

Littleborough Community Primary School

Calderbrook Road, Littleborough, Lancashire, OL15 9HW

Inspection dates 3–4 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils make good progress from starting points that are below those typical for their age. Good provision and teaching in the early years ensure that children achieve well and get off to a good start.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and most reach the expected level of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils attain particularly well in reading and mathematics.
- Progress is good in Key Stage 2 and pupils reach standards that are broadly average. Pupils' attainment in reading has improved significantly in the last year. This is because of actions taken by school leaders to improve the quality of teaching in this subject.
- Teaching is good in all year groups. Staff provide very well-planned and interesting opportunities for pupils to learn. In all classes, pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences.
- All staff work hard to maintain a calm, respectful and positive place for learning. They ensure that pupils get the most out of every lesson.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well in and around the school. They are polite, enthusiastic and highly value the opportunities that they get to learn and play at school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe.
- School leaders have consistently high expectations of what all pupils can achieve and are ambitious for their success. Leaders' focus on improving the quality of teaching has ensured that all groups of pupils are making accelerated progress and are achieving well.
- Governors are very knowledgeable. They have a well-informed and very accurate view of the school's performance. Governors work successfully with senior leaders to raise standards further and improve the quality of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some lessons, pupils do not have sufficient chances to develop the skills necessary to explore and investigate ideas without the support of adults.
- Too few pupils attain the higher levels in writing at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Pupils do not have as many chances to develop their mathematical skills through other subjects as they do in reading and writing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons or part lessons in all classes. Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, members of staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 78 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors considered 33 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including: assessment data; the school's evaluation of its work; minutes of governing body meetings; safeguarding documentation; reports from School Improvement Partners; information about the management of teachers' performance; monitoring records; and the school's improvement plan.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and also reviewed samples of their work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtime, lunchtime, around the school and in lessons.

Inspection team

Clare Daniel, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Barbara Martin	Additional Inspector
Rosemary Batty	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British families.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported through the pupil premium, is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding the school receives for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- Nursery provision is flexible and parents are offered morning or afternoon sessions, or a combination of both daily. Reception provision is full time.
- The school operates a breakfast club and after-school club during term time which is managed by the governing body.
- The school is located in a building which was previously a secondary school and on a site with a children's centre and leisure centre. The children's centre is subject to a separate inspection and a report of its quality can be found on the website www.gov.uk/ofsted
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further, so that more pupils attain the higher levels, by:
 - making sure that pupils have more opportunities to investigate and explore during lessons in order to develop their independent learning skills
 - ensuring that the most-able pupils are always sufficiently well challenged so that they can achieve as well as they might, especially in writing.
- Ensure that pupils have more opportunities to develop their mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills across a range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders have high expectations of pupils and staff. Every member of the school community works effectively to ensure that pupils make good progress and achieve and behave well. As a result, school leaders ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed in their learning.
- School leaders demonstrate unwavering commitment to raising achievement for all pupils. Senior leaders check pupils' performance and the quality of teaching regularly. They have a well-informed and accurate view of the standards currently achieved by pupils.
- Evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness is detailed and accurate, ensuring that school leaders have a clear understanding of its strengths. Plans for improvement have had a significant impact on tackling the few pockets of underachievement and, because of this, pupils are now making faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Middle leaders are effective in their work and have made a significant impact on raising standards. They check the quality of teaching and ensure that professional development and training are effective in raising standards for all pupils. The leader with responsibility for overseeing the achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs manages the provision very well and, as a result, these pupils make good progress.
- All teachers have performance targets which are directly linked to improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement. Senior leaders check these targets throughout the year. They can clearly demonstrate the impact that high quality and regular training opportunities are having on raising standards. Pay awards are closely linked to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides many opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes and in different subjects. Opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills are not currently as well developed. Learning is enriched with a wide range of trips and visits that are closely linked to curriculum themes and cultural opportunities, all of which pupils enjoy greatly.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is well supported by the range of subjects taught. Assemblies provide pupils with excellent opportunities to develop their spiritual understanding. Pupils also have many opportunities to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. They have a range of responsibilities which they particularly enjoy, including being members of the school council.
- Pupils have a range of opportunities to learn about British values through a variety of well-planned activities. Their understanding of democracy is particularly well supported by the work of the school council and also by the mock general election which was held recently to mirror national events. When talking to inspectors, pupils themselves suggested taking an issue which concerned them back to school council members for action.
- Through a range of activities planned across the curriculum, the school fosters good relations, promotes tolerance and tackles discrimination. The range of experiences that the school now offers pupils ensures that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils have a good understanding of the diversity of the country's social and cultural make up.
- School leaders carefully evaluate the spending and impact of the pupil premium funding and, as a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve well and make good progress, especially in reading.
- Leaders spend the primary sports funding effectively. They ensure that all pupils gain health benefits from an improved quality of teaching and the support of sports coaches. The impact is evident in increasing proportions of pupils who are taking part in a wider range of sporting activity and who are involved in local competitions.
- The local authority has provided effective support for school leaders and governors with a focus on improving the quality of teaching, strengthening the relatively new senior leadership team and increasing their understanding school assessment data.
- The school meets all statutory safeguarding requirements. All pupils are safe and well cared for in school, especially those who may be more vulnerable.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a very well-informed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because the information shared with them by senior leaders is accurate and thoroughly analysed. They challenge senior leaders effectively about improvements in the standards pupils reach and they work closely with a range of staff to reflect on the school's performance. Governors check the quality of the school's work

regularly, including attending meetings with the School Improvement Officer. They are ambitious about seeking further improvements.

