

Thornton Cleveleys Royles Brook Primary School

Marsh Road, Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire, FY5 2TY

Inspection dates 22–23 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- The school is well led by a very caring, dedicated headteacher. She is well supported by enthusiastic senior leaders and governors.
- Senior leaders have ensured teaching, and consequently achievement, has improved. Teaching is consistently good.
- Pupils' achievement is good. They reach standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. This shows good progress from below average starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs do as well as their classmates. This is because they have effective support which helps them in their learning.
- The pupils' very good attitudes towards school and their good behaviour contribute positively to the progress they make. When given the opportunity they love to work independently.
- The school makes sure pupils are safe. The care pupils receive is a strength.
- The pupils have an appreciation of British culture and are conducting their own election with candidates representing different aspects of the community.
- The school has been successful in stressing the importance of good attendance. As a result, attendance rates have improved and are broadly average.
- In the early years, children make a good start in learning to read, write and to understand mathematics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. This can be seen in the very good relationships pupils have with one another and their deep respect for adults.
- The governing body is effective and keeps a close eye on how well the school is doing. Governors are not shy in asking searching questions of senior leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most able pupils do not always make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- In the early years, children's creative development is not promoted strongly enough.
- Teachers do not always move pupils on to more challenging tasks quickly enough in lessons.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work is not good enough. There are not enough opportunities to write at length in English lessons.
- The impact of teachers' marking on pupils' learning is not consistent between classes.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a number of lessons and parts of lessons, one lesson was a shared observation with the headteacher.
- Work in books was scrutinised and records of the learning of Reception children.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Many discussions were held with pupils as they worked in lessons and a small number of pupils were heard read.
- Inspectors took account of the 34 responses to Ofsted’s online parents’ questionnaire and discussions that took place informally with parents.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work throughout the day and looked at a number of documents, including, the school’s own information on pupils’ current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Information from the 19 responses to the staff questionnaire was taken into account.

Inspection team

Gordon Alston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Mawer

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-size primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and all pupils have English as their first language.
- Most pupils are taught in single-age classes, although there are a few mixed-age classes.
- Children start school full-time in the Reception class.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium, is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- Since its last inspection, the school has appointed a new headteacher and several teaching and non-teaching staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate pupils' progress, particularly the most able by:
 - teachers checking on pupils' learning as they work and moving them on as soon as possible onto more challenging tasks
 - spreading the good practice in teachers' marking to ensure all pupils improve their performance as a result
 - improving pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work and increasing the opportunities pupils have to write at length in English lessons
 - making sure best use is made of teaching assistants in classrooms.
- Providing more opportunities for children in the early years to extend their creative development.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is inspirational and has created a school where every pupil and adult is valued. There is an ethos in which good teaching and learning and behaviour can flourish. The support of a conscientious senior leadership team is an integral part of the driving force in helping create this happy school.
- The leadership of teaching is good. Senior leaders make regular checks on how well staff are doing and set targets which help them do their jobs well. Relevant training and support are provided to help staff improve their work. Targets are set based on how well pupils achieve and their progress over time is rigorously monitored by senior leaders. A strength in the impact of good management is the speed at which pupils who fall behind are identified and support provided to help them quickly catch up.
- Middle leaders carry out their roles effectively, based on an accurate picture of how well pupils are achieving. Senior leaders have provided support with joint lesson observations and book scrutinies which have led to clear action plans. The local authority supports the school well through regular visits and in providing training to keep teachers well informed.
- The school has a rigorous assessment system in place and uses it well in helping staff to understand how well individuals are doing, including children in the early years. Leaders are establishing new assessment systems in response to change in the National Curriculum.
- The care and well-being of pupils are given the same high priority as academic achievement. Care is taken to make sure those in need of extra help receive the correct support to make them successful learners and achieve well in their academic and personal development. This reflects the school's strong commitment to equal opportunity. Equality is at the heart of the school's ethos. That discrimination is not tolerated and good relations are fostered, is reflected in the way pupils from all backgrounds collaborate together in lessons and play happily together at break times.
- The pupil premium funding is used successfully in benefiting disadvantaged pupils, resulting in their raised esteem and their better achievement. The school has recognised the need to support some of the youngest children who have language difficulties and those pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. The appointment of a part-time Speech Therapist and a Family Support worker, funded by the pupil premium, is already having a positive effect on the progress being made by these pupils.
- The curriculum is well balanced and provides a range of interesting activities, which promote good progress and enjoyment for learning. Good use is made of all the community has to offer in order to enhance pupils' experiences and make learning meaningful. Further enrichment is provided through residential trips, class visits and visitors. Values feature strongly, helping pupils to recognise and demonstrate respect and tolerance and contributing towards an understanding of life in modern Britain.
- In the light of the current focus on the General Election, the school is conducting its own election based on a similar principle. There are candidates who address the whole school in assemblies and represent different groups. The pupils will then vote in May for the candidate they feel has the best ideas for the school.
- The primary sports funding is used effectively to provide a wide range of physical activities for pupils. The purchase of resources for use at lunchtime has had a positive effect on pupils' engagement and behaviour. Increased participation in sporting activities is improving pupils' skills and raising their success in inter-school competitions.
- Safeguarding is given high priority and regular assessments are made to make sure pupils are safe. Arrangements meet statutory requirements are fully met and systems are effective. Training in safeguarding issues is securely in place and the site is secure.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is conscientious, particularly in holding the school to account. It works very closely with senior leaders and has a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas which could be further improved.
 - Governors have a good view of the quality of teaching across the school not only from reports they receive but also from first-hand experience in lessons and talking to pupils.
 - Governors have access to assessment data and have a good understanding of what this means. They have ensured that very good use is made of pupil premium funding and are regularly updated on how well these and other groups of pupils are achieving.
 - The governing body is fully involved in strategic planning and their decisions are well informed. The governors set clear targets in managing the performance of the headteacher and staff, making sure teachers' pay increases are linked to competence.

