

# Great Harwood St John's Church of England Primary School

St John's Street, Great Harwood, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB6 7ES

**Inspection dates** 9–10 July 2013

|                                |                      |              |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| 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.

- Achievement is good. From their low starting points pupils make good progress and attainment is in line and rising in Year 6. Reading is above average.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well. They make good progress.
- Effective teaching and some outstanding teaching was seen. Teachers make lessons enjoyable. Pupils grow in confidence and this raises their aspirations for the future.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils value the care shown to them by staff and feel safe in school. They are polite and friendly.
- The curriculum is rich and includes many exciting activities that widen pupils' understanding of the wider world as well as providing happy memories of school.
- Leaders, staff and governors have worked as a determined team to improve the school since the previous inspection. Actions have been rigorously put in place and attainment, teaching and behaviour have all improved.
- Governors have greatly extended their role. They keep a close eye on the impact of changes and ensure the school continues to move forward.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are inconsistencies in teaching. Lessons do not always go at a brisk pace and, especially in Key Stage 1, tasks do not consistently achieve the best from pupils. Not all pupils respond to teachers' comments after their work has been marked.
- Attainment in writing and mathematics in Year 2 has dipped this year to below average.
- The school's plans for future developments do not always make a direct link between actions and their impact on pupils' progress and attainment.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons and parts of lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, two groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The Chair of the Governing Body was unable to meet the inspectors but sent a message expressing his views about the school.
- Pupils from different classes read to the inspectors.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books with a focus on writing and mathematics in Years 2 and 6.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents, including the school's plan for future improvements, information about pupils' progress and safeguarding.
- There was insufficient response to gain information from parents through the online questionnaire (Parent View). A few parents shared their opinions of the school with inspectors at the start of the day. Inspectors took note of a recent parental survey carried out by the school.
- Inspectors analysed eight returns by staff to the inspection questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Jennifer Platt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ian Wellens

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. A few of these enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with little spoken English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided for children in local authority care, those from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Several staff are new since the previous inspection. This is the headteacher's first year in post. During the inspection a temporary teacher was in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school has achieved the local authority's excellence award for best practice in science, the Global Teaching award and Race Equality mark.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and increase the rate of pupils' progress to outstanding by:
  - improving pupils' handwriting, grammar and punctuation skills in Key Stage 1
  - ensuring tasks are always hard enough for pupils and, especially in Year 2, checking that the more-able pupils always make enough progress in mathematics
  - keeping up the pace of learning and sustaining pupils' interest throughout the lesson, in all lessons
  - insisting that pupils respond to teachers' marking comments so that they learn from their errors.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that priorities in the school's development plan are precise and there is a direct link between actions and their impact on attainment.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage are obvious to visitors. The room is organised well with a focus on learning through practical activities both indoors and outside. Bilingual support is on hand for those starting with little spoken English. From a starting point that is lower than expected for their age children make good progress.
- Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is good. This rising pattern was noted at the previous inspection and the school has built well on this success. In 2012 in Key Stage 2 100% of pupils made the expected progress in English and 90% in mathematics.
- Overall attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen year on year and is now in line with what is expected for this age. Unvalidated results of the national tests this year show these standards rising. The increase in the proportion reaching the higher Level 5 indicates a rise in attainment in reading to above average. Pupils are fluent readers and use their skills successfully for research. A small number reached the very high Level 6 in mathematics and are very competent mathematicians. The school has a strong tradition for success in science, with evidence of high-quality work on display and many pupils working at above the level expected for their age.
- A similar rise in overall attainment has been emerging in Key Stage 1 but this has dipped this year with attainment in writing and mathematics being below average. This group started school with much lower than expected attainment and staffing disturbances have hampered the development of their basic skills. Although many make the progress expected of them, few do better than this. In writing pupils' handwriting is often difficult to decipher and they make errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. In mathematics some pupils lack the confidence to apply their skills and few reach the higher levels.
- Reading is improving because the teaching of letters and sounds is effective. Results of the Year 1 national reading assessment in 2012 were above the national average and are higher this year. Many in Year 2 use these skills well to tackle new words.
- Support for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is good. This group includes those known to be eligible for free school meals. Attention is given to social needs, ensuring these pupils take advantage of school visits and have help when it is needed. As a result, they make good progress and attainment is similar to that of other pupils in the school. Attainment in English and mathematics is moving to above the average expected for this group, with a high proportion reaching Level 5 in reading and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who are from minority ethnic groups make good progress. Staff training to support pupils who are new to speaking English plus an extension of bilingual support are proving beneficial. The difference in attainment between these pupils and others in the school last year is not evident this year. The school promotes equality of opportunity most successfully.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good, with examples of excellence in Key Stage 2, which enables pupils to make good progress.
- Although, at the time of the inspection, the teacher in the Early Years Foundation Stage was absent, it was evident from the organisation of the classroom, children's work and data on their progress that teaching is good. Activities are practical and a central theme links imaginatively different skills. 'Cinderella' was acted outside, with staff playing a lead role, and indoors children planned their story using pictures on a long sheet of paper. As a result, they learned effectively how stories are structured and extended their vocabulary through play.
- Most of the lessons in the rest of the school include positive features. Pupils are encouraged to talk through their ideas and this is especially helpful for those who are developing their skills in speaking English. Teaching assistants lead successfully small groups and correct

misunderstandings while pupils learn.

