

Peel Brow School

Fir Street, Ramsbottom, Bury, Lancashire, BL0 0BJ

Inspection dates 13–14 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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

- Pupils' achievement has declined since the last inspection. In 2013, pupils in Year 6 did not make enough progress from their starting points.
- Currently, pupils' progress and attainment in writing and mathematics are weaker than their performance in reading. However, in 2013, at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment was below national levels in the three subjects.
- The quality of teaching and learning is uneven across the school. New learning is not always thoroughly explained to pupils. Assessment information is not always used well enough to provide activities that challenge pupils appropriately. Consequently, some pupils can become distracted from their learning.
- Marking does not always provide focused advice and guidance to help pupils improve and teachers do not always check that pupils accurately follow the advice that they are given.
- School leaders do not focus strongly enough on pupils' progress when they check the quality of teaching and learning.
- Middle leaders do not always check quickly enough that actions put into place to improve standards are having a positive impact in their areas of responsibility.
- The headteacher and the governing body know that they have not been rigorous enough in their drive to secure improvement and, as a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have not been lifted quickly enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The achievement gap between pupils eligible for the pupil premium grant and those who are not is closing in classes across the school.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very well to improve pupils' learning.
- The curriculum includes a wide range of after-school activities, trips and visitors that provide pupils with memorable learning experiences.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to each other. They feel safe and are kept safe in school.
- The school has worked successfully with pupils and their parents to improve attendance, which is now above national levels.
- The headteacher is well supported by the governing body. Together they have taken decisive actions that put the school in a stronger position than it was at the end of the 2013 academic year.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 parts of lessons, sessions taken by teaching assistants, and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 65 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), replies to parental and pupil questionnaires distributed recently by the school, and 16 responses to a staff questionnaire. They also received a letter from a parent and met a number of parents informally at the school gates.
- A range of documents were considered by inspectors, including the school’s analysis of how well it is doing, the school development plan, information about pupils’ progress, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, and records relating to attendance and safeguarding. Inspectors also examined work in pupils’ books.

Inspection team

Louise Murphy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Heather Simpson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Peel Brow Primary is smaller than most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is similar to the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children that are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are from a White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs supported through school action is well below national levels.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standard, which sets out the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in writing and mathematics, in order to raise standards and help pupils to behave well, by making sure that:
 - information from assessments is used to always provide work that is hard enough
 - skilful questioning is used to stretch pupils to think hard
 - new learning is demonstrated or explained thoroughly, so that pupils know what they are expected to do when they are working on their own
 - marking always provides good, relevant advice to pupils and helps them to improve their work
 - pupils' corrections and editing are always checked for accuracy so that they can learn from their mistakes.
- Increase the impact school leaders have on improving standards by:
 - focusing more clearly on pupils' progress when the quality of teaching and learning is checked
 - making sure that middle leaders check that agreed actions are quickly and consistently put into place in their areas of responsibility and that those actions have a positive impact on raising pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment has declined since the previous inspection. In 2013, at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils were approximately two terms behind pupils nationally in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. Too few Year 6 pupils made the expected progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics and so achievement requires improvement.
- Of the group of pupils who completed the end of Year 6 national tests in 2013, approximately 20% of the class joined the school during Year 6. The majority of these pupils had additional learning needs.
- Though there is some variation between cohorts, most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. They make the progress expected of them, and the majority of children reach a good level of development and are ready for the next stage in their learning by the time they join the Year 1 class.
- The school's information on pupils' progress indicates that the achievement of pupils is now stronger than it was this time last year. Evidence from lesson observations and pupils' books shows that there is no further decline. Almost all pupils are making expected progress from their different starting points and an increasing number are making more than expected progress.
- Usually, pupils' achievement in reading is strongest, though this does vary for some classes. Well-targeted small-group teaching sessions have been put into place to make sure that younger pupils are able to improve their skills in matching letters to the sounds that they make. Older pupils read in small groups and on their own at school; they are challenged to read every evening at home for at least 20 minutes. Pupils readily discuss their favourite books and the wide choice of fiction and non-fiction books available to them at school. Pupils make slower, but improving, progress in mathematics and writing.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2013, the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding, including those eligible for free school meals, lagged behind that of their classmates by over one year. However, this gap is now closing very quickly in all classes across the school. Eligible pupils now make similar progress to that of their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school provides support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The progress that these pupils make is variable and overall requires improvement.
- Changes, especially the more precise tracking of pupils' progress and focused support, are showing benefits for the most able pupils. For the first time, some Year 6 pupils will be entered for the very highest Level 6 tests. However, the progress that the most able pupils make in other classes across the school is not yet consistently good and, therefore, requires improvement.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, pupils have not been supported to build up their skills year-on-year and make consistently good progress, especially in writing and mathematics. Therefore, the quality of teaching requires improvement.
- The headteacher is confident that teachers can now accurately assess where pupils are in their learning. However, this knowledge is not always used to provide activities or pose questions that challenge pupils to think hard.
- There has been a drive to improve the teaching of mathematics. For example, support staff are deployed to make sure that more focused support can be provided to identified groups of pupils. However, there are times when the introduction to an activity does not fully prepare pupils to complete tasks on their own and progress slows as they wait for clearer explanations.
- School leaders recognised that the impact of marking needed to improve and have put systems in place to achieve this. Though pupils are regularly given time to look at teachers' comments,

the remarks are not always accurately focused on what the individual pupil needs to do to improve their work. Moreover, pupils' corrections or editing of their work are not always checked. Consequently, pupils are not always able to learn from their mistakes.

