

Spindle Point County Primary School

Moss Lane, Kearsley, Bolton, BL4 8SE

Inspection dates 12–13 June 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

- The work of the headteacher, well supported by a strong staff team and governing body, has led to a number of recent improvements.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers promote learning well and demonstrate good subject knowledge. This is due to regular checks on the quality of teaching and effective staff training.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and this contributes strongly to the good learning in most lessons. Attendance is above average. The school helps its pupils to know how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children make an excellent start to school in the Nursery. They respond well to a good range of stimulating activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are confident and curious about the world around them
- Pupils are treated with respect and as valued individuals in an atmosphere of care and support. As a result they are considerate and take good care of each other. They are welcoming and courteous to visitors.
- Pupils enjoy a good variety of exciting additional activities throughout the school year, including visits, visitors and a residential stay for Year 6.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, teachers do not provide work at the right level for all groups of pupils in the class, particularly those of the highest abilities.
- Leaders and managers do not give clear, measurable indicators of success and precise timescales on improvement plans.
- Teachers' marking in some books is very good and really helps pupils to move forward in their learning. However, this good practice is not yet consistent across the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons delivered by seven teachers, including joint observations with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a few short visits to observe pupils' learning and to hear some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and managers, staff, members of the governing body, a local authority representative and groups of pupils.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including: the school's own information about pupils' progress; planning and monitoring of teaching; safeguarding information; and the minutes of governors' meetings.
- Inspectors took account of 24 responses to the online survey (Parent View), comments from three parents by letter and also the 21 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff.
- The school has been through a number of staffing changes since the previous inspection, some temporary due to staff on maternity leave.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club on site which is managed by the school and governing body.

Inspection team

Barbara Flitcroft, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Martin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is lower than the national average. (This 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 proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below that found in most schools. The proportion supported at school action is lower than in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who are learning English as an additional language, is below that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that more pupils make better than expected progress by:
 - extending the excitement, innovative planning ideas and inspirational teaching strategies, seen in the best lessons, throughout the school
 - providing work of differing levels to sufficiently challenge the whole range of learning needs of the pupils, particularly for the highest-ability pupils
 - encouraging pupils to present work to their best standard in all subjects
 - making sure that the best practice at marking and giving helpful feedback to pupils becomes common throughout the school and across the different subjects.
- Leaders and managers should include focused measures of success and precise timescales on improvement planning documents so that the success of actions taken can be determined.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Nursery class with levels of knowledge and understanding below those expected typically for their age. The school offers good indoor activities across the Early Years Foundation Stage, with exciting outdoor learning for Nursery children and making the best use that it can of the space available for Reception children. The children make good progress so that the gap between their levels and those typically found nationally has narrowed by the time they enter Year 1.
- The school's results in the 2012 Year 1 reading check were above average because of the good phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make) teaching which gets off to a fine start in Nursery. Standards at the end of Year 2 are consistently broadly average, which represents good progress from their low starting points.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2011 were not as high as previous years and dipped to well below national average in writing, caused by a small minority of pupils just missing their targets. The school has worked hard to make sure that standards were above average in 2012 and are likely to be so again in 2013. This is supported by lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Those pupils who are eligible for pupil premium also make good progress as a result of additional support carefully targeted by senior leaders. Consequently, the gap between levels of attainment is closing in English and mathematics. All groups of pupils make expected progress and a high proportion of these exceed expectations.
- Girls perform slightly better than boys. The school has recognised this and purchased new reading books, introduced writing opportunities across the whole curriculum and by promoting reading in order to improve boys' progress. A brand new library facility and an innovative approach to reading are helping to boost pupils' reading skills.
- Dedicated support staff help pupils with their learning and build successful relationships to develop the pupils' confidence in their own abilities.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is tracked rigorously as they move through school. This is useful in identifying any pupils who are falling behind so that they can be given some additional help.

The quality of teaching is good

- Overall, teaching is good with a few lessons outstanding. This leads to good progress across the school. Some pupils exceed expectations; consequently, a few pupils make outstanding progress.
- Good teaching enables pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to learn successfully during their time in school. Teachers plan lessons well, sharing with pupils what is to be learned and, in the best lessons, how they can judge successful learning for themselves and for their peers.
- In most lessons, learning moves along at a good pace but, in a small minority of lessons, the pace of learning slows after a good start. This is sometimes due to pupils chatting and becoming distracted.
- Good use is made of resources, including information and communication technology, to motivate pupils and enhance their learning. Marking of pupils' work is up to date and, in the best cases, next steps in learning are indicated by the teacher with a response from the pupils; however, this practice is not yet consistent.
- Good progress is shown in the pupils' books for all ability groups, but different activities to challenge all levels of learners are not used widely enough. The work expected of higher-ability pupils is sometimes not sufficiently challenging for them to achieve their best.

