

# Lancaster Ridge Primary School

Keswick Road, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA1 3LE

**Inspection dates** 19–20 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school from their starting points. They do not make enough progress in their mathematical skills and boys do not achieve well enough in reading and writing.
- More-able pupils do not always reach the standards of which they are capable because the work is not always challenging enough.
- Teaching is not consistently good in all classes and subjects. Teachers do not always plan activities which are at exactly the right level to help all pupils make good enough progress in lessons.
- Marking does not always show pupils exactly how to improve their work and they do not have enough opportunities to act on teachers' advice.
- Teachers do not have enough opportunities to share and observe good and outstanding practice.
- Actions taken by senior leaders have not yet led to enough improvement in teaching to make it consistently good, nor for all pupils to make sufficiently rapid progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and the school makes every effort to help pupils whose circumstances make it more difficult for them to learn.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils get on well together and they say that they feel safe in school.
- The curriculum provides a range of exciting and memorable experiences for pupils that widen their understanding of the world.
- Pupils in the specialist educational resource facility are fully integrated into the school. They are well-supported and make good progress.
- Children in the Reception class get off to a good start and make good progress.
- Leaders at all levels know the school well and understand that standards need to improve. They have taken actions which have led to accelerated progress in writing this year. They are determined to build on the improvements in teaching secured so far.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school and has helped to drive improvements since the previous inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 18 lessons, including one joint observation with the headteacher, and lessons in small support groups and the specialist educational resource facility. Inspectors listened to pupils reading and observed the teaching of early reading skills. They also looked at examples of pupils' work to obtain a view of teaching and progress over time.
- Discussions took place with pupils, parents, the Chair of the Governing Body and five other governors, a representative from the local authority, senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors took account of the school's analysis of the most recent parental surveys carried out by the school, two letters from parents, and 21 staff questionnaires. There were no published responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' progress across the school, the school's view of its own 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

Marilyn Massey

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- Just under half the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which is well above 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 who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- There is a specialist educational resource facility on site, providing education for up to 10 pupils with a statement of special educational needs for speech, language and communication difficulties. There are currently three pupils on roll, who are fully integrated into the school. The facility is expected to close in April 2014.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school shares its site with Firbank Children's Centre, which is managed by the local authority, and Rising Stars Nursery, which is managed by an external provider. These are subject to separate inspections and the reports are available on the Ofsted website.

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

- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching, so that it is all good or better, in order for all pupils to make good progress in all subjects and reach the standards of which they are capable, by:
  - giving all pupils activities that are at just the right level for them so that they make as much progress as possible in lessons
  - always giving more-able pupils the right amount of challenge
  - ensuring that teachers' marking always gives pupils clear guidance on precisely what they need to do to improve their work, and that they always have the chance to act on this.
- Accelerate the progress of all groups of pupils in mathematics, and of boys in reading and writing, by:
  - ensuring that basic number skills and mathematical language are taught systematically
  - giving pupils more practical opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to problem solving and investigations in real-life contexts across the curriculum
  - giving boys texts that fire their imagination and which they can use as models for their writing
  - ensuring that boys have more opportunities to rehearse orally what they want to write before they start
  - giving boys more opportunities in reading and writing activities across the curriculum to develop their vocabulary and sentence structure.
- Strengthen the leadership and management of teaching and learning, by:
  - giving teachers more opportunities to share and observe good and outstanding practice
  - ensuring teachers' planning in mathematics makes it clear at which level pupils are working and that learning activities are always closely matched to these.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress from their individual starting points. While there have been improvements overall in the rate of progress, and more pupils are making expected progress, progress is not yet accelerating strongly enough to make up for previous underachievement. Too few pupils reach levels higher than those expected for their age at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 because more-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication and language. Children make good progress and reach levels close to those expected for their age by the end of the Reception class.
- Progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 varies between classes and subjects. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards that are slightly below average.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in mathematics. Their basic number skills and understanding of mathematical vocabulary are not secure. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to solving problems. Consequently, these skills are under-developed.
- While progress in writing overall is accelerating strongly, boys are not doing well enough in either reading or writing. The gaps between the attainment of boys and girls in reading and writing are wider than those found nationally, and are not closing quickly enough.
- Early reading skills are taught well and, this year, a greater proportion of pupils in Year 1 are expected to reach the required standard in a national screening check of how well pupils use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to read words. Older pupils enjoy reading and understand its importance as a life skill, including when using the internet to find things out.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to provide additional teaching and support, which ensures that eligible pupils make better progress than other pupils in the school from their individual starting points. In 2012, the attainment of eligible pupils in English and mathematics was between two and three terms behind that of other pupils, but current data shows that the gaps have narrowed rapidly and they are now less than two terms behind other pupils in the school. This demonstrates the school's successful promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress, and some make exceptional progress from their starting points, because of the well-planned support they receive.
- Pupils in the specialist educational resource facility make good progress because of the intensive support that they receive, both within the facility and in their mainstream classes. They are well-prepared for their transition back to mainstream schools.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- In the teaching that requires improvement, teachers do not plan tasks for pupils that are at exactly the right level for them. Work is sometimes too hard for some pupils and too easy for others, particularly those who are more-able. As a result, some pupils do not do as well as they should.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and praise their efforts. However, teachers' comments do not consistently give pupils clear advice on what to do next to improve their work. Pupils do not always have specific opportunities afterwards to make their work better.
- The teaching of writing across the school has improved. Teachers use themes across the curriculum to provide opportunities for pupils to develop specific writing skills. However, boys still do not find reading and writing tasks sufficiently interesting and exciting. They often find it hard to get started on their writing because they do not have enough opportunity to rehearse orally what they are going to write before they begin. Opportunities are missed to develop their

vocabulary and sentence structure.

