

Brimrod Community Primary School

Holborn Street, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL11 4NB

Inspection dates 18–19 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- By the end of Year 6, attainment in mathematics, reading and writing is typically average. This represents good progress for pupils from their various starting points.
- Carefully tailored support for pupils with special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils enables them to make at least good and sometimes better progress.
- Children make good progress and are looked after well in the early years.
- The school is a happy, harmonious community. Pupils are considerate and respectful to each other and to the adults around them.
- Teaching is good. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to question pupils well and move their learning on. Teachers are well prepared and pupils generally make the most of their time in lessons.
- Work in and out of lessons, as well as the wide range of visits and clubs, provide pupils with rich and memorable life experiences. These successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and ensure that they enjoy their time in school.
- Behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe and say they feel safe in school; the vast majority of parents agree.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, strongly supported by the leadership team and governors, provides very clear direction. The monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress is rigorous and detailed. As a result, teaching is consistently good and is steadily improving pupils' achievement, enabling them to thrive.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress pupils make in reading lags behind that of writing and mathematics. When pupils have adult support in their reading, progress is more rapid.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because work is not always precisely matched to pupils' capabilities so that some pupils are not consistently challenged to do their best.
- The detailed marking seen in literacy, which provides guidance on how pupils can improve their work is not always present in other subjects.
- The monitoring role of some middle leaders is not firmly embedded. As a consequence, they do not always play a full enough role in improving pupils' achievement and in whole school development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons or parts of lessons, including two observations carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors visited small group and 1 to 1 teaching sessions.
- Inspectors heard pupils reading, looked at pupils’ workbooks and observed pupils at lunch times and during break times.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors also reviewed the school’s website.
- They took account of the 29 responses to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View), of parent views during the inspection and responses from the school’s own recent questionnaire sent out to parents.
- There were 31 responses to the staff inspection questionnaire and these views were taken into account by the inspection team.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents including: the school’s most recent data on pupil progress and attainment across the school; the school’s own view of its effectiveness and its plan for improvement; minutes of governing body meetings; and information related to checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- They also checked the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and looked at records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Yvonne Mills-Clare, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheryl Farnworth

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are from ethnic minority groups with the vast majority being of Pakistani heritage.
- The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, who are eligible for the pupil premium is above average (pupil premium is additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority).
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The leadership team has been restructured, there has been a change of headteacher and all senior leaders are new to their roles since the last inspection

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding in order to raise standards and achievement, including in the early years by:
 - ensuring tasks and activities set for pupils consistently challenge them to do their best
 - extending the good practice seen in the marking of pupils' workbooks in literacy to other subjects.
- Improve progress and raise standards in reading by:
 - ensuring there is more adult support available to pupils during reading sessions
 - providing a greater focus on reading in classrooms and in shared areas of the school.
- Extend the monitoring role of middle leaders, including in the early years, so that they have a greater impact on the achievement of pupils and whole school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, together with other senior leaders and governors, are passionate about the school and are determined to drive improvement forward.
- They have an accurate view of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve. This evaluation is based on thorough and accurate monitoring of teaching and pupil achievement. Leaders know, for example, that achievement in reading is not as good as in writing and mathematics. Strategies to address this have been put in place and are now bringing about improvement across the school.
- The leadership of teaching is good. Regular monitoring of teaching, together with meetings with staff to discuss the pupils in their charge, hold teachers firmly and effectively to account for the progress their pupils make. Staff feel valued and are keen to do the best for their pupils. Targets given to teachers are based on school priorities and pay awards for teachers are dependent on good and better progress from their pupils, as well as improvements in their other areas of responsibility.
- Although leaders are generally knowledgeable about the subjects and areas in the school that they lead, some leaders are relatively new to their role and are therefore not yet contributing fully to whole school improvement.
- The school's own data for assessing pupil progress and attainment is thorough and is used well to identify pupils who may be in danger of falling behind. When necessary, appropriate support is quickly put into place so that pupils continue to make good progress. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The school's curriculum is closely tailored to the backgrounds and needs of its pupils. It links subjects cleverly together where possible, into themes and topics. Trips, such as visits to the seaside, theatres and residential visits brings learning to life. Links with other schools both at home and abroad and fundraising activities organised by the school councillors themselves, provide life experiences for pupils in the school. This promotes teamwork, tolerance and harmony, preparing pupils extremely well for life in modern Britain. Together with the values of respect for themselves and others that the school promotes very effectively, good relations between pupils are fostered well and discrimination tackled successfully.
- Leaders ensure that the primary sports funding has been used to good effect. Staff in school have been trained to deliver more unusual sports such as archery for pupils and provide sustainability in the teaching of sports in the future. The purchase of equipment has provided more opportunities to participate in different sports, increasing confidence and awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school at the request of senior leaders. It takes the view that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and inspectors share this opinion.

