

Griffin Park Primary School

Cavendish Place, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 2PN

Inspection dates 4–5 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school from their different starting points.
- Teaching in all classes is good. Staff know pupils well and there are good relationships all round. Pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to do well.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well because they are well supported and work is carefully planned to meet their needs.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils get on very well with their teachers and each other. They say that they feel extremely safe in school and are very well cared for.
- School leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of how well the school is performing and where it can do better. They have worked well together to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- Parents are very supportive of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Occasionally pupils are not given work that is hard enough to challenge them to make the best possible progress, including the most able pupils.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is not as strong as in reading and writing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons, taught by nine teachers. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and with four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met two groups of pupils and also spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in lessons and in their books over time. They listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents concerning pupils' current achievement and progress, development plans and performance-management information. They also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. Minutes of governing body meetings were also considered.
- Inspectors took account of 18 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and 14 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robert Birtwell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Emily Wheeldon

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in eight classes from the Nursery to Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-below average.
- A large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- There have been some unavoidable staff absences recently, but the school now has its full complement of permanent staff.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching to raise pupils' achievement, especially in mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - work set is always hard enough so that pupils are consistently challenged to make the best possible progress, including the most able pupils
 - pupils have more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to investigate and solve problems in mathematics lessons and other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are generally below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and the Reception classes because they are well taught and have good opportunities to develop their skills. They are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved since the previous inspection. In 2013 they were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils in Year 1 and 2 are currently making good progress and achieving well.
- Since the previous inspection the standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved. In 2013 they were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils who made the expected progress was above average in all subjects, and the proportion that made more than expected progress was average in reading, and close to average in writing and mathematics.
- Inspection evidence and the school's most recent data for Key Stage 2 show that all groups of pupils are continuing to make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils achieve well in reading because they have opportunities to read regularly and there is a strong focus on developing pupils' skills in phonics (letters and the sounds they make). The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics check was above average in 2013.
- Pupils make good progress in writing. The school has worked effectively to improve pupils' writing skills since the previous inspection. There is a clear focus on spelling and grammar, and pupils write well in a range of styles in different subjects.
- Pupils have well-developed numeracy skills. Although they make good progress in mathematics, it is not as strong as in reading and writing. Pupils do not have enough opportunity to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to investigate and solve problems both in mathematics lessons and across the curriculum.
- The most able pupils make good progress overall. However, in common with their classmates, in mathematics they do not always make progress as rapidly as they do in reading and writing.
- The attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in Year 6 in 2013 was around two terms ahead of other pupils in mathematics, and about two terms behind in reading and writing. Extra assistance, where needed, helps pupils supported by pupil premium funding to make rapid progress, and the school's most recent data shows that any gaps in achievement are closing quickly.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs achieve well and make good progress, similar to their classmates. This is because their needs are well identified and they receive good support. This reflects the school's commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good across the school, and some is outstanding. This was confirmed by teaching seen during the inspection, the work in pupils' books and school records of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. This enables pupils in all year groups to make good progress and learn well.
- Staff know pupils well and there are very strong relationships all round. Staff typically have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set work that motivates and engages pupils so that they learn quickly. Pupils say that lessons are interesting and challenging and that teachers 'help us to understand new things; they tell us something and get us to work it out'. As a result, pupils enjoy lessons and are very keen to learn and do well.
- In an English lesson, Year 3 pupils were writing a poem based on 'The Magic Box'. The teacher

