

Packmoor Primary School

Carr Street, Packmoor, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST7 4SP

Inspection dates

14–15 January 2015

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: This inspection: | Inadequate | 4 |
|--------------------------------|--|------------|---|
| | 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.

- Effective leadership at all levels has led to notable improvement in all aspects of the school's work. A strong sense of teamwork and shared high ambition exists between school leaders, staff and governors. Staff are committed to providing the best possible care and education for every pupil.
- Governors hold leaders to account for pupils' achievement. Leaders rigorously check the quality of teaching and effectively measure pupils' achievement. Good quality training for teachers and well-targeted support for pupils are provided where needed. As a result of this cycle, teaching is now good and pupils are making rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are safe and happy in school. The school helps them to become confident, caring, socially aware individuals and prepares them well for life in modern democratic Britain.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They plan lessons that enable pupils to learn new skills quickly and challenge pupils to think critically and creatively.
- Pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills are now well developed. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are attaining the standards they should for their ages. Some are exceeding these. Increasing proportions of the most-able pupils are reaching the high standards of which they are capable. Pupils use their reading and writing skills confidently to help their learning in many subjects.
- Children in the early years are taught well in a safe, stimulating environment. As a result, they are happy and confident and achieve well.
- The school's curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to learn through a broad range of memorable experiences. It helps pupils to develop academic skills, cultural awareness, tolerance and understanding.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Due to the legacy of very low standards, pupils' attainment has been too low in recent years. While all pupils are now making good progress, a few still have lost ground to make up.
- Pupils do not routinely use their mathematical skills in everyday life.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 15 lessons and through a series of walks around the school. While visiting lessons, inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and talked to pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' writing, mathematics and other exercise books and heard some pupils reading. They observed playtime and lunchtime activities and visited the after-school club run by the school at the local community centre.
- Meetings were held with: the headteacher and other senior staff; the home-school link worker; a group of teachers and teaching assistants; the governing body; three groups of pupils; and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors spoke informally to other staff and pupils as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 70 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to parents of pupils in all year groups as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, which included: the school's checks on how well it is doing and plans for improvement; evidence about how teachers are set targets to improve pupils' progress; records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching; minutes of meetings of the governing body and the senior leadership team; information about pupils' progress over time; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Sandra Hayes, Lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Elaine White | Additional Inspector |
| Elaine Maloney | Additional Inspector |