- Good relationships are a strong feature of all lessons. Teachers praise and encourage pupils and value their contributions and opinions. During lessons, teachers refer to the classroom 'working walls' to help pupils learn. They give pupils practical equipment when they know this will help them, such as coins and plastic fruit to help Year 1 pupils do shopping 'sums'.
- In many lessons, teachers ask searching questions to check pupils' understanding and help them to develop their thinking. Year 6 pupils explained the different methods they were using to investigate the area and perimeter of different compound shapes.
- Highly-skilled teaching assistants provide a range of well-planned support for pupils who need extra help, both within lessons and in small support groups. They understand the pupils' needs and contribute well to the learning and progress of pupils.
- Teaching in the specialist educational resource facility is good. Tasks are matched very precisely to pupils' individual needs. Teachers and teaching assistants across the school have received specific training, which means that the pupils are well supported in their mainstream classes. This contributes to their good progress.

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

- Pupils are polite and friendly. They care about each other and older pupils are keen to be 'buddies' and look after the youngest children. Pupils cooperate well both in lessons and in their play.
- Most pupils have good attitudes to their learning and they want to do well. Most behaviour in lessons is good, but occasionally pupils become restless and there is some minor misbehaviour when the work planned for them is not at exactly the right level.
- Pupils feel safe and very well cared for in school. They know that they can always talk to an adult if they are worried about anything. They say the teachers are 'always there for them'. They appreciate the extra help they get in small support and nurture groups.
- Pupils feel that behaviour is mostly good, with very few incidents of bullying or racism. These are always dealt with quickly and effectively, and pupils say that 'everyone is very forgiving'. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, and parents wholeheartedly agree that the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils are happy at school. Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. The learning mentor and family support worker have had a significant impact on punctuality and attendance through their involvement with, and support for, families who are experiencing difficulties. They work closely with class teachers to provide a range of appropriate support, such as anger management and bereavement counselling, for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because, although pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are improving, there is still more to do to ensure they are consistently good or better across the school. The headteacher, other senior leaders and the governing body recognise that teaching needs to be better in order to accelerate pupils' progress more rapidly and to raise standards. They have successfully shared their view of the school's future with all staff, who are now equally committed to improving standards and raising the aspirations of all pupils.
- Leaders are accurate and honest in their judgements about the school. They undertake a range of actions to check how well the school is doing and use the information well to plan appropriate actions for improvement. They regularly check the quality of teaching and learning and provide specific training and support for all staff, which has led to some improvements in teaching. However, teachers do not have enough opportunities to share and observe good and

outstanding teaching, including the best practice in other schools.

- Senior leaders have introduced systems to aid teachers' planning in writing which are closely linked to pupils' levels of attainment. This has contributed to the accelerated progress in writing across the school. However, they do not yet ensure that all teachers' planning in mathematics is as well linked to pupils' levels of attainment and that activities are always exactly right for all pupils.
- Leaders systematically track the progress of pupils through regular pupils' progress meetings. They plan carefully for individual needs and ensure that effective support is provided at an early stage for those who are at risk of falling behind in their learning.
- Leadership and management of the specialist educational resource facility are good. Pupils' needs are assessed carefully at all stages and specialised teaching and support contribute to their good progress, and to their successful transition back into mainstream provision. The teacher in the facility also ensures that expertise and resources are shared across the school, so that all disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils appreciate the opportunity in philosophy lessons to reflect on moral issues and feelings. The curriculum provides a good focus on enriching pupils' experiences of the wider world, for example, through the recent Year 6 trip to London.
- Parents are supportive of the school's work. Parents of pupils in the specialist educational resource facility speak especially highly about how well their children have done. Parents appreciate being involved in their children's learning through the 'brain builder' homework activities and many regularly attend weekly coffee mornings in the learning mentor's room.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority has provided strong and well-focused support for this school, which has contributed to ongoing improvements in achievement and teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body know and support the school well and work diligently to help drive school improvements. They have a good understanding of the school's performance data and ask challenging questions about why not all pupils are doing as well as they should. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, have taken decisive action to eliminate weak teaching and are kept well-informed about the outcomes of performance management and decisions relating to pay progression. The governing body ensures that decisions about the use of pupil premium funding improve 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119131
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401814

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>	184
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Phil Hudd
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sue Fitt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01524 67880
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	head@ridge.lancs.sch.uk



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