used questioning very skilfully to enthuse and motivate the pupils, and to develop and refine their ideas before they wrote their own versions. All pupils, including the most and least able, had different, challenging tasks. Pupils thought hard about what they were doing, greatly enjoyed the lesson and made outstanding progress.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Staff make sure that learning is well focused and children's interest is engaged. Children are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their skills and there is a good balance between activities directed by the teacher and those chosen by the children, and between the indoor and outdoor environment. In the Reception class, for example, the teacher used questioning skilfully to develop children's interest and understanding of a story about a blackbird before they went outside to observe and listen to birds. As a result, the children made very good progress in developing their language and communication skills.
- While expectations of what pupils can achieve are generally high, staff do not always make sure that the work set is challenging enough to enable pupils to learn as much as they could. As a result, pupils, including the most able, are sometimes not given work that enables them to make the best possible progress and reach the highest levels.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and consistently. Teachers use praise effectively and make helpful comments and suggestions that identify the next steps in pupils' learning. Pupils say that teachers make it clear what they need to do to improve their work, and it is clear that pupils are given time to respond to these comments.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to help pupils who find learning more difficult. This includes pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and those who are disabled or have special educational needs. As a result these pupils make good progress and achieve at least as well as other pupils in the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are very polite and considerate, and get on very well with each other and with adults in the school. There is an orderly, calm, committed and happy atmosphere throughout the school and a very strong and caring ethos. This creates an extremely positive climate for learning.
- Pupils are very well motivated and engaged in lessons. They listen attentively to their teachers and try their best to do well. As a result lessons proceed very smoothly and there are no interruptions to learning.
- Discussions with pupils and the school's behaviour records show that poor behaviour is very rare. There have been no exclusions in recent years, and racist or discriminatory incidents are extremely rare.
- Inspectors observed very good behaviour in lessons, in assemblies and around the school. Pupils behave very well during break times. They play enthusiastically and safely together and behave responsibly in the school hall at lunchtime.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and speak enthusiastically about their experiences: one pupil described the school as 'joyful'. As a result attendance has risen and is now above average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school and very well cared for. They have a strong awareness of how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including on roads, when cycling and when using the internet. Pupils have a very good knowledge of different types of bullying. They say that there is hardly ever any bullying in the school, and they are very confident that it would be sorted out quickly if it occurred.
- In discussion pupils showed very strong tolerance and were swift to condemn discrimination in any form. They say that they would actively try to prevent it happening.
- All parents who responded to the Parent View survey thought that their children feel safe at school, and almost all thought that they are happy, well looked after and behave well.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides clear direction for the school and is well supported by the senior leadership team and middle leaders. They have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection, and their actions have improved the quality of teaching and raised pupils' achievement.
- School leaders, including governors, make good use of data about pupils' progress and achievement. They have a clear view of how well the school is performing and where it could do better.
- The school improvement plan clearly identifies the key priorities and has a strong focus on further improving the quality of teaching in order to raise achievement. For example, leaders are aware that progress in mathematics is not as strong as in reading and writing, and plans are in place to address this.
- School leaders, including middle leaders, closely check the quality of teaching and effectively monitor and evaluate pupils' performance. Any underachievement is addressed by providing pupils with extra support if they need it. As a result all groups of pupils in the school are making good progress.
- Information about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement is used effectively to check how well teachers are performing. It is used to identify where further support or training is needed, and governors take it into account when making decisions about teachers' pay.
- Staff work effectively to share good practice within the school, and they have had opportunities to observe outstanding teaching in the school's partner school.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides a range of activities that promote pupils' creative thinking. It engages and motivates pupils very effectively in their learning and promotes excellent behaviour. However, it provides too few opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- There is a good range of enrichment for all pupils including clubs, trips and visits covering sport, drama, music and cultural activities.
- Pupils have opportunities to take on responsibility in areas such as the school council, as prefects and as house captains. These contribute to pupils' very strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is using the additional primary school sports funding successfully to extend its range of physical education activities and to improve teachers' skills. Specialist coaches and teachers take lessons, run activities and train staff. This is having a positive impact on pupils' physical well-being and lifestyles.
- The local authority has provided effective support for this improving school in areas such as training for governors and fostering links with another school. This has contributed to improving teaching and leadership and management.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the school has improved since the previous inspection. Governors are well informed and know the school well. They have undertaken training to improve their skills and effectiveness. They know how to analyse and use data about pupils' achievement, and understand how this is linked to the quality of teaching. They hold the school to account by asking probing questions about how well the school is doing and where it could do better, and by setting challenging targets as part of the headteacher's appraisal. Governors are involved in the life of the school and visit regularly in a variety of roles. They oversee the school's finances effectively and have a good knowledge of how extra funding such as the pupil premium and primary school sport funding is spent and the impact it is having. They ensure 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	119116
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	442422

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trevor Anderton
Headteacher	Catherine Clayton–Young
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2012
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