

The Roebuck School

Inkerman Street, Ashton, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 2BN

Inspection dates 12–13 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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

- Between Years 1 and 6, pupils' progress from their starting points is variable and is not always good. Standards by the end of Year 6 are below average.
- Teaching requires improvement as it is not yet of a consistently good standard.
- When planning lessons, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged consistently.
- Teachers do not always ensure that lessons have enough sense of urgency. The pace is not fast enough so that pupils learn quickly.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their mathematical skills through solving problems as part of work in subjects other than mathematics.
- Although pupils have many opportunities to write in different styles, they do not learn quickly enough how to write at length.
- The actions put in place by leaders, aimed at improving the school's performances have not been swift enough to ensure teaching and pupils' progress are consistently good.
- Recent changes to the curriculum are not yet embedded and leaders do not yet rigorously check the impact on improving pupils' achievement.
- Teachers are not given enough opportunities to share and see good or outstanding teaching to help them improve.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's performance and their work is improving the quality of teaching and learning, especially in reading.
- Children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result they make good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they behave well in lessons, at break and lunchtime and around school.
- Pupils feel safe. After-school clubs and visits locally and further afield enrich their learning and play a key role in their enjoyment of school.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. This creates a good working atmosphere during lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 teachers and visited 20 lessons, which included a joint lesson observation with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, members of the leadership team, English and mathematics subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinators, pupils, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and parents.
- The inspectors observed pupils' work and listened to pupils read
- A range of the school's documentation was examined, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, documents relating to monitoring and evaluation, systems for tracking children's progress, documents regarding safeguarding and key policies.
- Inspectors took account of responses of the school's most recent questionnaire for parents and 27 responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors analysed 32 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Sue Sharkey, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Faheem Chrishti	Additional Inspector
Anthony Buckley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Roebuck School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for children in local authority care, for children from armed-service families, and for children known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school has an above-average proportion of pupils who enter and leave the school at other than the usual times.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection there have been several changes in staff with seven new teachers joining the school in September 2013.
- There is a breakfast club on site which is not managed by the governing body. This provision is subject to separate inspection and a separate report is available on the Ofsted website.
- The school has achieved the Activemark award and FA Charter Standard in football.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is at least good in order to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations are high enough so that pupils of all abilities are consistently challenged
 - improving pupils' ability to progressively write at length in different areas of the curriculum
 - ensuring teachers adopt a greater sense of urgency during lessons so that pupils can learn at a faster pace
 - ensuring that pupils are given more opportunities to develop their mathematical skills through real life problem-solving activities in subjects other than mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that actions taken to improve teaching and achievement are put in place rapidly in order to accelerate the quality of teaching and pupils' progress
 - ensuring recent changes to the curriculum are embedded and its impact monitored rigorously
 - making sure that teachers share and observe good and outstanding teaching regularly so that teachers are helped to improve their skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement. All groups of pupils do not make consistently good progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 because the quality of teaching is not consistently good. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below average in English and mathematics. The high proportion of pupils who enter and leave at times other than in the Early Years Foundation Stage sometimes impacts on the overall standards reached.
- Children enter the Reception class with skills that are well below those expected for their age particularly in their emotional development, speaking, reading, writing and numbers. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided with a range of exciting and interesting activities. They particularly enjoy their early experiences of school and make good progress. By the start of Year 1, their skills are closer to but are still below average.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils make expected progress. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. In reading, pupils in Key Stage 1 are building increasing well on their good start to the learning of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In 2013, the proportion of Year 2 pupils achieving the expected level in the national phonics screening check was average. Standards in writing by the end of Year 2 are also improving. Pupils work well in pairs to write sentences while adults model sounds, effectively helping pupils spell the words correctly.
- Between Years 3 and 6, the proportion of pupils who make the expected rate of progress is close to the national average. However, too few pupils make better than expected progress overall. Although the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 in writing and mathematics is broadly average and rising, too few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment. The achievement of the most-able pupils requires improvement. They are not always given work that is challenging enough.
- Achievement in English is improving, especially in reading. More pupils make better progress in English than they do in mathematics. In 2013, more pupils made expected progress than in 2012 in both reading and writing. In reading, pupils enjoy a wider range of books and select their favourite authors. They are keen to talk about their books and read often at home. In writing, the 2013 unvalidated national tests results for Year 6 show that more pupils made expected progress in writing than did so in 2012. Even so, achievement in writing is still sometimes held back because pupils' ability to progressively write at length in different areas of the curriculum is not fully developed.
- Achievement in mathematics requires improvement. Fewer pupils make the expected progress in mathematics than in reading and writing. This is because pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and develop the skills they learn in mathematics lessons through solving real-life problems in other subjects.
- The achievement of pupils supported by the pupil premium and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs requires improvement. Standards they reach are below average, which is similar to other groups of pupils in the school. Additional funding, such as to offer one-to-one and small group support as well as extra support assistants and nurture support is helping to improve their achievement. Even so, pupils supported by the pupil premium and those with special education needs do not make consistently good progress because the quality of teaching they receive is inconsistent.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving it still requires improvement as over time it has not been good enough to bring about consistently good progress for all groups of pupils.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. They do not always plan work that challenges pupils of all abilities.
- The teaching of writing and mathematics requires improvement. Although teachers now give

pupils better opportunities to write in many different styles, they do not give pupils enough opportunities to build up their stamina in their writing ability so that they are able to write at length, such as across the different areas of the curriculum. Similarly, although pupils solve problems in mathematics lessons there are not enough opportunities for them to develop their mathematical skills when completing work in other subjects.