- The governors ensure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements, and that these arrangements are highly effective.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well around the school. They play well together during break times and are courteous and polite to each other and to adults. Very positive relationships are a strength and thread their way throughout school. This is making a positive contribution towards pupils' social and cultural development.
- Pupils see behaviour as being good. They show an understanding of the values that lie at the heart of the school and know that good behaviour is the norm. They can explain the way that behaviour brings a positive reward and what the consequences are otherwise.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive shown in their keenness to get on with their work. Pupils, even in classes with younger pupils are able to sustain their concentration for long periods while working on their own. Occasionally, a few potential vulnerable pupils need the support from teaching assistants to ensure they are fully focused on their learning. This ensures that the learning of other pupils is not disrupted.
- Pupils are proud of their school, but this is not always transferred into the quality of the presentation of their work, which can be quite poor at times. Children in the early years get on well with each other. They are enthusiastic about their learning and are developing good social skills. They cooperate well together and share the available equipment sensibly when playing particularly in the outdoor area.
- Pupils' attendance has been below average. However, the school has worked tirelessly to stress the importance of regular attendance to families where this has been a cause for concern. The newly appointed Family Support worker has been central in this and follows up any unexplained absences immediately, which sometimes involve home visits; she works closely with a small number of families where the children's absence is a concern. Attendance is broadly average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Caring for pupils is central to the school's ethos and the school has secure fencing and gateways to ensure entry to school can be controlled. Systems for checking visitors into school are robust and as a result, pupils are safe.
- Pupils say they feel safe and are happy at school. Pupils are supervised very closely at breakfast club, break times and during lessons. Senior leaders have established strong links with outside agencies to ensure pupils, whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, are looked after well. The tenacity with which the school pursues this support is a strength.
- They have a clear understanding of the dangers of the internet, know about 'stranger danger' and the dangers in the area they live such as crossing the road. They know what action to take in these various situations.
- Pupils say that bullying very rarely happens. This is confirmed by the very few recorded incidents about such matters and pupils feel confident and say that any such incidents would be 'jumped on and stamped out' very quickly by the adults at school. Similarly, racial incidents and exclusions are rare but poor behaviour is followed up, sometimes with parental involvement.
- Parents' views are overwhelmingly positive and complimentary about pupils' behaviour and to the extent that their children feel safe in school. All parents who spoke to an inspector confirmed this view at a very positive feature of the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good. It has improved because senior managers have spent time observing teachers teach. They have followed this up with discussions about the lessons seen and provide advice and support to teachers on how to improve their work. Teachers respond positively to the feedback that they are given and see this as an important part of their development.
- Classroom procedures have been reviewed, such as marking and assessment of pupils' work. These are now becoming established but not yet consistently applied in all classes. Teachers mark pupils work rigorously and give them pointers on how they can improve. However, in some classes pupils do not always respond to the pointers teachers make or teachers do not always check on pupils' responses.
- Pupils enjoy tasks and learn well when they find out things for themselves. In a Year 2 English lesson, the

pupils drew a story picture on a linen cloth with very little input from the teacher. Pupils concentrated well and their enjoyment and pride in making the story picture filled the air. However, it is not evident that pupils find out things for themselves when appropriate, in all classes.

