

Bleasdale Church of England Primary School

Bleasdale, Preston, Lancashire, PR3 1UY

Inspection dates

12 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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' achievement requires improvement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make expected progress but too few make good progress. They reach standards, overall that are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' writing skills are weaker than in reading and mathematics. There is insufficient focus on improving pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar across the school.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement. There is not enough teaching that is consistently good or better to closely match the abilities and interests of individual pupils, especially in Key Stage 2.
- The use of targets to improve pupils' standards is too vague to precisely focus teaching on National Curriculum levels of attainment and what is required to speed up pupils' progress.
- Leadership and management require improvement. School targets are not challenging enough for pupils to achieve well.
- Systems to streamline the leadership of the two schools sometimes fall short when teaching time in Key Stage 2 is occasionally interrupted.
- Governors do not sufficiently challenge the school's performance and the achievement of individual pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' achievement, especially in Key Stage 1 and in linking sounds and letters, is improving and attainment is rising.
- Some teaching is good, especially in Key Stage 1 and in physical education, thanks to specialist coaching.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. They are very welcoming and polite. There is a very positive atmosphere in school and parents and pupils agree.
- Governors are increasingly challenging and are taking part in tailored training to increase their knowledge about achievement in order to improve the school's performance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited parts of seven lessons.
- An inspector listened to pupils reading from Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, including the special educational needs leader and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, a member of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to take into account. Inspectors took account of the school's questionnaire completed by parents and conversations with parents in the 'Little Learners' group and with parents who were collecting their children from school. The questionnaires completed by six staff were also taken into account.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and reviewed various documents including the school's view of its effectiveness, tracking of pupils' progress, pupils' books and records of governing body meetings and the performance management of staff. Documents relating to behaviour, safety and safeguarding were also considered.

Inspection team

Marie Cordey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elaine Maloney

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The school has provision for Reception age children. At the time of the inspection, there were no Early Years Foundation Stage children on roll.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below 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.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher leads and manages two schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better in order to improve standards and ensure that pupils make at least good progress, especially in Key Stage 2, by:
 - focusing more on the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - challenging pupils to reach their potential using precise targets matched to National Curriculum levels of attainment
 - closely matching work to the individual abilities and interests of pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
 - setting challenging targets aimed at pupils making at least good progress
 - streamlining management systems so that teaching time in Key Stage 2 is not interrupted
 - further improve governors' knowledge about pupils' achievement, including the effective use of pupil premium funding, and their challenge of the school's performance so that they are fully able to hold the school to account.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement from their individual starting points requires improvement. Pupils make expected progress across Key Stages 1 and 2. Progress accelerates in Key Stage 1 because the quality of teaching is mostly good but slows in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' standards vary from year to year linked to the differences in cohorts each year. Overall standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with the average. Pupils' starting points in Year 1 vary but are typically average. This reflects expected progress overall.
- Very small numbers and different starting points in each year group contribute to differences in achievement each year. Typically, for example, there have been only two pupils in Year 6 for the last two years. Nevertheless, pupils do not achieve well overall. Initiatives are being taken by leaders and governors to improve achievement and to tackle weaknesses in teaching. These have begun to take effect, especially in Key Stage 1, where pupils' progress is now good.
- Standards in mathematics are typically above average in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Teaching in mathematics has improved because teachers' knowledge and understanding of teaching mathematics is more secure. Weaknesses in pupils' writing remain, especially in spelling, punctuation and grammar. There is not a consistently rigorous focus to improve pupils' skills. Pupils' ability to link letters and sounds has improved in Year 1 because of having a higher priority and some good teaching.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs requires improvement. Individual attention and care for pupils with more complex special educational needs speeds up their progress so that they make expected gains in their learning. Leaders identify what is needed to improve outcomes for individual pupils who are supported in class and on a one-to-one basis by skilful support staff. There is some variability in support when staff are not as knowledgeable or skilled.
- More-able pupils make expected progress in line with the achievement of other pupils. Some lack of challenge in lessons prevents them from making better than expected progress.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium including those known to be eligible for free school meals make expected progress and their rates of progress are in line with other pupils in the school. There are no significant gaps in their standards and those of other pupils in the school.
- Pupils make good progress when teaching quality is good. In a Year 1 and 2 mixed-age class, for example, pupils relished the opportunity to match their well-constructed rhyming sentences to characters from a software programme. Information and communication technology (ICT) was used well to improve the presentation of pupils' work and to inspire their imagination.
- The school has used the Primary School Sports funding to support pupils' achievement in physical education well. Pupils enthuse about sport and both enjoy and learn well in their good physical education lessons taught by a specialist sports coach. They learn about how to live healthy lifestyles and attain standards in line with national expectation in physical education.
- Teachers' knowledge of National Curriculum levels and sub-levels is inconsistent and this is reflected in individual pupils' targets which are sometimes vague and repetitive. Consequently, not all teachers set challenging targets to encourage them to make good progress. When, targets are too vague pupils are not sure exactly what is required from them.
- Although there were no children in the Early Years Foundation Stage at the time of the inspection, children's books from last year and the school's tracking records indicate improving progress, particularly in linking letters and sounds. The outdoor area is extremely attractive.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although there are examples of good teaching, there is still some that is not good enough to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in the Key Stage 2 mixed-age class. Consequently, pupils make expected rather than good progress overall.