- In the best lessons, there is brisk pace which engages pupils successfully in learning. However, some lessons lack a sense of urgency and so pupils do not learn at a consistently good rate.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage where teachers have a good understanding of how to ensure that young children learn well. Effective support ensures that children work cooperatively and learn quickly. Children in the Reception class enjoy dipping brushes with long handles into paint so that they can make vertical and horizontal strokes to practise their early writing skills. Children enjoy writing names on party invitations.
- In the best lessons teachers give clear instructions and they have good subject knowledge. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 class, pupils understood what they were learning quickly. They used numbers well to work out averages. By regularly checking their progress, the teacher was able to extend their learning to the next level, including looking at the ranges of numbers prior to interpreting different graphs.
- Teachers have positive relationships with pupils in the classroom. Teachers manage behaviour well. Pupils' good behaviour means that pupils can successfully enjoy learning in pairs or in groups where they share ideas with each other.
- Teaching assistants play a positive role in supporting the needs of pupils. This is often through working closely with individuals, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, to ensure that they understand fully what they are learning. This contributes well to ensuring that the progress of these pupils is at least similar to, and sometimes better than, other pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic. They have positive attitudes to learning; they settle quickly to lessons and are happy to work. Pupils are polite and courteous to adults as well as each other, which is why the atmosphere throughout the school including during lessons is calm and friendly.
- Pupils agree that behaviour in school is good, which was evident during the inspection. However, a few pupils have a tendency to get restless in lessons where the pace is not quick enough.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View and talked to an inspector say that behaviour is good and their children are safe.
- Pupils speak highly of the school and are proud to be part of it. They say they feel safe in school and are aware of different forms of bullying, for example cyber-bullying. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that adults in school deal quickly with any problems.
- The school is an inclusive community and provides for pupils with a range of needs. Pastoral care is given high priority and pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable for any reason are given strong support to enable them to have equality of access to all activities. Pupils value the attention they receive in the nurture room where they can talk with staff to ensure that they are well prepared for lessons and ready to learn.
- Attendance is average and leaders are working hard to encourage the better attendance and punctuality of a few pupils who do not live up to expectations. The recently appointed family support worker works closely with families to help them understand the importance of attending school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- School leaders accurately evaluate that leadership and management requires improvement. Leaders have not yet ensured that teaching overall is consistently good and that enough pupils

are making good progress. Actions aimed at improving teaching and achievement have not been rapid or effective enough to ensure that pupils' progress improves quickly.

- Recent changes to the curriculum, however, are having a positive impact and pupils' achievement is improving more quickly. There are, for example, more opportunities for pupils to learn through real-life experiences and there is a stronger focus on developing pupils' basic skill in English and mathematics. However, these changes are not yet embedded and leaders have yet to rigorously check the impact they are having on pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher, governors and the local authority. They know that teaching requires improvement and are taking appropriate steps to do so. The school has had to deal with challenges arising from much turbulence in staffing since the last inspection but it is now firmly back on its feet with several new teachers in place.
- The school has a good relationship with the local authority who has been working closely with leaders to develop leadership and management skills. This means that the school is now better placed to move the school forward at a faster rate.
- The leadership of teaching is improving. Leaders and managers ensure that the quality of teaching is checked throughout the school year, including by lesson observations. The school's own monitoring of lessons shows that teaching and learning is beginning to improve and there is now more good teaching. Termly checks of pupils' progress pinpoints any variances in the achievement of different groups of pupils. The school is effective in ensuring there is no discrimination and that all pupils have equal opportunity.
- Teachers' performance management has led to good opportunities for teachers' professional development, often through training with other schools. However, leaders do not provide teachers with enough opportunities to watch good or better teaching in order to improve their own teaching skills.
- Curriculum enrichment is strong and pupils have many opportunities to take part in sports, singing, art and outdoor activities. These activities help pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness contributing to developing confident, well rounded individuals with good attitudes to learning new things.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has strengthened their effectiveness since the last inspection and is very committed to supporting the school and giving the very best care and nurture to its pupils. It has a clear understanding of the strengths of the school as well as areas for improvement. Governors carry out a range of monitoring and are very keen to improve this aspect of their work even further. They know that one of their next steps is to carry out a wider range of monitoring activities. With the headteacher, governors regularly check the performance of different groups of pupils and know how the school's performance compares to others. Governors monitor the budget carefully and know how pupil premium is being used and the impact this has on the progress of pupils. Governors are involved in deciding how the primary school sports funding should be spent. They are pleased that sports coaches are now working with pupils and helping train teachers to improve their teaching of sports. Governors are involved in teachers' performance management and make sure that pay awards are linked to teachers performance and pupils' achievement. The governing body ensures that all statutory responsibilities with regard to safeguarding are met effectively.

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	119237
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	426137

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	317
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Brownjohn
Headteacher	Jackie Burns
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2011
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