

Accrington Spring Hill Community Primary School

Exchange Street, Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 0JD

Inspection dates

8–9 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
<hr/>			
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school is a happy community, where learning and good behaviour are valued, and where pupils, whatever their abilities or needs, are made to feel welcome.
- Achievement is good. Pupils' progress has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. Standards are rising and pupils in Year 6 are reaching the level expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Adults know the children well and plan exciting activities which are well-matched to their needs and abilities.
- Teaching is good. Relationships are strong, activities are carefully planned and pupils are keen to learn and do well.
- The support provided by highly skilled and dedicated teaching assistants makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning in lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They get on well together and support each other in lessons. They are spontaneously polite and helpful. Pupils feel safe and well looked after in school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. They have many opportunities to reflect on their feelings and those of others.
- Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the effort that staff put in, 'to make it a good place for the children'.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. Successful teamwork among leaders and staff at all levels has contributed well to the significant improvements in achievement and the quality of teaching.
- The governing body provides good support for the school. It asks challenging questions which hold school leaders to account in this rapidly improving school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding. Pupils are not always clear about what they are aiming for in order to make their work better.
- Although progress is accelerating, pupils do not yet do as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 20 lessons, including one observation carried out jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors also observed the teaching of reading skills and listened to pupils reading. They looked at examples of pupils' work and observed pupils at lunchtime and during their break times.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. They spoke to some parents as they brought their children to school and to one parent who requested a meeting.
- The inspectors took account of the school's own survey of parents' view, one letter from a parent and 30 questionnaires returned by staff. There were no published responses to the on-line questionnaire, (Parent View).
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' current progress across the school, the school's view of its own effectiveness, and how the school checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspectors checked the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and looked at records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Christine Potter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Adrian Francis	Additional Inspector
Dave Blackburne	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- A very large majority of pupils is of Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- 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 needs is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- 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 the quality of teaching by:
 - making it clear to pupils precisely what they are aiming for in order to make their work better
 - giving pupils more opportunities to respond to teachers' written marking and so improve their work
 - encouraging pupils to take more care and pride in the presentation and organisation of their work.
- Raise standards in writing further by:
 - making sure that pupils learn and practise important skills for writing sentences and punctuating their work from an early stage
 - ensuring that pupils learn more precisely how to make their writing varied and interesting.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are well below those typical for their age, particularly in speaking English, listening and social skills. They settle quickly and make good progress, because the classroom and outdoor areas are full of exciting things to do, which are just right for the children. For example, their 'secret sentence' work ensured that they listened carefully in order to improve their vocabulary and put words in the right order. Children leave the Reception class at levels which are below what is expected for their age.
- Pupils make good progress in all year groups across Key Stages 1 and 2. This includes the many pupils who speak English as an additional language. As these pupils gain confidence in speaking English, their progress increases.
- Although the results at the end of both key stages have been well below average for several years, current school data show that progress is improving strongly. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has shown a steady improvement since the previous inspection. Many pupils in Year 2 are now working at the level expected for their age, although few as yet reach beyond this level. This year, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are expected to reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- While progress in writing is speeding up rapidly and standards are closer to average, they are lower than in reading and mathematics. Pupils do not learn well enough, from an early stage, the important skills that they need to write and punctuate sentences. Pupils do not learn precisely enough how to make their writing more varied and interesting.
- The recent introduction of well-structured small-group teaching of early reading skills has led to a rapid improvement in pupils' achievement in phonics (the sounds that letters make). In 2013, standards in the Year 1 phonics screening check were well below average, but this year the results are expected to be closer to average. Older pupils are very enthusiastic about reading and talked enthusiastically about the different kinds of book they enjoy. They confidently use their skills in reading to carry out research on the Internet.
- Pupils' books show that they make good progress in other subjects, and links between subjects are strong. Pupils complete a lot of writing in different subjects, such as when they wrote letters to Lord Caernarvon whilst studying ancient Egypt. They say how much they love the practical aspects of learning in themed work. For example, pupils in Year 4 made rainforest models, which linked particularly well with the poems that they had written.
- The most able pupils make good progress because they are usually given work in lessons that is hard enough and develops their thinking skills. For example, a group of the most able pupils in Year 6 were busy comparing their ideas and challenging each other, as they improved a non-fiction text. There is a steady rise in the number of pupils reaching levels above those expected for their age at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, some of which are very complex, make good progress from their individual starting points. Their needs are assessed promptly and they receive the additional support or special programmes and equipment that they need.
- Pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium funding make progress which is at least as good as that of other pupils. This is because the funding is used wisely to provide additional one-to-one support and access to additional activities to broaden their experiences. In 2013, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were less than a term behind other pupils in reading and writing, and a term behind in mathematics. This demonstrates the school's commitment to ensuring that every pupil has an equal opportunity.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The improvement in teaching is the major factor leading to pupils' good progress. Pupils enjoy learning, work hard and are eager to do well. Relationships are good, adults praise and

encourage pupils, and pupils are keen to support each other.

