

# Blackburn Primary School

Baring Road, Blackburn, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S61 2BU

**Inspection dates** 24–25 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. As a result, not enough pupils make good progress, particularly in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2.
- Although improving, pupils' progress in reading and writing in Key Stage 2 has been too slow.
- Not enough pupils have attained the higher level at Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 in reading, writing or mathematics. This is because work provided has not always been sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils.
- Achievement in reading has been a weakness in the past. Changes in the way reading is taught are having a positive impact, but improvements are not consistent across the school.
- The quality of marking is variable across different classes.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations and do not insist pupils take sufficient pride in their work. They allow pupils to present untidy and incomplete work.
- Leaders do not analyse information on incidents of poor behaviour that occur to identify trends and patterns so that preventative action can be taken.
- Pupils do not have sufficient understanding or awareness of different faiths. Consequently, aspects of their spiritual and cultural awareness are underdeveloped.
- Leaders and governors do not check closely enough on the extent to which additional government funding is raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leadership at all levels, including that of the governing body, has improved and all are committed to ensuring the school's progress continues.
- Senior leaders have made clear their expectations of teachers and have provided appropriate professional development to strengthen their professional skills.
- Middle leaders make a significant contribution to evaluating the quality of teaching and the development of less-experienced members of staff.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start because of good teaching. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is of a good quality.
- More pupils currently in the school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils behave well and attend school regularly. They are polite and courteous and have well-developed skills to work together effectively and support one another.
- Attendance is above the national average and rising.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 part-lessons, of which the majority were completed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors also made shorter visits to lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to learning, to look at their books and displays, and to talk with pupils.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. Further meetings were held with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils, listened to them read and observed them during social times.
- There were too few responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) to be viewed. Inspectors spoke to a number of parents during the day when children were being collected from school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including the school's plans for improvement, the self-evaluation summary, assessment information, records of checks on teaching and anonymised records of teachers' performance management. In addition, inspectors considered information relating to attendance and behaviour and the minutes of governing body meetings.

## Inspection team

Chris Smith, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lynne Davies

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.*

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average size primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium, is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- Few pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average, at around 16%.
- 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.
- The school has early years provision in which younger pupils attend in morning or afternoon groups. Children in the Reception Year attend on a full-time basis.
- The school is currently being led by an executive headteacher on a temporary basis, during the headteacher's maternity leave.
- Since the school was judged to require special measures, it has received three monitoring visits from HMI prior to this inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - ensuring the good practice in marking which is evident in some parts of the school is matched by all staff
  - ensuring all teachers expect pupils to work hard, present their work to a good standard in all subjects and apply their spelling and grammar skills across the whole curriculum
  - ensuring that learning activities are challenging and engaging, particularly for the most able.
- Further accelerate pupils' progress in reading across the school and accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils by:
  - sharing more widely the good practice in the teaching of reading so that all teachers have the skills necessary to support rapid progress
  - encouraging pupils to explain their ideas fully, using appropriate vocabulary
  - ensuring that all disadvantaged pupils receive individual additional support that accelerates their progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - systematically checking the gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at every assessment point to determine which strategies are the most effective for improving pupils' progress
  - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to develop their understanding and appreciation of different faiths
  - systematically analysing information gathered on bullying so that trends and patterns are identified and preventative action is taken.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good because the quality of teaching, behaviour and safety have improved, and achievement is rising rapidly for pupils currently in the school.
- The headteacher, and more recently the temporary executive headteacher, have raised the expectations of staff and pupils and have sustained improvements since the school was placed in special measures. They have instilled a 'can-do' approach, and a positive ethos now permeates classrooms. When the temporary executive headteacher is not on site, the head of school has provided strong leadership and has sustained improvements on a day-to-day basis.
- The leadership of teaching has been effective. Good teacher training and more rigorous management of teachers' performance, combined with the setting of more demanding targets, have raised expectations. The introduction of non-negotiables for teaching has helped all members of staff to understand what leaders expect. This, together with more regular checks on the quality of teaching and the increasingly precise feedback teachers receive, has helped most teachers to refine their practice.
- Middle leaders are now much more influential and play a more significant role in leadership decisions. They contribute effectively to checking the quality of provision and increasingly lead the professional development of colleagues. All have had access to good external training, which has enhanced their leadership skills.
- The leadership of the early years is effective and contributes well to the good teaching and achievement in this area of the school.
- More rigorous arrangements are now in place to manage the performance of teachers. All teachers are aware that their salary progression is dependent upon meeting their objectives. Teachers told inspectors that they find the performance management arrangements helpful, as their objectives are clear and measurable. Arrangements to manage the performance of teaching assistants have also been introduced. As a result, teaching assistants feel more valued and professional in their approach. They now receive better training to equip them for their role and their impact in the classroom has improved.
- The school provides an appropriately broad curriculum. A particular focus this year has been on developing the teaching of reading. New methods have been introduced into Key Stage 2 and new engaging texts have been integrated into each cross-curricular project. Pupils told inspectors that the new curriculum is more interesting. Projects such as 'Crime and Punishment', 'Roman Britain' and 'Really Wild' engage pupils' interests and sustain their curiosity.
- The curriculum ensures that there are good opportunities to develop pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. In most respects pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They are taught the values of kindness, respect and tolerance, and they value the opinions of others. They develop a sense of responsibility and pride in their school. Pupils understand that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated, although the curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to learn about and experience different faiths.
- Senior leaders and governors recognise the pupil premium funding needs to be used more effectively to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Although disadvantaged pupils have begun to make better progress, the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school is not closing fast enough.
- The primary school sports funding is used well to provide specialist sports coaching. Teachers at the school are benefitting from opportunities to observe and work alongside specialists to improve their own teaching of physical education.
- The local authority has provided good support and challenge. Effective partnerships have been brokered with local schools and good advice and guidance have influenced improvements in the school's provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. It has also led to improvements in the early years provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The quality of governance has improved significantly since the school was placed in special measures and governors have been instrumental in the school's improvement. The Chair of the Governing Body has taken steps to recruit governors with suitable skills and experience, and has ensured that all governors undertake relevant training. Consequently, they understand data and use it effectively to evaluate the school's performance.
  - Governors are very active within school. They have established a programme of 'governor in school days' through which particular aspects of provision are scrutinised in detail. Most recently, governors have scrutinised the teaching of reading. Governors sought answers to a number of probing questions