The governance of the school:

- The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and they are aware of what the school needs to do to improve further. Regular visits and links to classes and subjects together with the comprehensive reports by the headteacher, ensure they are fully aware of the quality of teaching in the school and how performance in the classroom affects teachers' progression along the pay scale.
- The information they receive and the training they undertake through the local authority is empowering them to begin to ask challenging questions and hold leaders to account.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's progress through regularly reviewing data presented by the school and from external sources.
- They are aware of how the primary sports funding is allocated and the benefits this is bringing to pupils. They ensure the premium funding is spent wisely and understand the impact it is having on the achievement for disadvantaged pupils, ensuring they progress equally well and sometimes better than their classmates.
- Governors also ensure that they fulfil their statutory duties in relation to finance and safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is typically good. Pupils work and play together well, whether in the classrooms or in the playground. Lunchtimes are real social occasions, with pupils eager to chat to their friends.
- Pupils are courteous and polite to adults and to each other. They are open and friendly to visitors and are

happy to talk about their achievements.

- They take their responsibilities very seriously and are proud of their contribution to the school, for example as Reading Champions, school councillors and monitors in the dining room. Indeed, during the inspection they were writing a job application for one of the roles, listing their qualities ready for an interview later in the week.
- Pupils say they enjoy school, that learning is fun and that teachers in the school help them to learn. They particularly enjoy the visits they make and the Forest School of which they are particularly proud. They understand the need to be in school and on time. Attendance is average.
- Classrooms are bright and uncluttered and pupils take a pride in their school. Workbooks are generally neat and tidy and pupils are eager to talk about their work.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and the vast majority contribute well to their lessons by answering questions or offering ideas. However, on occasions, when working with partners, some pupils do not always take enough opportunity to offer their opinions and ideas. As a result, progress for these pupils slows.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils feel safe in the school and although they are adamant that bullying is rare, they are confident that any bullying would be dealt with swiftly and effectively. The vast majority of parents who responded to the online parents' questionnaire are in agreement. Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying, such as name-calling and cyber bullying. The school ensures that pupils and parents are well equipped to deal with it.
- Pupils know how to stay safe and talk about the measures the school takes to safeguard them. They have visitors to the school to raise their awareness of safety and take part in the 'bikeability' programme to ensure they stay safe on the road. They understand the benefits of sports and enjoy many sporting activities such as archery and trampolining.
- Pupils' relationships with each other and with adults are strong and are based on a mutual respect for each other. This epitomises the values of the school 'Respect ourselves, respect others, respect the environment.'

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good across the school. This is reflected in the good and sometimes outstanding progress that pupils make.
- Teachers use group and paired activities effectively to increase pupils' confidence and develop their speaking skills. When pupils work together, they discuss their work and grow in confidence as they explain their learning. Pupils are asked and encouraged to reflect on their learning, enabling the teachers to assess their understanding in order to build further on pupils' knowledge.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together and ask probing questions to see how much pupils have understood their learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson pupils were asked to sort shapes into colour and form, and this led to much animated discussion about where to place a shape that was red and a square. Skilful questioning of the pupils teased out the answer that they could be in either. This developed pupils' reflection on their learning and provoked ideas about how this could be represented.
- Similarly, in a literacy lesson pupils were discussing fact, opinion and bias. The challenge for one group of pupils was high. They were given the task of writing a report of a football match where they were biased against their favourite team. Sensitive and probing questioning by the teacher promoted a sharing of ideas to ensure all pupils in the group were clear about the task in hand and felt confident in what they were doing. This level of challenge, however, is not always consistently evident in all lessons and therefore, on occasions, pupils are not given tasks that make them think hard. At times like these, progress slows for pupils.
- The teaching of phonics (sounds that letters make) in the early years and across Key Stage 1 is raising achievement for pupils in reading. Across the school strategies such as 'Reading Champions', where older pupils regularly read with younger pupils, and the targeting of pupils in Years 2, 3, and 4, who attend events where they are given complimentary books have been introduced. Groups of pupils in Key Stage 2 are given the opportunity to take ownership of their reading by assuming different roles within the group. When working with adults in this activity progress is more rapid; however, when pupils work in pupil led groups, progress slows. This is particularly so in Key Stage 2. This increased focus on reading, however, is

not always reflected by vibrant displays in shared areas or in classrooms to raise the profile of reading and enthuse and motivate pupils to read even more.

