provides an impressive range of courses advising parents on how they can best support learning at home. The school's survey of parental views indicates that parents are very satisfied with the education and care provided for their children.
- Termly visits by a representative from the local authority provide good opportunities to evaluate the school's performance alongside the headteacher.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has an accurate view of how well the school is performing compared to other schools. However, governors do not challenge the school sufficiently about what is being done to raise standards of attainment and improve the quality of teaching. The school budget is very well managed and, in particular, the pupil premium funding is allocated well to ensure the pupils eligible are receiving appropriate support and making good progress. Governors do not yet fully understand how the performance of teachers must be linked to salary progression or how this should be used to tackle any underperformance. The governors have received a lot of training, much related to safeguarding issues.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119295
<b>Local authority</b>	Blackburn with Darwen
<b>Inspection number</b>	411801

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	180
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Margaret Atkin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Laura Pooles
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 703440
<b>Fax number</b>	01254 760772
<b>Email address</b>	sudell@blackburn.gov.uk



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