- Work in books and displays around the school show that pupils are given many opportunities to read and write for an audience, and also in many areas of the curriculum. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark for promoting the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum. As one boy said, 'I love literacy. I'm not the best but I learn lots of new things.'
- In one good literacy lesson, pupils followed instructions on how to make a sandwich. The recipes for these had been written in a previous lesson by other pupils in their class. At the end of the lesson, they evaluated each other's work with two praise comments and one piece of advice for improvement. Later in the day, they were given the chance to eat their delicious concoctions.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well in partnership to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The quality of support is good and pupils are given opportunities to work independently. Importantly, pupils of all abilities have equal opportunities to respond to questions in class or group discussions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school is a calm, friendly and well-ordered place in which to learn and work. There is a good sense of teamwork amongst the staff.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically good, both in the classroom, where most children listen carefully and try their best with their work, and around the school. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in lessons, good manners and courtesy to adults in school. This contributes to the good progress seen in lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed well by teachers and support staff. In a few lessons, a little low-level disruption is sometimes seen, especially when the pace of learning slows down.
- Pupils from different ages work well together and care for each other. Some older pupils are play leaders – the fun bunch – and encourage younger pupils to play well together. Older pupils provide good role models.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school, and this is supported by the views of most parents. Pupils say there is no significant bullying and they are confident that, if any did occur, they could trust the staff to deal well with it. Pupils are knowledgeable about different types of bullying, especially regarding new technology. Pupils are confident to share their worries with staff because they trust them.
- The school makes sure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe and prepares them well for the future. Visitors such as the police, lifeguards and road safety officers come to school to help the pupils to learn about road, railway and water safety.
- Pupils respond well to the strong spiritual, moral, and social guidance they receive. They develop positive attitudes to life and learning through the teaching of common values and expectations through short but powerful assemblies and personal and social education. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and embrace new experiences enthusiastically.
- Strong cultural development opportunities are in place. These are enhanced by links with another local primary school and with a school in China. The school holds the International School Award. Year 5 pupils were enthusiastic about their day of Indian dance workshops.
- The school council help to fund-raise and organise charity events. They suggest ways of improving school at their meetings, such as by getting a canopy on the Key Stage 2 play area. They speak enthusiastically about the walking bus.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, with the strong support of staff and the governing body, provides good leadership and has steered the school successfully despite several staff changes. She used these changes as opportunities to develop the talents of other staff who were eager to rise to the challenge of additional responsibilities.

- The school's accurate checks on how well it is doing have identified the appropriate key areas for school development. Leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development very well. In school's documents for improvement planning, there is a lack of timescale and measurable outcomes on some actions. This makes success difficult to evaluate.
- Teaching is carefully monitored by senior staff and subject leaders. Useful feedback focuses on specific improvements to raise the quality of teaching.
- Staff are well motivated and demonstrate a shared sense of responsibility and commitment to improving the school further. They are set challenging targets, based on the quality of their teaching and the progress pupils make in their classes, and these are reviewed annually.
- Pupils have good access to books in classrooms and in the attractive school library. They are enthusiastic readers who take every opportunity to read with a variety of adults around school.
- The school provides a rich and imaginative curriculum experience for all its pupils, with a good range of after-school clubs including, dance, drama, fencing, singing, art, origami and some sports clubs. Pupils value their visits to interesting places such as Jodrell Bank, Clifton Marina and the mining museum.
- Pupils enjoy meeting at the breakfast club and look forward to their healthy afternoon snacks at the after-school club. This is effectively managed by the school and governing body.
- The school has a strong ethos of care, inclusion and equality. It carefully identifies pupils' needs and offers support for these pupils to learn alongside their peers. The headteacher, who has been the acting coordinator for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, has obtained the necessary assessments, identification and support for these pupils.
- Safeguarding systems are robust and meet all requirements. These are reviewed regularly by senior leaders and the governing body.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides good support and challenge for leaders and managers to ensure that the school continues to move forward. It checks that safeguarding is secure and has overseen arrangements for the use of pupil-premium funding. It is closely involved in the evaluation of teachers' performance and the impact on their pay. It has a good understanding of the school's standards and how these compare to other schools locally and nationally. Governors have a sharp awareness of how effectively the school spends its budget. The local authority provides appropriate and effective support and challenge to this good school.

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	105196
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	412171

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	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Derek Burrows
Headteacher	Susan Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	22 June 2010
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