and made a number of recommendations following the visit. As a result, an action plan has been written for the development of the library and funding has been identified to improve the range of available books.

- Governors are rigorous in checking safeguarding arrangements. A thorough audit was completed at the start of the school year. The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and have ensured teachers' performance is closely linked to salary progression.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is because most staff have high expectations. Pupils are well supervised at social times and generally move around school sensibly. They are polite and courteous to one another. A focus placed on cooperative learning has developed pupils' skills in working with one another. Inspectors observed several occasions when pupils spontaneously helped one another with their learning. Pupils are punctual to lessons and adhere to the school uniform policy.
- Good attitudes to learning are fostered as soon as children enter the early years provision. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy school and that lessons have become more interesting. In most lessons pupils concentrate and try their best to get their work completed quickly and to a high standard. Where learning is less successful, pupils are reluctant sometimes to take part and some pupils take less care with their presentation and handwriting.
- Pupils are respectful of each other. Good protocols have been developed in lessons for pupils to challenge each other's views and opinions so that constructive debate can take place. This leads to good quality discussion and development of ideas.
- Pupils' attendance is slightly above the national average and is improving. This is because pupils are keen to come to school. Parents are also supportive of the school and many are keen to work in close partnership. Many parents attend curriculum events where children demonstrate and showcase what they have learned. Such events include the 'Mathematics Evening', which is designed to help parents support their children at home more effectively.
- Leaders have been successful in helping those pupils that demonstrate more challenging behaviour, and exclusions from school for poor behaviour are reducing in number.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Members of staff are vigilant, and levels of supervision across the school are high. Pupils feel safe in school and have confidence in adults to look after them. Parents also expressed their confidence in the staff to look after their children.
- Pupils are well aware of the different forms of bullying. They told inspectors there are some incidents of bullying and name-calling, but they trust teachers to deal with this effectively. The school maintains a detailed log of incidents of poor behaviour, but does not do enough to analyse this information to identify any trends or patterns so that preventative action can be taken.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when online. All classes receive a unit of work on e-safety each year and there are further opportunities planned into the curriculum for pupils to consider the risks when online. The school's approach to e-safety could be strengthened further by developing an e-safety policy so that everyone understands their role in this aspect of safety.
- Staff are well trained in child protection and know what procedures to follow when a concern is identified. The school responds quickly and appropriately when required to do so in order to protect a child. Detailed records are kept and partnerships with external agencies are well established and effective.

## The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not led to good progress across different subjects. However, the quality of teaching is improving, although it is not of a consistently good or better standard. Some weaker teaching remains in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. However, inadequate teaching has been eradicated and the proportion of good or better teaching is rising.
- Where teachers' expectations are not high enough, pupils' progress slows. Work in some books is less tidy or incomplete. Some marking is less specific and fails to make clear what pupils need to correct or add to improve their work. Some teachers are less clear about what pupils are expected to learn; consequently,

their questioning is sometimes vague and unhelpful acting as a barrier to accelerating pupils' knowledge and understanding.