- Governors have attended training offered by the local authority and by school staff which has further developed their understanding of the school's performance and assessment data. They understand clearly the impact that the arrangements to manage the performance of staff have on improving the quality of teaching. They articulate clearly how this also affects raising achievement. They are involved in overseeing the school's systems for pay awards related to the performance of teaching staff and know how underperformance is tackled.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. In all lessons, pupils are keen to learn and respond respectfully and considerately to staff and to their peers. They enjoy exceptionally positive relationships with all members of the school community. Staff provide an encouraging and stimulating learning environment in all classes.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is exemplary. Pupils are unfailingly positive about their learning and the opportunities that the school gives them. When asked to choose the best thing about being a pupil at the school one said simply, 'We work, we learn.'
- Pupils have very high expectations of themselves and one another. They say that they manage their own behaviour well; if any pupils ever do fall out, they are able to sort out problems themselves because they have been taught the skills to do so by school staff. Pupils were observed playing with others from different classes and year groups happily and in harmony.
- Pupils say that behaviour is 'perfect all of the time'. They have a clear understanding of the school's systems of rewards and sanctions and the effect these have on maintaining good order and high expectations. They have confidence that if an issue arose, they could rely on any member of staff for support.
- Most parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that the school makes sure that pupils behave well and deals effectively with bullying. Pupils say that bullying does not happen at Littleborough and the school's records confirm this. There have been hardly any significant incidents in the last two years.
- Behaviour records are very well maintained and senior leaders regularly conduct a thorough analysis so they are aware immediately of the very rare incidents that happen. Staff use this information effectively to ensure that the needs of individual pupils are well met and managed.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe in school. They say that adults in school help them very quickly, should they need support.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are respectful. Pupils know that they are expected to care for one another and the school environment. They say, 'It's a child friendly environment; everybody can get involved with everything. It is important to have rules and to behave well.'
- Pupils demonstrate a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe in and around the school and community, and when using the internet. They have an extensive understanding of different types of bullying and name-calling, but say that these would not be tolerated either by pupils or staff.
- Effective procedures are in place to keep vulnerable pupils safe. There is clear evidence to show how the school works effectively with other agencies if it has concerns about a pupil's safety in order to protect those who are particularly vulnerable.
- Attendance is currently average. The school follows up absence and concerns about punctuality rigorously. The few pupils with low attendance are well supported and, as a result, attendance is improving throughout the year.
- The breakfast club and after-school club are well attended and provide a safe and stimulating environment for pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- In all classes, staff provide a nurturing and stimulating place to learn. Activities are well planned and enthuse pupils about their learning. Pupils enjoy respectful and purposeful relationships with all adults responsible for teaching and supporting them. The impact of teaching assistants and support staff on pupils' achievement is a significant strength of the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils being challenged in their learning and enjoying the opportunity to work on extension activities in most lessons. However, on a few occasions, evidence in their books indicates that pupils are not given enough opportunities to explore or investigate concepts independently. As a result, the most-able pupils do not always make the best progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers ensure that support staff fully understand the focus of each session and have appropriate resources to work with groups and individuals. As a result of this high quality support, most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- Teachers carefully plan opportunities to develop pupils' reading and writing skills effectively through other subjects. Reading has been the focus of school improvement planning recently and is now taught very effectively. Pupils enjoy reading and are enthusiastic about the range of books that they read at school.
- Effective teaching has improved pupils' phonic skills (knowledge of letters and the sounds they make). They are now better able to tackle a wide range of more challenging books and to use their reading skills more effectively. The early identification of issues faced by some pupils when learning to read is a strength of the school. A successful programme of interventions ensures that pupils make rapid progress and catch up with their peers quickly.
- Pupils enjoy using their skills to write in a range of subjects and can adapt their writing for a range of purposes and audiences. High quality pieces of writing are displayed around the school and inspire pupils to strive for higher standards. The writing that inspectors reviewed in pupils' books was beautifully presented, well constructed and of good quality, especially in Year 6. While standards in writing are now improving across the school, too few pupils have previously attained the higher levels in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Teachers ensure that mathematical skills are taught well and pupils are currently making much stronger progress than previously. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects are not fully established or as plentiful as in reading and writing.
- Pupils are fully involved in lessons and respond well to the effective questioning used by all teachers and support staff. Year 1 pupils enjoyed watching an animated film to help them understand how to be safe on the internet. They were able to discuss issues maturely in pairs before responding to a range of highly focused questions with sophisticated and well-considered answers.
- Feedback given to pupils during lessons helps them to move on quickly and ensures that progress is good. Pupils' work is effectively marked in accordance with the school's policy, especially in their English books. Pupils have opportunities to act on advice, correct their work and understand clearly how to move on to the next step in their learning.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well overall and make good progress across the school from their individual starting points.
- The overall standards achieved by different year groups are occasionally variable because the proportion of pupils with additional needs is much higher in some than others. The proportion of pupils who have arrived mid-year is also variable from one year group to the next. Once pupils join the school, the progress they make from their individual starting points is good.
- In the most recent Year 1 phonic screening check, most pupils reached the standard expected for their age. Pupils achieved well from their starting points. The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard at the end of Year 2 in 2014 was slightly below average and reflects the more complex needs of this group. Pupils who did not achieve the expected standard are currently receiving high quality support to ensure they catch up rapidly.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, the overall standards achieved by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014 were broadly average. The school's assessment data and inspection evidence show that these pupils made good progress in Key Stage 1.
- In 2014 at the end of Year 6, standards achieved by pupils were broadly average. The proportion of pupils making expected progress was above average in reading and was average in writing. The proportion of pupils making expected progress in mathematics was below average. Too few pupils made better than