- The work in small groups which takes place regularly throughout the school is organised carefully. These sessions enable all pupils to develop skills at their own level and make a particularly strong contribution to pupils' learning, and especially to their skills in understanding and speaking English.
- Careful questioning checks pupils' understanding and clarifies any misconceptions. Pupils feel confident to ask for extra help when they are unsure about anything. Activities are adapted to the needs of the pupils, and they revise and improve their understanding. For example, pupils in Year 6, who had said that they were not confident about converting units of measurement, clearly improved their skills as they revisited the topic and worked on more measuring tasks.
- A focus on teaching mathematics, with clear opportunities for pupils to solve problems, has increased their confidence in using these skills.
- Resources are prepared well and pupils often have a check list that shows them what they need to include to achieve success in a particular activity. For example, pupils in Year 3 were very clear about the different aspects they needed to include in their 'Wizard of Oz' stories. However, sometimes instructions are more general and pupils do not know precisely what they are aiming for to make their work better.
- Tasks given to pupils are usually matched well to pupils' needs. For example, different groups of pupils in Year 2 were sorting numbers in ways that varied in their complexity and really challenged pupils of different abilities.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Adults know just when to support children and when to leave them to learn on their own. Children understand the routines, enjoy the wide choice of activities and chatter excitedly about what they are doing. They made good progress in their language and mathematical skills as they explored how much water could fit into different shaped containers.
- The work in books shows how hard pupils work and the good progress made this year. However, there is not always enough insistence that pupils produce neat and tidy work. Consequently, pupils do not always take sufficient care and pride in the presentation and organisation of their work.
- Teachers' marking usually gives pupils helpful guidance about what they have done well and what they could improve next time. Pupils do not have enough opportunities, however, to respond to this, in order to make their work better.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are welcoming and friendly. Unprompted acts of thoughtfulness, such as respectfully shaking hands with the inspectors, and tidying the chairs after a meeting, make the school a happy place. Pupils care about one another, and are genuinely delighted when others are rewarded for their achievements in the Friday morning assembly.
- There are consistent systems in place to encourage good behaviour, which the pupils understand and appreciate. They and their parents feel that behaviour in school is good. Although they acknowledge that a small number of pupils do occasionally misbehave, they say that 'things have improved a lot recently, particularly at lunchtimes'.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They are mostly keen to learn and do well, although work is not always presented well. Their eyes light up when they are given extra 'challenges'. Learning in lessons progresses smoothly. On the rare occasions when pupils become restless, they respond very quickly to the teacher's request to improve their behaviour.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say how safe they feel in school, and responses to the parents' survey show that parents agree. Pupils know that they will be well looked after, and are confident to discuss any concerns with adults in the school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, and what action to take if they

think they are being bullied. Incidents of bullying in the school are extremely rare and are always dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils seemed surprised when they were asked if anybody used racist language or called each other names like 'gay'. 'It just doesn't happen here,' was their immediate response.

- There have been significant improvements in attendance, which is now broadly average. The school continues to work successfully with both pupils and parents to reinforce the importance of coming to school regularly and on time. There are regular reminders on the school website, and weekly celebrations of the best attendance. Pupils enjoy collecting coloured spots, which they exchange for tokens, when they arrive punctually.

The leadership and management

are good

- The headteacher leads by example. She has a very clear view of where she wants the school to be, and how to get there. She is well supported by other leaders, who have worked together as a closely knit team to bring about rapid improvements to teaching and achievement. Staff feel valued and are keen to improve their skills and do the very best for the pupils.
- The school has an accurate view of the next steps and priorities are clear. Future plans are precise and success is evident in the rise in progress. The school is well placed to move forward.
- There are now good systems in place to check on the quality of teaching. Senior and middle leaders are effective. They gather information from watching teaching, checking planning and looking at pupils' work. They give teachers and teaching assistants clear guidance on how they can improve their practice. A few weaker aspects have yet to be fully resolved, especially in marking. Training is linked well to need and staff value the chance to observe outstanding practice that exists in this school and other local schools.
- The progress of pupils is tracked closely to check that all do as well as possible. The school knows that it needs to make up for pupils' previous underachievement, and expectations of the progress pupils need to make are high. A broad range of additional support is provided at an early stage for pupils who speak English as an additional language and for those who are not doing as well as they should. Frequent checks make sure that this support is effective.
- The curriculum is rich and varied and provides a wide range of experiences both within and outside school hours. There are good links between subjects and carefully planned opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, whilst studying World War 2, pupils reflected sensitively on the experiences of Anne Frank and wartime evacuees. Music and art feature prominently in school life.
- Leaders work hard to build up and maintain positive relationships with parents and to involve them in their children's learning. Parents appreciate the information they receive about how well their children are doing. Family half-term projects which give good opportunities for parents and children to talk and work together are very well supported.
- The school makes good use of the primary school sport funding. Pupils have opportunities to take part in a broader range of sports, including tennis, running and rock-climbing. Sports clubs before and after school are popular with pupils. The good partnership with other local schools has increased participation in local sporting events. Staff receive high quality training to develop their skills.
- The local authority provides strong support, which is appreciated by the school, and has made a significant contribution to improvements since the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are supportive and loyal. They receive detailed reports and have regular meetings with leaders about particular areas of responsibility. Governors are more aware of pupils' progress because they know how to interpret school data and compare their school with others. They understand the new arrangements for pay progression. They make sure that salary rewards are based on teachers meeting pupil progress targets. Governors' minutes show that they ask challenging questions about what the school is doing to improve teaching and achievement. Governors say that they are never afraid to ask if they do not understand

anything. They make sure that the pupil premium is spent carefully to meet the needs of eligible pupils and are fully committed to making sure that everyone is treated equally. They ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.

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	119185
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	442424

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	382
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rizwana Yousf
Headteacher	Stephanie Grimshaw
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2012
Telephone number	01254 399009
Fax number	01254 398962
Email address	head@springhill.lancs.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