- Where pupils make good progress, activities are carefully prepared to engage pupils' interest and are adapted to challenge pupils of different abilities. The most able pupils are suitably challenged and encouraged to develop independence. Teaching asks probing questions and is prepared to reshape tasks to take advantage of ideas that emerge through discussion.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved because teachers now have stronger subject knowledge, place more emphasis on teaching underlying concepts and provide numerous opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge to solving problems. As a result pupils are increasingly confident when faced with new challenges.
- The teaching of reading and writing has been reviewed over the last year and a number of changes have been made. Some strong practice is now developing, particularly in Key Stage 2. However, this remains inconsistent and the good practice needs to be shared in order to bring greater consistency.
- 'Fix-it time', in which pupils read the teacher's comments and make improvements to their work, is now well established. Pupils told inspectors that they like 'fix-it time' because they know what they need to work on to improve.
- There are positive relationships between pupils and adults. Expectations of behaviour are high and this supports pupils' learning. Pupils respond quickly and positively to teachers' instructions and explanations.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support when in lessons and through the small group sessions they lead. They work closely with teachers to plan learning activities and are deployed thoughtfully. They are skilled at working with small groups of pupils and many have received specialist training in specific programmes to support literacy and numeracy development.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Children flow freely through a broad range of stimulating activities both indoors and outside and members of staff work effectively as a team to guide their learning.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- The achievement of all groups of pupils has improved since the school was last inspected, but it is not yet good. Pupils currently in the school, particularly those in the early years and Key Stage 2, are making better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result their attainment is set to rise in 2015 and pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach or surpass national averages. The progress of other pupils lower down the school is less consistent because the quality of teaching is variable.
- In the past, children have made good progress in the early years and have been prepared well to enter more formal education in Year 1. The proportion of pupils that reached the expected level in the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds they make) check has been above the national average. However, progress across Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics has been too slow. End of Key Stage 1 results showed that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was average, but a less than average proportion of pupils reached the higher Level 3.
- At Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils that made expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was below average. Progress in reading was weakest. In addition, too few pupils made good progress and the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was well below the national average. This was the result of weaker teaching in the past.
- The progress that pupils now make in reading and writing has improved markedly. This is because leaders have reviewed the way reading and writing are taught and have put in place a number of new approaches. The teaching of phonics is improving, and additional support groups for those pupils making slower progress are now more effective. The library is being developed and new texts purchased. Interesting and engaging texts have been integrated into all new topics and there are positive signs that the teaching of reading in Key Stage 2 is improving. Nevertheless, these approaches need further development and emerging good practice needs to be shared across the school.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved since the last inspection, and pupils currently in the school are making better progress.
- In the past, the most able pupils made less progress than similar pupils nationally. Data on pupils currently in the school show that they have begun to make better progress. However, their progress is still variable because some teachers do not consistently provide suitably challenging work.
- In 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was not as good as other pupils in the school or compared to other pupils nationally. Disadvantaged pupils were around two terms behind other pupils in the school in mathematics and around a year behind in reading and writing. When compared to other pupils nationally, gaps were wider, with pupils around four terms behind in reading and writing and two

terms behind in mathematics. The progress of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school is improving and gaps are closing, although leaders recognise more needs to be done to narrow the gaps in attainment more rapidly.

- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar to or better than that of other pupils in the school. This is because the school now provides more tailored and individual support that is better matched to pupils' needs. The special educational needs coordinator tracks the progress of individual pupils carefully and intervenes quickly to adapt the support provided where necessary.
- Children enter the early years provision with levels of development that are slightly below those typical of their age. They make good progress because of the broad curriculum and good teaching. Those that enter with lower levels of development make rapid progress. In 2014, an above-average proportion of children attained a good level of development. Evidence from current data and the work in children's books shows they are on track to reach similar levels to the national average this year.

### The early years provision

is good

- The early years provision is resourced well and provides a stimulating learning environment. The provision is well led and managed. Members of staff work well together as a team and have a shared vision for what they want children to achieve. The quality of teaching has improved and leads to children making good progress. There is a broad range of resources, interesting displays and rich activities to engage and stimulate children. The unit provides good continuous provision indoors and outside. The quality of outdoor provision has improved since the last inspection with more activities designed to appeal to boys.
- The children's progress is carefully assessed and staff use this information to adjust the curriculum and tailor activities to meet individual needs. Children find the activities appealing and absorbing. Many quickly develop the skills to concentrate for long periods on activities such as preparing dinner in the 'mud kitchen' or building in the construction area. Through good teaching, most children develop sound phonics skills that prepare them well for more formal teaching in Year 1.
- Girls attained higher levels than boys in 2014. Teachers have made changes to the learning activities to ensure there are appropriate activities in place which appeal to boys. As a result, the gap in attainment between boys and girls is closing.
- Children's books and their learning journeys record the good progress they make. Parents regularly visit the early years unit to participate in activities. Parents are confident that children are safe and well cared for, and children settle quickly into the routines of the early years classes.
- All members of staff in the early years ensure children are safe. Thorough policies are in place and are followed. Children are confident, trusting of adults and capable of working well with one another. Their positive attitudes and good social skills support their learning well.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106834
<b>Local authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	453993

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	316
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Caroline Birkinshaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Sanderson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 November 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01709 740412
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