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- Packmoor Primary School is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- Around one in five of the pupils is disadvantaged and eligible for support through the pupil premium. This proportion is below that in most schools. This additional government funding is provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Just over one in ten of the pupils is disabled or has special educational needs. This is similar to other schools.
- The early years is made up of one Nursery class and two Reception classes. Children attend full time.
- An out-of-school club, managed by the governing body, operates in a nearby community centre in partnership with a local special school and secondary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school was inspected in September 2013 and judged to have serious weaknesses, as it was performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform. Since then, it has been monitored three times by Ofsted.
- The governing body had been reconstituted since the previous inspection. There is now a core of seven members.
- The local authority brokered a package of support to strengthen leadership and to improve the quality of teaching. Through this package, the school has worked with successful local schools and the Britannia Teaching School Alliance.
- The assistant headteacher is a specialist leader in education (SLE). At the request of the local authority, she and the headteacher have provided support to strengthen the capacity of leadership at another local primary school. The deputy headteacher is also the co-ordinator for provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs (known as the SENCO). He has provided support for SENCOs from other schools to improve the tracking of achievement for these pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by sustaining the current rapid rates of progress.
- Ensure that pupils are able to use mathematical understanding in everyday life confidently and effectively by applying knowledge about numbers to their work in different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Staff, parents, pupils and governors recognise the transformation brought about in the school by the headteacher and her highly effective senior leadership team. Staff morale and confidence are high because leaders value and utilise individuals' strengths. Teachers and governors comment on the high degree of transparency that exists and how this promotes trust. Consequently, change is welcomed and rapid improvement has been made.
 - Leaders at all levels work closely together to build an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and to plan how to make improvements where needed. Governors regularly attend senior leadership meetings and are actively involved in checking on pupils' learning. Subject leaders and key stage leaders help monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement effectively. Sharply focused action plans set out how issues will be addressed. The school council shares the school development plan with fellow pupils. As a result, there is a shared sense of accountability and ambition.
 - Senior leaders have implemented an effective system for setting expectations of teachers' performance; monitoring teaching quality; checking the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement; providing support and challenge where necessary; and holding teachers to account. Teachers value the process and the opportunity it provides for professional development. The system is applied rigorously and has driven up the quality of teaching.
 - Leaders check other aspects of the school's work equally well. For example, the deputy headteacher checks meticulously the progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. He uses this information to adjust provision so each pupil receives precisely the support needed to help overcome barriers to their learning.
 - Detailed records show the difference made to each individual eligible pupil by the use of the pupil premium funding. The school's physical education team checks on participation rates and pupils' views to evaluate the impact of the primary school sport funding. Consequently, leaders ensure that funding is used well to achieve good outcomes and equality of opportunity for all pupils.
 - Leaders have ensured that teachers assess pupils' work accurately and keep useful records of achievement. This includes effective tracking of pupils' attainment in the new National Curriculum.
 - The assistant headteacher has led the development of an approach to combine subjects into interesting themes. This helps pupils develop and apply reading and writing skills in meaningful ways. It promotes appreciation of different faiths, cultures and ways of life and reinforces the school's values of determination, respect, self-belief, excellence and teamwork. Through these experiences, the school promotes good relations, tackles discrimination and prepares pupils well for life in modern democratic Britain. The curriculum does not enable pupils to use mathematical knowledge as effectively as reading and writing skills in everyday life. This is why leadership is not outstanding.
 - The local authority had not identified this as an inadequate school and offered little support or challenge prior to the previous inspection. Since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses, the local authority has kept a close check on its performance. Senior leaders and governors value the availability and quality of support brokered by the local authority.
- The governance of the school:**
- The reconstituted governing body works in strong partnership with senior leaders to evaluate the school's effectiveness, address weaknesses and secure continuous improvement. Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement because they actively seek to find out for themselves. Governors describe this as a, 'Don't tell me, show me,' approach. Members of the governing body attend school meetings to help them understand performance data. Governors challenge leaders with perceptive questions and ask for additional information to confirm the validity of information given to them.
 - The governing body has supported the headteacher well in tackling weak teaching. Governors ensure that teachers' performance is managed effectively and that decisions about salary increases take sufficient account of pupils' achievement.
 - Governors who are assigned key roles work closely with relevant members of staff to ensure that statutory responsibilities, including those for safeguarding pupils, are met well.
 - Governors have a realistic view of their own performance. They aim to be as effective as possible and readily act on advice and training. The governing body aspires for the school to provide an exceptional education for pupils. Governors are seeking to develop a strategic approach to achieving this ambition.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and are keen learners. They are proud of their work and keen to share what they have achieved.
- Pupils are friendly to each other and very polite to adults. Adults provide good role models as they treat pupils courteously and respectfully.
- The school's values are understood well by pupils and are embedded and reinforced in the school reward system. This helps pupils to understand their responsibilities and appreciate the rights of others.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility. They have many opportunities to do so. Pupils can be elected to be prefects, or to be on the school council. Older pupils are trained to act as peer mentors, helping other pupils to get on well together at break times.
- Pupils work well with the local and wider communities, for example through raising money for charity and by working with the Millennium Green Trust to arrange fencing to help them feel safe on the school site. During the inspection, the school choir travelled to Birmingham to participate in the Young Voices regional event.
- The after-school provision located at the community centre, shared with the local special school and high school, provides high quality care and experiences for pupils. For example, pupils have the opportunity to complete homework in the 'Learning Zone.' Pupils benefit from the time they spend at the after-school club.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. When they do occur, they are recorded in detail. The home-school link worker ensures that actions taken are followed up rigorously and that parents are involved in the process.
- Pupils have an astute understanding of bullying. The school's values help pupils to talk about bullying issues maturely. Pupils feel staff take bullying incidences seriously and deal with them effectively.
- When moving around school, pupils follow rules immediately and without question. Just occasionally, when they are not directly supervised, pupils' behaviour in corridors or the dining room deteriorates slightly and they become a little boisterous.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Staff are well trained in all aspects of keeping pupils safe. Checks on staff and visitors are rigorous. Safeguarding procedures are effective.
- The school teaches pupils how to stay safe. As a result, pupils have a sensible view of the risks they face when out and about or at home. There is a vigilant approach to e-safety across the school and pupils are confident they know what to do if they are worried about anything that happens while they are online.
- Pupils' attendance is above national rates for primary schools. Absences are closely monitored by office staff and the home-school link worker. Any causes for concern are noted and investigated immediately. This ensures that pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are well protected.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers make accurate assessments of what pupils can do. They use this information well to plan activities that meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants keep a close check on pupils' learning in lessons, so they are quick to spot if there is a problem, or if pupils are finding the work easy. Teachers then re-shape the lesson to ensure that pupils make swift progress and that the most able are well challenged.
- Classrooms are bright and welcoming. Teachers use imaginative and helpful resources to motivate pupils and support them in their learning. As a result, pupils know what to do if they want to write a better sentence, or check they have completed a mathematics question correctly.
- Skilful questioning by teachers and teaching assistants probes pupils' understanding, helps them make links in their learning and challenges them to think critically. This helps pupils develop analytical skills and give reasoned explanations for their answers.
- Time is used well in lessons, so no learning time is lost. As a result, pupils settle quickly to their tasks, work productively and maintain high levels of concentration.
- Teachers show pupils what they are expected to learn and how to complete tasks successfully. Pupils know these instructions as 'success criteria' and use them to assess their own work. Teachers use the success criteria to provide well-focused feedback on what the pupil has done well and what could be improved. Pupils use teachers' comments to help them make the necessary improvements.