- Pupils make good progress in reading. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is effective in helping younger pupils unlock new words and the way in which learning is organised helps pupils to develop these skills effectively. In addition, older pupils are taught other important skills well such as, how to use all the clues to help find a word and understand the text. Group reading activities with the teacher are successful in developing these skills further.
- The teaching of mathematics has been a focus for the school and the success of this can be seen in the good progress pupils are now making. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of basic skills and how to apply these skills effectively in problem-solving situations. Pupils are beginning to master a good knowledge and understanding of mathematical processes.
- In writing, there is a strong focus on teaching pupils the skills they will need to be successful writers. These skills are use effective in helping pupils make good progress. Pupils have many opportunities to write in other subjects such as science and topic work. However, in English lessons there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length as evidenced in the scrutiny of their English books. This limits the progress pupils make, particularly the most able.
- Most teachers quickly spot when the task they have asked pupils to do is too easy for some and intervene by offering a more difficult task that better matches ability. In Year 5 mathematics, pupils were writing balanced mathematical sentences such as $9+6=22-?$. The teacher quickly realised that there was a lack of challenge for the most able pupils and increased the difficulty by asking them to use square numbers or fractions in their sentence. This practice is not fully consistent and in some classes, pupils work through tasks that do not fully challenge them, particularly the most able.
- The warmth of relationships are evident in all classrooms. This helps provide a good learning environment where pupils and adults respect one another and pupils cooperate well when working in pairs or in small groups. Teachers often provide stimulating resources which engage and motivate pupils. In Year 4, pupils had the opportunity to taste a range of French food linked to their topic on France. They found the 'smell' test a real challenge.
- Teaching assistants are present in all classes but best use is not always made of their time, particularly at the start of lessons. The quality of support is variable but the school has plans in place to develop this important resource. Homework is used well and usually linked to learning in lessons. It is supported effectively at home by parents.

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children start school in the Reception Year their skills are below those typical for their age. They subsequently achieve well in each class and by the time they leave the school, they reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- They have achieved particularly well in mathematics, with a few pupils reaching the very highest levels. This is because pupils have a good grasp of number concepts, which they use competently in problem-solving tasks in a range of subjects. For example, work in books shows they use they knowledge and understanding of mathematics in finding average rainfall in geography and compare findings in science, very effectively.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. In the Year 1 national phonics screening test, pupils' attainment is better than most schools nationally. The national test results, at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2014, show a marked improvement over the last two years in pupils' attainment in reading, due to successful actions by staff. New resources, including a new library and an increase in the time given to reading, have all had a positive impact.
- In writing, pupils' attainment has improved but not as many pupils reach the higher levels as in reading or mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 1. The quality of handwriting is sometimes poor with many pupils not yet producing clear, legible, joined script, even the oldest pupils. Pupils can write imaginatively and at length, producing interesting stories, but there are too few examples of this in pupils' books. The progress pupils make slows, particularly that of the most able.
- The most able pupils are challenged when they are provided with well-planned activities to extend and challenge their knowledge. However, these kind of opportunities are not consistently provided in all classes. Teachers do not always move pupils on to more challenging tasks quickly enough and as a result, progress slows down.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special needs achieve well, making good progress towards their

personal targets because of the high level of support they receive. In some classes pupils discuss their targets, which helps them become clear in knowing what they need to do. However, this is not consistent across the school. The most able pupils are challenged when there are well-planned tasks to extend and deepen their knowledge. However, this is not consistently provided in all classes. Teachers do not always move them on to more challenging tasks quickly enough and as a result, progress slows.

- The gap in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school closed rapidly in 2014 particularly by the end of Year 6. Previously, the gap has been as high as two years in reading. Last year's cohort of disadvantaged pupils' attainment was two terms behind other pupils in the school in writing and mathematics and three terms behind in reading. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment was one term behind non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in writing and mathematics and two terms behind in reading. Current data shows the gap has closed even more this academic year and that disadvantaged pupils are progressing well, at least in line with the current national average.

The early years provision

is good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age, particularly in speech and language. They make good progress from their individual starting points and the proportion reaching a good level of development has improved steadily over the past three years. It is now close to average and the majority are ready to start Year 1.
- While a good proportion of children exceed expectations in reading, writing and number because of the high focus and time given to this, very few exceed expectations in other areas of learning.
- Children settle quickly and successfully into school life because of strong links to parents, who appreciate the weekly 'Working Together' sessions which help them support the children's learning at home. Children learn to play safely by taking turns and being kind to one another. They behave well while sitting on the carpet with an adult or while playing together in the classroom or outside play area. They happily share equipment and help one another with building or role play activities. Children are safe and aware of safety rules.
- Teaching is good. Both the indoor and outdoor areas provide a good balance between teacher-led activities and activities for children to choose. Activities to support reading, writing and number receive a high focus and enable pupils to make good progress. However, there is a lack of opportunities for children to develop their creativity.
- Care is a strength and children who need extra help and support are well provided for. A Speech Therapist was funded by the pupil premium to help a small group of children who had language difficulties. These children made very good progress and are gaining confidence in their speaking and listening skills.
- The early years is well led and a clear action plan is in place. Planned changes are in place to address the issue of provision to enhance children's creative skills and challenge the most able. The deputy headteacher has supported the development of early years well this year. Children are carefully assessed and support is given when children cause concern.

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	119149
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	462320

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	J Bottomley
Headteacher	H Murray
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2013
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