- There is not enough work that is closely matched enough to individual pupils' abilities and interests. This is marked in the Key Stage 2 class where pupils vary in age from Year 3 to Year 6. This is compounded by a previous lack of classroom support staff and by interruptions to occasional teaching. Although there is a pleasant atmosphere in lessons across the school, the pace of learning is sometimes slow and lacks a sense of urgency.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and often in some detail. Teachers work very hard but opportunities are missed to focus specifically on what is required for individuals to improve their work. This is because targets are too general and pupils' work is not always checked to see if they have acted on teachers' advice.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are thoughtfully supported in their learning by their class teacher and by support assistants. A lack of consistency in matching support very specifically to individual pupil's needs prevents pupils progressing further to make good progress.
- The headteacher and the governing body have accurately identified strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and begun to improve its quality. Increasing support from the local authority, through the school's adviser, and professional training and support are beginning to make a difference, for example, in improving the quality of teaching. The headteacher and the governing body are planning systematic changes to ensure continuity in teaching of Key Stage 2 and have already instituted classroom support.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are keen to come to school and their attendance is high. They are proud to celebrate their school and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Despite the size of the school, collaboration with other schools enables them to participate in sporting events and they take part in many community and national trips. They are proud of the many examples of their work on display around school. The effective use of additional funding in sport has further contributed to pupils' knowledge and enthusiasm for us all to lead healthy lifestyles.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are helpful to each other and to adults. They want to learn and gain knowledge. Occasionally, they become inattentive when not enough is expected from them.
- Pupils say they feel safe and are happy in school. The school questionnaire and conversations with parents indicate that parents agree. Pupils are aware of most forms of bullying as well as what to do about it. They are less knowledgeable about 'cyber' bullying and the school is acting to address this.
- Assemblies are much enjoyed by pupils who appreciate learning about different groups of people as well as about spirituality. Pupils are reflective and thoughtful young people. This reflects their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and the governing body have a largely accurate understanding of their school. They know that teaching and pupils' achievement require improvement and their actions have begun to accelerate pupils' progress in Key Stage 1. Staff are largely supportive and positive about leadership and management but some would appreciate more clarity and direction.
- Targets for pupils are not sufficiently precise or challenging. The headteacher and governors are now involved in setting more challenging targets and providing clear systems to track pupils' progress.
- Performance management arrangements have become more clearly linked to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Targets have been set by the headteacher and the governing body to improve the school's performance and to increase accountability.

- The curriculum is broad and detailed enough to support pupils to make expected progress and for all to have an equality of opportunity to learn and develop. Nevertheless, it is not sufficiently closely matched to each individual's abilities to make progress good. There are missed opportunities to further develop pupils' writing and their skills in ICT. The curriculum has a good impact on pupils' behaviour and their enjoyment of learning.
- Pupils' enjoyment of activities after school and of educational visits is well documented in photographs around school and in journals.
- The local authority, through the school's adviser has identified areas for improvement and is providing further support to help improve pupils' outcomes.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the school requires improvement. Governors appreciate that there has been some lack of challenge in the past and that there are some gaps in their knowledge of interpreting data relating to pupils' achievement. They are taking appropriate steps to remedy this shortcoming and so an external review is not recommended by the inspectors. They are beginning to strengthen their scrutiny but are still not holding the school to account sufficiently robustly. Statutory requirements regarding the safeguarding of pupils are met by the governing body who take part in regular training to update their knowledge. The allocation of the pupil premium is not thoroughly understood by governors. It has been used helpfully to appoint support staff but is not specifically targeted to ensure that pupils in receipt of this funding achieve well. Finances are managed appropriately otherwise. Their participation in school life, such as in assemblies, is welcomed by staff and pupils. The 'Little Learners' parent and child group run by the governing body is popular and well-regarded. Governors are proud of their role in school life and eager to be involved.

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	119520
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	426261

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	16
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maxine Pratt
Headteacher	Ian Cookson
Date of previous school inspection	11 September 2008
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