

Accrington Woodnook Primary School

Hudson Street, Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 2HS

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2014

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		Requires improvement	3
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

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. As a result, the progress that pupils make between starting and leaving the school is not as good as it could be, and standards are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils making the progress expected of them is similar to other schools, but the proportion doing better than this is not as good.
- Where teaching requires improvement this not only slows down pupils' progress in lessons but has a negative effect on their attitudes to learning.
- The work pupils are given is sometimes too easy, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Pupils do not always pay enough attention in lessons, especially when they are not clear about what they are trying to learn, or when lessons are not sufficiently interesting.
- Best use is not being made of pupils' personal targets in order to develop their confidence in striving to do even better.
- Staffing issues have slowed down school improvement.
- Governors do not routinely receive a sufficiently detailed summary about how well pupils are achieving in reading, writing and mathematics across the school in order for them to rigorously challenge the senior leaders and bring about the required improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Pupils are happy at school and feel safe.
- The headteacher has established good teamwork among staff and all are working towards a common set of goals.
- The teaching is good in Years 4, 5 and 6 where pupils work hard and achieve well.
- The concerted effort the school has put into improving attendance is paying off.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons. Some of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to classrooms and watched sessions where pupils were taught in small groups.
- Meetings were held with staff and a representative from the local authority. A telephone conversation took place with the Chair of Governors.
- Inspectors talked to pupils informally in class and at breaks and listened to pupils read.
- A number of documents were scrutinised, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, minutes of governor meetings, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding information.
- Inspectors talked informally to parents around school but there were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire Parent View to show the results.

Inspection team

Gordon Alston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Harrison

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school. Some classes are made up of pupils of different ages.
- The large majority of pupils are of Asian heritage with small numbers of Bengali pupils or pupils from White British backgrounds. A significant number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure teaching is good or better to raise standards and achievement and improve pupils' attitudes to learning, by ensuring all teachers:
 - show that they have high expectations of pupils of all abilities, especially the most able
 - set tasks that are interesting and ensure that the work is hard enough to challenge pupils, including the most able
 - improve pupils' understanding of their targets for improvement and use them more effectively so that pupils understand how well they are doing, what they need to do to improve and can see for themselves the progress they have made
 - make sure pupils are very clear about what they are going to learn in each lesson and that pupils know if they have achieved it at the end of the lesson.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - adjusting the system the school uses to set and track pupils' progress in order for all teachers to have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - ensuring leaders provide governors with a regular and detailed summary about the progress pupils are making towards their targets in reading, writing and mathematics so that governors can rigorously hold the school to account.

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

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because they do not make consistently good progress across the school. There are variations in rates of progress between classes. Consequently, while there have been some recent improvements in the standards pupils reach at the end of Key Stage 2, they typically remain well below average from when pupils start school to when they leave. Most pupils are making the progress expected of them but not enough pupils do better than this.
- The school has to work hard to overcome many of the difficulties pupils have such as poor language skills and a lack of confidence. Children enter the Reception class with skills well below those expected for their age and there are high numbers here where English is not spoken at home. They settle in fairly quickly and enjoy the range of tasks indoors and outdoors. In some sessions, children make slow progress because they are not given enough time to practise new skills or reinforce the skills they already have. The majority make the progress expected of them and not more than this in all areas of learning. Consequently, when they leave Reception they are still well below the level expected for their age. This affects what pupils are able to tackle in Year 1.
- Pupils' attainment is well below average at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. This again is a picture of pupils making no more than the progress expected of them across both key stages. Improvement is required in order to push pupils on to make faster progress.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils improve their skills at a faster pace. Work in pupils' books shows that writing improves well and in mathematics the basic skills are well taught providing pupils with the tools needed to solve problems. However, elsewhere in school the progress of the most able pupils is uneven because work is sometimes too easy to challenge them sufficiently.
- Pupil premium money is used well to provide additional support in literacy and numeracy for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school's own information about the progress pupils make shows that these pupils make similar progress to their classmates. However, by the time they leave the school they still lag behind others who are not in receipt of the funding and in 2013, eligible pupils were two terms behind in mathematics and writing and one year behind in reading.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same uneven progress as others in lessons dependent on which class they are in and the quality of the teaching. Most make the progress expected of them by the end of Year 6. They do best when supported by teaching assistants.
- The school adopts a structured approach to the teaching of the sounds that letters make (phonics) and groups pupils by ability, including older pupils who need extra help. This is proving to be successful in helping pupils with reading. The sessions seen during the inspection were enjoyable and pupils were making good progress. Even so, over recent years the results of the phonics screening test for Year 1 pupils have been below the national average. Reading features strongly and pupils read regularly at school but not always at home.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it varies greatly between classes and not enough teaching is good in order to result in pupils achieving well. The strongest teaching is in some Key Stage 2 classes where teachers squeeze every effort out of their pupils.
- Where teaching requires improvement, pupils do not learn quickly enough in lessons. In Key Stage 1 and Reception, teachers do not always use information on what pupils already know to make sure work is not too hard for the less able or too easy for the most able. Work does not always motivate pupils. When teachers do not make it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn, pupils do not concentrate well enough; they do not push themselves and do not make the

progress they are capable of.