- Teachers set interesting homework tasks, which pupils complete regularly. This supports what pupils are learning in school.
- Disabled pupils, pupils with special educational needs and pupils who struggle with particular aspects of learning make good progress in lessons. Where they need extra help, they receive well-targeted and skilfully delivered additional teaching in small groups, or individually. As a result, these pupils achieve well.
- Teaching supports pupils' personal reflection skills and emotional understanding. For example, when Year 3 pupils listened to music in order to help them write a story opening, they used emotive adjectives and imaginatively described the effect the music had upon their mood. Teaching also supports the development of pupils' social skills. Pupils frequently listen to others' views in lessons, showing respect and courtesy as they do so.
- Teachers know how to teach the skills of reading, writing and mathematics effectively. Consequently, they help pupils build knowledge systematically. Teachers help pupils use reading and writing skills well to support learning in other subjects, but do not give pupils similarly broad opportunities to demonstrate such capability with mathematical understanding. This is why pupils do not use their knowledge about numbers as fluently in other subjects as they do with reading and writing skills.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- At the time of the previous inspection in September 2013, standards had started to improve. By the end of 2014, pupils' attainment in Key Stage 1 had improved notably in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' test scores were above average, and significantly so in reading.
- Standards in Key Stage 2 have also risen since the previous inspection. The improvement in standards was less notable than in Key Stage 1 because older pupils had more lost ground to make up. Externally marked assessments of pupils currently in Year 6 indicate the improving trend is set to continue and that standards in 2015 are likely to be above average. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils in Years 1 to 6 are now reaching the standards expected for their age. Many are attaining beyond this.
- Most gaps between the attainment of different groups of pupils, evident at the time of the previous inspection, have narrowed. In the 2014 Key Stage 2 national tests, disadvantaged pupils were around a term behind other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. They were over a year behind in the test for grammar, punctuation and spelling. Despite a slight improvement, compared to other pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were around a year behind in reading, writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, disadvantaged pupils in Years 1 to 6 are now making rapid progress and gaps are closing quickly.
- At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics was too slow, leading to low standards. From 2013 to 2014, pupils' progress sped up rapidly. By the time they took the end of Key Stage 2 tests, most Year 6 pupils had made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils currently in Years 1 to 6 are making consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Many disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are now making accelerated progress from their starting points. These proportions have improved significantly from previous years.
- High expectations, quality teaching in lessons and booster sessions at the local secondary school, ensure that the most-able pupils currently in the school are making rapid progress. As a result, attainment for these pupils is rising fast and is above the standards expected for their age.
- When children start in Nursery and Reception classes, they can sit quietly when listening to stories, follow simple instructions and act out stories they know. They can recognise some letters and know some numbers. They build well on these skills so, by the time they begin Year 1, they are ready to start the National Curriculum.
- Reading has a high profile across the school. The school library forms an impressive centrepiece to the school building. Many classrooms have exciting reading corners, which inspire pupils to choose books. Younger pupils use phonics skills confidently to help them read. Most Year 1 pupils achieved the expected standard in the national phonics screening check in 2014. This was a significant increase for the previous year. Older pupils enjoy reading and can talk about books they have read. They keep detailed reading journals, which show they read a wide variety of books.
- Pupils systematically develop spelling, punctuation and grammar skills. They have many opportunities to practise and refine these skills by using them in different subjects. As a result, the quality of pupils' writing has improved and standards are rising rapidly.
- Pupils acquire secure mathematical skills. However, they do not demonstrate that they can apply these skills in everyday life. This is because they rarely use mathematical understanding beyond mathematics lessons.

The early years provision**is good**

- When children start in the nursery, many are able to listen to stories, follow simple instructions, recognise their own name and say some number names in order. They learn well in the Nursery and Reception classes so, by the time they enter Year 1, most are ready to start the National Curriculum.
- The early years classrooms and the outdoor learning space are very attractive. This stimulates children's interest and enjoyment in learning.
- During the school day, children participate in self-chosen play activities as well as spending time working with adults. This ensures that children develop independence and curiosity. The variety of experiences is well planned and organised so that the children build and practise skills such as counting and letter recognition. This helps them make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have a good knowledge of children's interests and capabilities. They use this information to ensure that children's different abilities are met well. For example, one group of children was skilfully encouraged to identify rhyming words while enjoying a practical activity. Good questioning by adults encourages children to think. The most-able children are challenged well to give more extended answers to questions.
- The good support from staff, and close partnerships with parents, ensure that children form secure bonds and develop confidence and self-belief. They learn to share, take turns and care for one another's feelings. Even the very youngest children move sensibly around the school and behave well in class.
- The early years is led well and staff work well together. They have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development and use this knowledge to plan for improvement.
- Arrangements for keeping children safe are highly effective.

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 | 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. |
| | | | 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. |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 123979 |
| Local authority | Stoke-On-Trent |
| Inspection number | 453782 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 432 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ian Macbeth |
| Headteacher | Sharon May |
| Date of previous school inspection | 24 September 2013 |
| Telephone number | 01782 234544 |
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