

Lea Community Primary School

Greavestown Lane , Lea, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 1PD

Inspection dates

11–12 February 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		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

- By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards in mathematics are not high enough, and pupils do not make good progress in writing across the school.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length and to use and apply their mathematical knowledge to solve practical problems.
- There is not yet enough good quality teaching to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress over time.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough, and so pupils do not always work on tasks that make them think hard or that are matched closely enough to their needs.
- Teachers do not always give pupils enough guidance through their marking on what they need to do to improve their work, and do not always check that pupils follow this advice.
- Teaching assistants are not always fully involved in lessons, and do not always have the skills and knowledge to support pupils effectively.
- Middle leaders are not yet fully accountable for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their subjects.
- Improvements introduced by the headteacher have not had sufficient time to make sure that teaching is consistently good, and that pupils achieve as well as they should.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and school leaders have a clear view of what the school needs to do to improve.
- Leaders check pupils' progress carefully and this is helping to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are keen to learn and do well. They feel safe and well supported in school.
- The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- School leaders, the governing body and the local authority are working closely together to improve the school's performance as quickly as possible.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons or part-lessons, including two observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders and managers and with the Chair of the Governing Body and the vice-chair. Inspectors also met a representative from the local authority.
- Discussions were held with two groups of pupils and inspectors spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors reviewed the work pupils were doing in lessons and in their books over time. They listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 read and talked with them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents. These included data concerning pupils' current achievement, development plans and performance management information. Inspectors also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. Minutes of governing body meetings and the school adviser's reports were also considered.
- Inspectors took account of 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as responses to the school's own survey of parents' views. They also considered 12 responses to the questionnaires completed by staff for the inspection.

Inspection team

Robert Birtwell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gillian Burrow

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in seven classes from the Reception Year to Year 6.
- A very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well-above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and children from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2013.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to raise pupils' achievement, especially in mathematics and writing, by:
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations are high enough so that they set work that is closely matched to pupils' needs and is consistently challenging
 - making sure that teachers always give pupils very clear guidance in their marking about what they need to do to improve their work, and check that pupils follow this advice
 - ensuring that teaching assistants are always fully involved in lessons, and have the knowledge and skills to support pupils effectively
 - making sure that teachers set more work that requires pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge to solve practical problems
 - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to write at length across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by making sure that middle leaders take on more responsibility for improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their subjects.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium 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

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school. There are variations in the rates of progress between classes and subjects. In some classes, pupils do not make rapid enough progress; standards in mathematics are not high enough by the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils' progress in writing is too slow.
- The school's system for checking how well pupils are doing shows that pupils in some classes are making slower progress. This is because of weaker teaching in these classes. Inspection evidence from lesson observations and work in pupils' books confirm this view.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 has been declining. In 2013, standards were well-below average and the proportion of pupils who made the expected rate of progress was below average. Few pupils made more than the expected progress. School data and inspection evidence show that pupils are now making better progress in mathematics. Current Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve standards that are much closer to the national average in 2014. This is because of improved teaching, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6.
- Although pupils' basic skills are secure, there are too few opportunities for them to use and apply their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding to solve practical problems.
- Over time, standards in writing have typically been below average, although they are beginning to improve. Year 6 pupils made the expected progress in 2013, but school data show that pupils are currently making slower progress in writing in most classes across the school. Pupils write in a range of styles across different subjects, but there are too few opportunities for them to write at length.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, have not achieved as well as other pupils in the school. In national tests in 2013, the standard reached by eligible pupils was around two terms behind that of other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's system for checking all pupils' progress shows that this gap is beginning to close because of the improving support that these pupils are receiving.
- Pupils make steady progress in reading because it is taught effectively. Pupils say they read regularly and they have a good knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was average in 2013.
- Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are generally below those expected for their age, especially in communication and language. They make steady progress in the Reception Year, and join Year 1 with standards that are much closer to average.
- The most able pupils generally achieve higher standards and make better progress than other pupils, particularly in writing. This is because they are given work which is more challenging and more suited to meet their needs.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive increasingly well targeted and effective individual and small-group support and make progress similar to most other groups of pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, over time, it has not ensured that pupils make consistently good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the quality of teaching is improving. The majority of teaching seen during the inspection was good, although some was inadequate.
- In lessons where pupils make slower progress, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. They do not always give pupils suitable work that meets their needs or that is hard enough and challenges them. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress

as they should.

