

Luddendenfoot Academy

Burnley Road, Luddendenfoot, Halifax, HX2 6AU

Inspection dates 4–5 December 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

- Achievement is not good and progress across subjects and year groups is too variable.
- Pupils' skills in writing are not as good as they are in reading. Too few pupils reach the highest levels of attainment at either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2.
- Assessment is not accurate enough; therefore teachers do not have sufficient information to plan lessons which meet the needs of all learners. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough.
- Marking does not provide pupils with clear enough information about how to improve their work. Pupils are not expected to develop their work in response to teachers' feedback.
- Systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are new. Although they are entirely appropriate, they are not yet embedded and have not had time to show impact. Behaviour management systems are not consistently applied.
- The curriculum does not meet the needs of all learners or provide enough opportunities for enrichment.
- Governors have yet to decide on a permanent leadership solution for the school. Although the current interim headteacher is making appropriate changes, parents do not have certainty about whether they will be sustained.

The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is good. Pupils are extremely well mannered, respectful and show great care for each other. They enjoy school and attendance is above average.
- Governors know the school's weaknesses and have taken decisive action to address them.
- The interim headteacher, with the support of the governors, has introduced a number of significant measures to bring about improvement. The work of the school is now rigorously monitored, systems for performance management of teachers are robust, and clear action plans are in place.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of 8 lessons taught by 6 different teachers. One of these lessons was observed jointly with the interim headteacher.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour around the school. She talked to pupils informally about their learning, as well as holding a formal meeting with a group of pupils from Key Stage 2. She also listened to a number of pupils read.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, members of the teaching staff, and with representatives from the governing body.
- The views of 18 parents who responded to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account, and the inspector also talked to parents as they brought their children to school. Responses to a staff questionnaire were taken into consideration.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation, including data about pupils' achievement from internal tracking systems and analysis provided by school leaders. She also scrutinised leaders' monitoring records, including outcomes of lesson observations, as well as information relating to attendance, safeguarding and behaviour.