- Pupils are given many opportunities to write in subjects other than English. Almost all topics and themes undertaken by pupils begin with a practical activity or educational visit. This enrichment of the curriculum provides pupils with experiences that motivate and enthuse them to write. This has been instrumental in bringing about the good progress pupils make and the enjoyment they derive from their writing.
- The teaching of mathematics is good, resulting in good progress for pupils. Numbers of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 are average, with some pupils in 2014 reaching the very highest levels. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking and demonstrate their working to others. They are able to do this with growing confidence as they move through the school.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are examples, especially in literacy, where clear guidance is given to pupils to ensure they are able to improve their work. Most pupils are routinely given the time to respond to these comments from the teacher. This good practice seen in literacy is not always seen across other subjects and so opportunities to enhance learning are lost.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children entering the Nursery generally display skills and knowledge that are well below those typical for their age, and are lower than this in key areas such as communication and language. A strong emphasis on speaking and listening, using skilled bi-lingual staff ensure many children quickly acquire skills in speaking English. Despite the good progress they make in the early years, pupils' skills are still well below average on entry to Year 1 in areas of literacy and numeracy.
- More pupils join the school at different times of the year than is average, many of them at very early stages of speaking English as an additional language. This can, at times, give rise to fluctuating attainment in the government tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Nevertheless, attainment in mathematics, writing and, more recently, in reading by the end of Year 6 are typically average.
- This represents good achievement for pupils from their individual starting points to the end of Key Stage 2.
- The good progress made in the early years continues through Key Stage 1. Standards, although below average, are improving faster than national standards in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, attainment in the school is moving closer to average year on year.
- As they move through Key Stage 2 the good progress they make is built on successfully. Unvalidated results from the 2014 tests indicate that pupils made significantly better progress overall than is average. Current school tracking data confirm that this is set to continue. Almost all pupils make expected progress and a greater number than average do better than this in writing and mathematics. In 2014 the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 national screening check for phonics (letters and the sounds they make) was very slightly below average, an improving picture of attainment from 2013.
- Following the 2013 results at the end of Key Stage 2 the school recognised that progress in reading was lagging behind that of writing and mathematics. As a result of the school's strong focus on improving pupils' reading skills, achievement is rising rapidly and securely. Progress data tracking presented by the school indicate that progress in reading is accelerating, and, as a result, standards are set to rise, with many more pupils attaining the higher Levels 3 and 5 by the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to reading and say they enjoy the books they read. Pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2 generally read fluently and with expression. They talk about books they have read and can articulate why they particularly enjoy books by their favourite authors. They use strategies they have learnt to read unfamiliar words.
- The most able pupils usually make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Historically very few pupils have attained the higher Level 3 by the end of Year 2, with some pupils reaching the higher levels by the end of Year 6. Progress data presented by the school indicates that numbers of pupils set to reach the higher levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are now rising across the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make similar good progress to their classmates. Talented classroom assistants give valuable support and guidance to small groups and individual pupils.
- The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of the pupils for whom English is an additional language. There is an appropriate focus on speaking and listening activities from their entry into school and bilingual teaching assistants play a valuable part in ensuring pupils develop their language skills

rapidly. Consequently pupils are well placed to access their learning and make the same good progress as their peers.

- The additional support and experiences the school provides for disadvantaged pupils through extra guidance in the classroom, small group support and homework clubs after school, is used effectively and ensures these pupils make similar and occasionally even better progress than non-disadvantaged pupils in the school. By the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils in the school are almost one term ahead of their classmates and more than two terms ahead of similar pupils nationally in mathematics. In writing, although being just over one and a half terms below similar pupils nationally, they attain as well as their peers in the school. In reading they are up to eight months behind their non-disadvantaged classmates, the same as differences for similar pupils nationally. This demonstrates the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity.

The early years provision

is good

- When children join the school in Nursery or in the Reception year, their levels of skills and understanding are generally low, especially in speaking and communication. Through a curriculum that addresses children's needs, particularly focusing on developing their speaking and listening skills, children thrive. Small groups, working with bi-lingual assistants support children extremely well. Despite the good progress they make by the end of the early years, children's skills remain low on entry to Key Stage 1.
- Children are very safe. They settle quickly into the setting because of the strong relationships and clear routines that are in place to support them. Adults gently, but firmly, reinforce good learning behaviours, so that children develop a positive attitude to their learning, work happily together and learn to take turns and behave well. This is because the school instils its values into children from the outset. Children demonstrate concentration and resilience in their tasks, which enables them to investigate and explore activities on offer.
- Teaching is good and children enjoy a colourful and spacious indoor learning environment and a large, well resourced outdoor learning area. Where activities are adult led, these are well focused and children make more rapid progress. Where children access the outdoor and indoor 'choosing' activities, there is not always enough challenge for the older Reception children in the setting. At these times progress slows for these children. Learning Journey booklets, providing evidence of each child's progress, are available to parents. The school reaches out to its parents holding 'Stay and Play' sessions during the week. A parents' room linked to the Early Years setting offers parents a place to socialise and hold workshops.
- The early years' leader is relatively new to her role. However she, together with the rest of the early years' team of adults, share a commitment to children's well-being, safety and progress.

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	105764
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	449296

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nadia Imran (Acting)
Headteacher	Clare Cheetham
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2009
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