- In the excellent lessons teachers' enthusiasm and high aspirations for the pupils leads to brisk pace and challenging activities. Questions are thought provoking and pupils' interest sustained throughout the lesson.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge overall. This is especially the case in mathematics and was seen in Year 6 when ratio and proportion were made easy by the teacher's simple example that clarified misunderstanding and led to success in pupils' calculations.
- Most lessons include a variety of activities. The interactive whiteboards are used well to extend pupils' knowledge, as, for example, when pupils empathised with Anne Frank as part of a history lesson. Older pupils use information and communication technology well for research and this extends their skills to work independently.
- Reading is taught effectively starting with the successful teaching of letters and sounds. Older pupils have challenging texts and are well versed in a range of authors. Daily 10-minute slots for numeracy and literacy are closing gaps in basic skills. As yet, this success is less evident in writing in Key Stage 1 and neat handwriting and accuracy in grammatical skills are not fully promoted.
- When teaching is less effective the work set is not at the correct level to help pupils learn whatever their ability. This is especially the case for the more-able pupils in mathematics in Key Stage 1. Sometimes the pace slows and pupils lose interest as they are ready to move to a different activity.
- Teachers mark work thoroughly and often make it clear to pupils how to improve. They do not always insist that pupils take on board their advice.
- Homework has improved since the previous inspection, including using the internet to extend pupils' skills.

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

- Pupils feel valued and talk freely about their confidence in the staff. They respond well to the focus on raising their aspirations. As a result, behaviour is good and in most lessons pupils strive to do their best. Only when pupils find work too difficult or uninspiring do they get restless and some younger pupils start to misbehave. For the most part this is managed well, especially with prompt intervention from support staff.
- Pupils heed the messages imparted by staff and visitors on keeping themselves safe. They are well versed about dangers and feel well prepared to deal with them.
- Displays show the good attention given to dealing with bullying. Pupils recognise different types of bullying including cyber-bullying. Although pupils identify some name-calling, they consider there is little bullying and no racist behaviour. They are well informed about how their school promotes race equality.
- Pupils are polite and generous with their praise for the school. They willingly carry out responsibilities like organising activities for others and being members of the Pupils' Parliament.
- Attendance is average despite an outbreak of chicken pox. Awards for class attendance are valued, with Year 6 doing very well.
- Pupils identified little they would improve. They suggested the following to sum up their school: 'Staff encourage us to be healthy, to read widely and think about our careers by learning in a wide range of subjects.'

**The leadership and management are good**

- Leaders and governors have responded very positively to the previous inspection. There has been good improvement since that time and a great determination to ensure past mistakes do not reoccur. The new headteacher and assistant headteacher have moved briskly to put in effective changes and more are in the pipeline, ensuring the school is well placed to move forward.
- Pupils' progress is closely monitored and although the tracking system is duplicating information, it is used well to identify where help is most needed. Half-termly staff meetings analyse progress and staff are held to account for any lack of progress. As a result, attainment as pupils leave school is rising.
- Teaching is thoroughly monitored and action taken to support staff if teaching fails to meet the good standard expected by the headteacher. Training links closely to need, as in the teaching of letters and sounds. The response to monitoring is not always consistent, leading to some weaker aspects not being resolved.
- Thorough procedures to evaluate the school's performance lead to the correct priorities. Actions are often more effective than those identified in the school's development plan. This plan lacks precision and does not make a clear link between actions and increasing pupils' progress.
- The curriculum focuses on extending pupils' horizons, not only their wider view of the world but also in their future expectations. Visitors inspire them, showing how they have become successful authors and athletes. Visits provide unforgettable experiences as well as extending knowledge. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well promoted. Cultural development was a weakness in the previous inspection and is now entrenched within the school's ethos. Penpals across the world are just one example of success.
- The local authority has supported the school effectively on its journey to success.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - In his message to inspectors the Chair of the Governing Body describes governors as 'able to interrogate, understand and challenge at all levels'. These strengths were noted during the inspection. Governors use data to check on pupils' progress. They challenge any dips and ask for additional data to compare progress with that of other schools. Links with subjects ensure governors visit classes and review pupils' work. Consequently, they know where teaching is strong and the actions needed to resolve weaknesses. Governors know that staff targets are based on pupils' progress and their performance of management roles. They check that salary rewards link to achieving these targets. Close monitoring of spending includes checking that pupil premium funding benefits eligible pupils. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties, particularly ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are met.

## 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> | 119421     |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Lancashire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 400110     |

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>                     | Voluntary aided                         |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 5–11                                    |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                   |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 129                                     |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                      |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Dion Etheridge                          |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Tracey Parker                           |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 21 June 2011                            |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01254 885926                            |
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