Inspection team

Christine Birchall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller-than-average-sized primary school. The overwhelming majority of students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, the children of service families, and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is below the national average.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has left the school and an interim headteacher took up post in September.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which is the minimum level expected for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that the achievement of all pupils, across all subjects, is accelerated, particularly for the more-able, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of how well pupils can achieve, so that they always provide challenging activities and ask challenging questions
 - increasing the focus on the development of writing across the curriculum throughout the school
 - ensuring that assessment of how well pupils are learning is accurate, so that teachers can plan lessons which meet the needs of the full range of learners
 - helping pupils to understand that making mistakes is part of learning, so that they can develop the confidence to try new things
 - ensuring that marking and feedback always tells pupils precisely what they need to do to improve their work, and providing them with time to act on the advice that they receive
 - ensuring that opportunities are provided to share the good practice which exists within the school.
- Improve the quality and impact of leaders at all levels, by:
 - ensuring as a matter of urgency that governors agree a long-term solution for the leadership of the school
 - developing the skills of all senior and middle leaders so that they are accountable for evaluating the effectiveness of their area of responsibility
 - developing the curriculum so that it is stimulating and engaging and meets the needs of all learners
 - ensuring that leaders take the views of all stakeholders, including pupils, into account when making decisions about improvements in the school
 - ensuring that behaviour management systems are measured and consistent, and include rewards as well as sanctions.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils start school in Reception with skills and knowledge which are typical for children of their age. They leave school at the end of Year 6 with attainment which is broadly in line with the national average. This indicates that they make expected progress overall. Although there is evidence of good progress in some classes and subjects, it is not consistent.
- More-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged; therefore too few of them reach the highest levels of attainment or make good progress.
- Pupils do not make as much progress in writing as they do in reading or in mathematics. Verbally, they can express their ideas very confidently and articulately. However, although their literacy skills are not a barrier to their making progress in other subjects, they are not given enough opportunities across the curriculum to broaden and develop their writing skills in a range of different contexts.
- Pupils know how to carry out straightforward mathematical processes, such as one- or two-stage calculations, by the time they leave school. However, they are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their mathematical understanding by applying their skills to solving real-life problems.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. They learn in Reception and Key Stage 1 how to use phonics (their knowledge of letters and the sounds that they make) to sound out words. They develop their skills across Key Stage 2 so that by Year 6 they can read fluently, with confidence and obvious enjoyment.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve at least as well as other pupils in the school. This is because teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support for them within and outside the classroom.
- The very small number of pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding achieve at least as well as other pupils in the school. By the end of Year 2, there are no gaps in the attainment of the two groups of pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although some examples of good teaching were observed during the inspection, it is not consistently good enough to enable pupils to make accelerated progress. There is very little evidence of teaching which is outstanding.
- Teachers' assessments of how well pupils are achieving are not always accurate. This means that they do not always provide challenging enough activities. Expectations of the more-able pupils in particular are not high enough. They are often given work which is too easy for them.
- Positive relationships between pupils and adults are a strong feature of all lessons, and create a positive climate for learning. In the best lessons, teachers use good questioning skills to encourage pupils to explain and develop their ideas. Good opportunities are provided for discussion, so that pupils can learn from each other and practise developing their communication skills. Teachers and teaching assistants spot when pupils are struggling and take action to support them and move them on.
- However, in too many lessons pupils are not given enough time to complete new work. Some work is repetitive, such as repeatedly carrying out the same mathematical operation and not enough opportunities are provided for them to solve problems. Questions are not used effectively enough to probe and develop pupils' understanding, or to ensure that all pupils are fully involved in the lesson.
- Although all teachers mark work regularly, the feedback which they give to pupils is not clear enough to help them to improve their work. Pupils are not encouraged to read teachers' comments and act on the advice given. Therefore there is little evidence of pupils improving their work in response to marking.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are very proud of their school and have very positive attitudes. As a result, attendance for all groups of pupils is above average.
- Pupils have extremely good manners. They are polite and treat each other and all adults with respect. They are very inquisitive and have the confidence to talk openly to visitors, asking as well as answering questions. They listen well to each other's points of view, and can articulate their own views very clearly.
- Pupils care well for each other. The inspector saw some excellent examples of pupils supporting each other with their learning, and looking after pupils who were anxious or upset.
- Parents are confident that the school keeps their children safe. All pupils confirm that they feel safe and that adults look after them well. They are aware of how to keep themselves safe and have, for example, a good awareness of e-safety.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms which bullying can take, but say that it happens very rarely, and that teachers always deal with it straight away.
- The atmosphere around school is purposeful and calm. Behaviour in the playground is good and pupils play a number of games very well, using the limited amounts of space available very responsibly.
- Pupils would welcome the opportunity to be able to take more responsibility around school and to make more contributions to the school community. They would like to have more of a voice and to be consulted more about developments in school.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding, because, when lessons are not stimulating enough, some pupils get bored and do not take an active part in what is going on.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Systems for monitoring the work of the school have recently been made more rigorous. Leaders now have an accurate view of how well the school is performing. Governors are better informed.
- Since her arrival in September, the interim headteacher has introduced a number of appropriate systems for checking on the school's performance and she has an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development. Clear action plans are in place to bring about improvement, and progress towards meeting the success criteria is monitored and evaluated thoroughly. However, the roles and skills of other senior and middle leaders in driving forward school improvement are in the early stages of development.
- The interim headteacher has introduced a cycle of lesson observations, and teachers are now receiving clear and accurate feedback about their performance and guidance about how to improve. Robust performance management targets are now in place, and appropriate professional development activities have been identified to support teachers' development. However, this will be the first time that performance has been linked clearly to pay progression. The interim headteacher is using links with the Brighter Futures Trust to ensure support from other schools, and opportunities have been provided for staff to observe good practice in teaching elsewhere.
- Leaders are now aware that assessments have been inaccurate, and are taking steps to remedy this. Teachers are being provided with support to develop their understanding of how pupils should be achieving, and are being given opportunities to moderate assessments both in school and with other schools. Meetings about pupils' progress have now been introduced so that underachievement can be identified early, and additional support can be provided for pupils where necessary.
- Leaders and governors are aware of the need to establish stronger relationships with parents. Parents speak very positively about the changes which have been introduced in recent weeks, but they have previously felt that communication about what was going on in school was too limited.

- The school curriculum requires improvement. It does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their skills across a wide range of subjects, or through real-life contexts. There are too few opportunities for pupils to be engaged and challenged through enrichment opportunities such as clubs and visits.
- Although there are no gaps in the achievement of groups of pupils, the promotion of equal opportunities requires improvement because too few pupils are sufficiently challenged to make good progress and reach their full potential. The school makes appropriate provision for the promotion of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, but the provision for spiritual and cultural is not as strong as for the social and moral.
- The additional sports funding has been used to provide further training for teachers through the local schools sports partnership. A broader range of physical activities has also been provided for pupils during lunchtime. An action plan is in place and the impact of actions is being closely monitored.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Until recently, governors have not been provided with sufficient information to enable them to support and challenge the work of the school effectively. Now however, they have taken proactive steps to remedy this and are working closely with the interim headteacher to develop their knowledge of the school. They have also engaged consultant support to enable them to develop their own skills as governors. They are checking that the pupil premium funding is being spent appropriately, and have plans in place to monitor its impact. They have ensured that performance management systems are in place this year, and understand the need to link outcomes with pay progression. They ensure that all safeguarding requirements 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

Unique reference number	137699
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	428012

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	145
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lucy Harper
Headteacher	Lynda Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2012
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