expected progress in writing and mathematics.

- Current assessment information shows that all pupils are making rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. Standards attained by pupils have risen significantly because of a sharper focus on assessment and improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Overall, the progress of the most-able pupils is good. The proportion of pupils already working at the higher levels is much greater than previously although it is still slightly below average in mathematics in Year 6. The most-able pupils apply their skills well across a range of subjects and tackle more challenging work with confidence. However, on those occasions when they are insufficiently challenged their achievement is less good, particularly in writing.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good overall. They make similar progress to their peers because their needs are met through well-planned and effective support which ensures that they achieve well. However, the standards they attain are sometimes lower than their peers because of their different starting points.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils at the school is below average and, as a result, the attainment of these pupils can vary from year to year. In 2014, the school worked successfully to narrow the gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally in reading and in the test for English grammar, punctuation and spelling. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils is approximately three terms behind other pupils in school in mathematics and two terms behind in writing. There is no difference in attainment in reading compared with other pupils in the school.
- When compared to other pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were approximately four terms behind in mathematics, three terms behind in writing and one term behind in reading. While the progress they made was slightly less than other pupils nationally in mathematics and writing, it was better in reading. Currently, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress overall in reading, writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

is good

- Most children join the early years with skills that are below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the early years from their individual starting points.
- In 2014, the majority of children achieved a good level of development from their starting points. This year, the proportion of children already meeting and exceeding their early learning goals by the start of the summer term in the Reception Year is much higher than in previous years, reflecting their slightly higher starting points and improvements in the quality of provision and teaching. Most children are well prepared to move into Year 1.
- Staff carefully plan with Year 1 teachers the provision for any children who have not yet met a good level of development. This means that they still have opportunities to learn outdoors and have access to activities which are better suited to their stage of development.
- The leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader has a well-informed view of children's achievement and checks the quality of teaching effectively. She ensures that the curriculum is appropriate, is planned to build on children's previous experiences and meets their interests well. Focused work with groups of children has ensured that the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and non-disadvantaged children has closed completely this year.
- Indoor and outdoor provision is both safe and secure. The outdoor area is exciting and vibrant, particularly for the Reception children, and provides them with a range of high quality learning opportunities which meet their needs well. The quality and variety of resources available to Nursery children in their outdoor area are somewhat limited, however.
- Teaching is good and there are significant strengths in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Adults plan and organise activities which support the children in developing their skills securely. The quality of questioning and support provided to children while they work in groups and independently is outstanding. There are plenty of opportunities for children to explore, create and think critically. Staff ensure the children develop their personal, social and emotional skills rapidly as they chat and work together.
- Children develop their communication and language skills and their mathematical skills well. During the inspection children were observed taking part with enthusiasm in activities linked to the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. They used role play to re-enact the story and, helped by staff, to explain and explore their roles. Others worked using a wide range of equipment to tackle subtraction questions successfully and were encouraged to use a range of strategies to tackle problems linked to other areas of learning.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and their behaviour is outstanding.

Children from a range of backgrounds play and work together in a purposeful and positive atmosphere. They enjoy learning together with highly effective support.

- Staff support disabled children and those who have special educational needs well so that they make good progress in the early years. Teachers quickly identify the individual needs of these children early and, as a result, they receive effective support.
- Children are safe and secure, relationships with adults are nurturing and encouraging, and welfare requirements are well met.

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	105785
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	456152

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	415
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jacqui Mellor
Headteacher	Martine Sinker
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2011
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