- Resources, including ICT, are well used during activities to improve pupils' writing skills. For example, when Year 2 pupils were developing their letter-writing skills, they were provided with digital photographs of their Spanish pen pals, so that they could see whom they were writing to. This really did bring the learning to life and encouraged pupils to ask appropriate questions of their pen pals, whom they wanted to know all about.
- Pupils like their teachers and say that they are always there to help them with their work. Classrooms are friendly places and there is a good selection of prompts available on the walls and around the room, to help pupils work things out for themselves. Pupils want to learn and are happy to share their ideas when they work together in pairs or small groups.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to make sure all pupils are able to take part in the activities. This shows the school's commitment to making sure all pupils are given the same opportunities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. During some activities, pupils do not always get on well with their tasks because they are not sure about what they should be doing. This can lead to distracted fidgeting and a lack of purposeful learning that slows the rate of progress.
- Around the school, most pupils are polite and respectful. They hold doors open for adults and greet each other with friendly smiles. Pupils are very aware of the rewards for and consequences of their conduct and feel that this helps them to manage their own behaviour. They are really proud to receive a 'tower token' when adults notice that they have done something well or have been particularly kind.
- Pupils have worked together to raise money to buy new sports equipment and first-aid dummies that they use to practise their resuscitation skills.
- The eco-councillors have organised recycling collections around the school to reduce waste. Moreover, they have arranged to donate vegetables grown by the gardening club to the school kitchen, where they make delicious, healthy soup for everyone to enjoy.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school and are helped by the school to know how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils are very aware of internet safety and appreciate the 'Bikeability' lessons provided at the school to help them stay safe when riding their bicycles.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying and the difference between bullying and falling out. Pupils agree that there is no bullying at Peel Brow and school records confirm this.
- The primary school sport funding is used to pay for sports coaches who work with pupils and staff. More pupils are now taking part in a wider range of sporting activities that they choose for themselves to help them stay healthy and promote well-being. Staff are benefiting from the expertise of the coaches and improving their own skills in teaching sporting activities.
- The school has worked successfully with pupils and their families to improve attendance, which is now above the national average.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The headteacher has accurately judged where the school is now and has a very clear view of the direction that he wants it to take. He has the skill and determination to achieve his ambition. However, he knows that actions taken by school leaders have not quickly secured teaching that is good enough to raise pupils' achievement to consistently good. He agrees, therefore, that leadership and management require improvement.
- There have been positive steps forward. For example, areas for improvement identified at the

previous inspection have been addressed and pupils currently in school are making better progress because the quality of teaching is getting better. As a result, the school has the ability to secure further improvement.

- The influence that middle leaders have on standards is variable. They are provided with support to help them develop their skills and so drive improvements in their areas of responsibility. However, they do not all reliably check that agreed actions are rigorously implemented by all staff, or that actions taken are having a positive, timely impact on pupils' progress.
- School leaders check the quality of teaching and learning frequently but there is not enough emphasis placed on the progress that pupils make. For example, the quality of teaching might be judged to be good when pupils make expected rather than good progress.
- Staff training is carefully planned to address whole-school priorities. Moreover, there are now well-established links with a local outstanding school, and some middle leaders are able to gather new ideas and share them with colleagues at Peel Brow.
- The school gives good attention to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Furthermore, the curriculum is enriched by a variety of after-school activities and a range of trips and visitors to the school that provide exciting experiences for pupils. At the time of the inspection, Year 4 pupils were enthusiastically developing their map-reading skills to prepare for a field trip to Derbyshire, linked to their rivers and mountains topic.
- The local authority is providing appropriate support to the school. It has brokered the services of consultants to support improvements in English and mathematics. Additionally, advisers have worked with senior leaders, including governors, to develop the school improvement plan, which is now accurately focused on improving standards.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has changed significantly in recent years and has emerged the stronger for it. Governors have a realistic understanding of the quality of teaching and the school's effectiveness because they visit school regularly for a range of different reasons and request increasingly comprehensive information on pupils' achievement. What is more, they are able to compare this information with nationally published data and ask relevant and challenging questions. Governors are seeking training and advice from external consultants and inviting new members to join the governing body. They are doing this to further enhance their spectrum of skills and expertise so that they can better support the school. Governors have a good grasp of the difference the pupil premium funding is making to closing achievement gaps for eligible pupils. They check that the performance of teachers is managed according to school policy and make sure that teachers' pay rewards are linked to pupils' achievement. Statutory duties, including keeping pupils and staff safe and the management of the school budget, meet 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	105368
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	442337

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Berrisford
Headteacher	Danny Mellor
Date of previous school inspection	31 October 2012
Telephone number	01706 823204
Fax number	01706 823204
Email address	peelbrow@bury.gov.uk

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