- The quality of marking and assessment has improved, although it varies from class to class. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and use praise effectively, but do not always give clear enough guidance about what pupils need to do to improve their work, and do not always check that pupils follow this advice when it is given.
- Where pupils do well, they enjoy a good level of challenge. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities, and teachers use questioning well to check pupils' understanding and progress during lessons and to further extend their learning.
- In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were investigating the properties of triangles. The teacher provided different groups of pupils with varied tasks that made them think and apply their knowledge and skills to solve challenging problems. The teacher used questioning effectively both to check pupils' knowledge and understanding, and to develop their learning. As a result, the pupils enjoyed the lesson and made good progress.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved. There is a good balance between activities directed by teachers and children making their own choices, and between indoor and outdoor activities, despite some limitations of the site. Learning is purposeful and appropriate for children's varying levels of development. As a result, they make steady progress.
- In many lessons, teaching assistants work well with teachers to support the learning of pupils whose circumstances render them potentially more vulnerable and those who need extra help. This is not the case in all lessons and, on occasions, teaching assistants play little part in the lesson, especially when the teacher is leading the whole class. In addition, teaching assistants do not always have the skills and confidence to support pupils as effectively as they might.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is improving as a result of changes introduced by the headteacher. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to learn and do well. There are good relationships between pupils and their teachers, and pupils want to do their best. Pupils say that they enjoy lessons because there are 'lots of activities and we learn a lot' and that 'teachers try to make us learn hard'. As a result, lessons run smoothly and without interruption.
- Inspectors observed good behaviour around the school. Pupils are well mannered and polite to each other, adults and visitors. They are proud of their school and would recommend it to others.
- Pupils play sensibly on the playground at break times, and behave responsibly in the lunch hall. They say that behaviour around school is usually good, but that some pupils can be 'silly and loud' at times, although teachers act and sort this out.
- School records show that there are few instances of poor behaviour, and that the good behaviour seen during the inspection is typical. On the rare occasions that pupils misbehave, the school responds appropriately and effectively.
- A small number of pupils occasionally show challenging behaviour. Staff manage this consistently and positively. The learning mentor has a strong role in this area by dealing with these issues in close partnership with parents. As a result, the school can show that the behaviour of these pupils has improved.
- Pupils take on responsibilities in areas such as the school council and older pupils act as play leaders for younger pupils. They enjoy this and say that it is 'fun and helps the younger children'.
- Attendance has improved and is now broadly average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in school, and are looked after well. They have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including e-safety, road safety, fire safety and when cycling.

The leadership and management**requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because achievement and the quality of teaching are not good, and have not been improving strongly enough.
- Since she took up the appointment, the headteacher has worked very effectively to improve the school. The changes she has introduced mean that the school is in a secure position to improve rapidly. They have already led to improvements in teaching and behaviour and rising achievement. However, actions taken have had too little time to have their full effect and secure consistently good teaching and good progress. As a result, leadership and management cannot be judged as good.
- School leaders, including governors, have a very thorough and accurate picture of what the school does well and where it needs to improve. The school improvement plan has a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching, raising pupils' achievement, improving behaviour and developing the leadership structure of the school. This is fully supported by all staff and governors.
- Systems to check on pupils' progress have been made more rigorous. School leaders use the information gained to identify any underachievement and to provide pupils with extra help when they need it. As a result, the gaps in the performance between different groups of pupils are beginning to close. This shows the leadership's clear commitment to equality of opportunity.
- There are effective systems to check on the quality of teaching. School leaders use these and the information gained on pupils' progress to identify where further action or support are needed. Appropriate training for staff is improving the quality of teaching and leading to increasing pupils' progress.
- The roles and responsibilities of school leaders have been clarified, with a stronger focus on the impact of their work on pupils' progress and behaviour. Middle leaders, including subject leaders, are developing their knowledge and skills in leading their areas, but do not yet have full accountability for improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their subjects.
- The headteacher and school leaders are reviewing the impact of the use of the pupil premium funding. They have changed the roles of teaching assistants and are providing improved training for them, which is improving their effectiveness in supporting pupils to make better progress.
- The curriculum is well planned and enriched by a range of activities, clubs, trips and visits, including sport, drama and cultural activities. For example, Year 6 pupils visited Romania as part of a Comenius Project. The curriculum promotes positive behaviour and makes a strong contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is using the additional primary school sports funding successfully to improve the quality of physical education. Specialist coaches take lessons, run activities and train staff, and the school takes part in a wider range of sports competitions. This has broadened the range of sporting activities in the school and is having a positive impact on pupils' lifestyles and physical well-being.
- The local authority is providing additional and increasingly effective support for the school. Extra training and advice are helping to increase the effectiveness of school leaders in improving the quality of teaching and behaviour and raising achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' achievement and behaviour and safety. They recognise that 'the school's potential is not yet being realised'. Several have been trained in the use and analysis of school performance data so governors have a much better view of how well the school is doing and where it needs to improve. They have become much more active in challenging the school and holding it to account by asking robust questions about whether pupils are doing as well as they should. They set challenging targets as part of the headteacher's appraisal, and make sure that pupils' progress is taken into account in teachers' performance management and when making decisions about teachers' pay. Governors are well aware of how the pupil premium funding has been spent, and the impact it is having on eligible pupils. They recognise that the effectiveness of teaching assistants could be improved. Governors make sure that the school meets its statutory duties,

including those related to safeguarding.

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	119155
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	433278

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Moore
Headteacher	Lynne Slater
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2010
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