- Pupils achieved the most in lessons where relationships were very good and where a 'buzz of enthusiasm' for learning had been created. Pupils found the learning interesting and responded by listening attentively and were keen to contribute. Challenging questions as the lessons developed held the interest of all, especially the most able. One example of this high-quality learning was seen in an English lesson with Year 6 pupils; the teacher read from '*Street Child*' and intervened with searching questions such as 'Why did Jim go with him?' This tested pupils' skills in interpreting what had happened so far in the book and sparked a lively debate.
- In other lessons, progress is slow and pupils do not achieve as well as they might. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, pupils were asked to change the nature of a character using speech. Pupils did not fully understand what they were learning about and found it difficult to complete the task, resulting in limited progress being made in the lesson.
- The work in pupils' books provides a mixed picture of learning over time. In some classes, a lot of work has been covered, it is well presented and good progress is evident. In other classes, work is untidy, sometimes unfinished and does not always challenge pupils, especially the most able.
- Marking of work in books is regular and tells pupils how well they have done and gives clear direction on how they can improve. Pupils have individual targets for improvement in writing and mathematics. Although pupils know their targets these are not used well enough to help pupils to make better progress. This is in part because the targets are checked at intervals only by the teacher with pupils having little involvement in this.
- . When disabled pupils, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom the school receives extra funding are involved in small group work, usually with teaching assistants, this support helps them to practise their literacy and numeracy skills and to close the gaps in their learning. The school promotes equal opportunities effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In some lessons, in Key Stage 1 and for the youngest children, when activities are not sufficiently interesting, a few pupils lose concentration and as a result, their learning slows down. Some boys are easily distracted and adults do not always tackle this effectively. For example, in a mathematics lesson, two boys who were continually chatting had lost concentration and completely misunderstood the task they had been given. They multiplied two numbers together that they had been asked to add together. This valuable learning time was lost.
- Around the school pupils generally play well together, but there is a tendency for boys to be boisterous. Pupils do not always follow school rules of walking around school or not climbing on large playground equipment unless supervised. Adults are not always quick enough to intervene and take the opportunity to explain why rules need to be followed. This is especially so at lunchtime.
- Attendance is just below average. The school has worked very hard to address this and attendance is now improving. The learning mentor, funded by extra money the school receives for pupils entitled to free school meals, has been a major factor in this and has helped in developing links with families who need support.
- Pupils are a delight to meet and talk to. They are happy, polite, exude energy and are very keen to learn. This energy is not always tapped into by some teachers. When they are not challenged with work that is hard enough, or the teacher does not motivate them, they can be distracted and, as a result, their learning slows down.
- Older pupils take on responsibilities around school. They help in the supervision of pupils and help at lunchtime to make the time fun and safe. Members of the school council play a meaningful role in the life of the school and ideas they have are listened to.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe at school and the parents who were spoken to by inspectors support this view. Pupils know how to keep

themselves safe and are aware of potential dangers, including bullying and using the internet. The school site is secure and there are adequate systems in place to make sure pupils are safe when at school. School records show that incidents of bullying or racial incidents are rare.

- A range of subjects and activities help promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have time to reflect on their work in lessons, know the difference between right and wrong, and have a good level of understanding and appreciation about other cultures and beliefs. They treat each other and all adults with respect and work well together in lessons.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because although the school clearly wants to meet its mission statement of 'every child to reach its full potential', the expectations of pupils' academic achievement are not high enough.
- This is shown both in the school's own information about pupils' progress and in results of national tests. The school is successful in helping pupils make the progress expected of them but less so in helping pupils to make even more progress than what is expected. In the 2013 national tests, the school's results show the proportions of pupils making the progress expected are similar to the national picture but are below the national picture for pupils making better progress than this.
- The current system of setting targets for pupils to achieve each year is not effective in setting high expectations for pupils and teachers alike. In some years they are expected to reach a target which requires them only to make the progress expected of them. This is not sufficiently challenging. In other years the target set for pupils requires them to make more than the progress expected of them and this helps them to achieve well.
- The headteacher is helped by capable middle leaders and has the support of staff. Together they have created a warm and caring environment where pupils feel happy and safe. They have improved attendance and are managing some difficult staffing issues successfully. Although staff absences and weaker staff performances have hindered efforts to improve the school, senior leaders have sufficient capacity to improve the school.
- A high priority is given to improving teaching, and in the joint observations which took place with inspectors and senior leaders it was evident that there is a clear view on what good teaching looks like. Feedback to teachers after lesson observations is helpful in making teachers aware of how they can improve their practice.
- The school's view of its performance is accurate and the school development plan identifies priorities for improvement. However, the school does not rigorously check the success of the actions they take and so they are not fully aware of what works and what does not work.
- A broad and balanced range of subjects is taught through a range of topics. These topics help promote pupils' literacy, numeracy and computing skills. Pupils also have the chance to learn to play an instrument. A wide variety of clubs, visits and visitors also provides memorable experiences for pupils.
- The school is using the new Primary School Sport funding to pay for specialist sports coaches to develop pupils' physical well-being and participation in competitive sport. There has been an increase in the numbers of pupils attending these clubs but it is too early to see what impact these activities have had on pupils' well-being.
- The local authority provides appropriate support and keeps a watchful eye on the progress made by pupils. Annual reports are provided to governors.

■ The governance of the school:

The governance of the school requires improvement. Governors take part in regular training and their wide range of skills and expertise mean that they fulfil their statutory duties, for example, in relation to finance and safeguarding. As a result, current safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Governors are provided with information about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement through regular meetings with the headteacher. They support the headteacher in tackling any underperformance in teaching. Governors hold the school to account but they do

not receive enough detailed information about the progress of all groups currently in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, they are unable to challenge leaders rigorously about the school's overall and specific performance. They are aware of how well the school is doing in comparison with other schools and have a good understanding of how the pupil premium is used and what difference this makes to pupils. Governors set targets for the headteacher and receive regular information about teachers' pay progression. However, in setting targets for the headteacher and, consequently all staff, there is not a strong enough focus specifically on improving pupils' achievement.

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	119341
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	440414

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Reading
Headteacher	Nicola Trayner
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2011
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