

Poulton-le-Fylde Carr Head Primary School

Carr Head Lane, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire, FY6 8JB

Inspection dates 16–17 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Achievement has declined since the last inspection. It is starting to improve, but good progress is not secure in all classes.
- Teaching requires improvement. The rate of learning is too slow in the early years and Key Stage 1 as pupils do not build on their knowledge and skills systematically. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write in different subjects at Key Stage 1.
- Teaching in mathematics does not meet pupils' needs well enough across the whole school. The most able pupils are not challenged to deepen their thinking.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to act on teachers' marking to make improvements and develop their skills. Some pupils do not know what they need to do to improve their work.
- The early years requires improvement. There is not enough liaison with pre-school providers to ensure children make good progress from the start. Assessment is not used well enough to plan activities that build on learning effectively as the year progresses.
- Partnership working is not well developed, so staff have limited opportunities to learn from good practice in other schools.

The school has the following strengths

- Leadership is good. The new headteacher is leading improvement effectively, after a period of decline. Pupils' achievement is starting to improve.
- Professional development is starting to improve teaching. There is some good practice on which to build, especially in teaching writing and topic work at Key Stage 2.
- Teaching assistants provide good support.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils are attentive and cooperative. Their behaviour around school is exemplary and they show respect for others.
- Pupils feel safe and are well cared for. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted effectively.
- Governors provide good challenge and support to leaders and have a thorough knowledge of strengths and areas needing improvement.
- Leadership skills are being developed successfully and middle leaders are making a particularly strong contribution. There is good capacity to secure further improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in every class and a number of groups supported by teaching assistants. They conducted a detailed scrutiny of pupils’ writing and mathematics as well as their work in a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders, staff and governors to discuss the school’s work and spoke by telephone to a local authority representative. They met with pupils to talk about their work and their leadership roles in school. They also spoke to pupils at break times and in lessons to get their opinions on aspects of the school’s work including behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including self-evaluation, monitoring information and improvement planning. They analysed data relating to pupils’ achievement, looked at policies and checked safeguarding systems and procedures to promote pupils’ well-being.
- Inspectors considered the 25 responses from Parent View (Ofsted’s online questionnaire), and the 17 responses from staff.

Inspection team

Jean Olsson-Law, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Ian Hardman

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Carr Head is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well below average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those children who are or were eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are below average.
- The majority of pupils are White British. A below average proportion are from minority ethnic groups and a small minority speak English as an additional language.
- Early years education is provided for children on a full-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes to the leadership. The current headteacher joined the school in January 2014 and there is a new Chair of Governors.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so pupils make consistently good progress at Key Stage 1 by:
 - assessing pupils' understanding thoroughly and planning teaching that builds on pupils' prior learning systematically
 - making sure activities quickly build pupils' learning and have a clear learning outcome
 - developing pupils' writing in other subjects.
- Ensure pupils make consistently good progress in mathematics across the school by:
 - making sure pupils are provided with work that is adapted to their ability appropriately; that the most able pupils are challenged with work that extends their skills and those who need more support are given it
 - making sure pupils have opportunities to deepen their understanding by developing their reasoning and problem solving skills.
- Improve marking and feedback to pupils by:
 - ensuring pupils have opportunities to act on teachers' marking and that their misunderstandings are checked and remedied
 - making sure pupils understand their targets for improvement.
- Improve provision in the early years by:
 - improving liaison with pre-school providers
 - making sure assessment is used effectively to build on children's knowledge and skills from the start
 - making sure that teaching proceeds at sufficient rate to maintain interest and enable children to make the best possible progress
 - ensuring that children access the range of activities provided so they develop their skills across all areas, including in writing and mathematics.
- Improve partnership working with other schools to promote developments in teaching and learning and in leadership.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher has skilfully created a positive atmosphere for learning. Staff, parents and pupils are extremely positive about the direction the school is taking. Parents who went out of their way to speak to inspectors were keen to point out that the headteacher is 'approachable', 'is getting things done' and has 'had a big impact on the school'.
- There have been improvements to achievement which stem from improvements to teaching, and leaders have a keen sense of what needs to be done next to make sure this continues. Teaching has been refreshed by good professional development. The strengths in teaching apparent in the school are recognised and are being used to help all staff acquire further skills and expertise.
- The headteacher has introduced good systems for checking the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Teachers' performance is managed effectively, with appropriate targets to raise pupils' achievement, improve teaching and develop leadership roles. This has given leaders and governors a detailed understanding of areas that need to improve and what works well. Planning for improvement is effective.
- Teachers have a good grasp of data to track the progress of groups of pupils and classes and use this to plan effective support if pupils fall behind. However, assessment is not used as well to plan activities from day to day in order to ensure there is the right amount of challenge and support for pupils.
- Senior leaders welcome the chance to take on more leadership responsibilities and develop their skills. They have a good overview of pupils' progress gained, for example, from looking at pupils' work. However, their roles in leading improvements to achievement and teaching are not developed fully.
- Middle leadership is strong. Subject leaders have a good overview of their subject across the school. The introduction of paired observations with the headteacher has created a positive culture in which to share practice and evaluate the impact of teaching. Provision for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs is overseen effectively to make sure these pupils make good progress.
- The new approach to curriculum planning ensures pupils develop their knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects and within interesting themes. Pupils enjoy 'topic work' because teachers make interesting links between subjects, particularly at Key Stage 2. Pupils develop their knowledge and skills well through a range of clubs and through trips out and visitors to the school. Pupils particularly enjoy sports clubs, choir and music and the 'code club' where they develop computer skills.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of British values through a range of subjects. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted strongly in lessons and through the ethos of the school. 'Family values' such as friendship and trust are explored in detail and promoted in lessons, in assemblies and throughout the school day.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding, such as the pupil premium and sports funding is used to promote equality of opportunity. The additional support for disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs ensures that these groups are able to access all activities and make good progress. Staff foster good relations and ensure there is no discrimination.
- The additional funding for sports has a good impact on pupils' participation and prowess in a range of sports, dance and gymnastics. Pupils enjoy the skill-based activities they can pursue at lunchtime. Teachers' skills have been developed through sports coaching and this has enabled them to provide additional activities after school.
- The majority of parents who responded to Parent View would recommend the school, feel that behaviour is good and pupils feel safe. They say their child is well looked after. A small number feel that the school does not respond well to concerns that are raised.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective and robust and all requirements are met.
- The local authority provides minimal support. The Improvement Adviser provides useful challenge and support to the headteacher.
- Partnership working is not well developed so staff have limited opportunities to learn from colleagues in other schools.
- Changes initiated by the headteacher have enabled teachers to improve practice and halt the downward trend in achievement at Key Stage 1 and to improve pupils' progress at Key Stage 2. Leaders are aware that achievement requires further improvement and are showing the leadership skills to enable this to happen, so there is a good capacity to continue to improve the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a range of skills to their work and provide good support and challenge to leaders. They know the school well through their regular visits, links with subject leaders and their clear grasp of

performance data.

- The new Chair of Governors has a good understanding of the strengths and what needs to improve in teaching and ensures all governors are well informed.
- Governors manage the performance of the headteacher effectively. They ensure that teachers are rewarded for good performance and do not receive salary increases unless this is merited.
- Governors ensure the pupil premium is used wisely. They ensure it is spent on a range of interventions to support pupils' learning and personal development. Gaps in learning are closing as a result.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are attentive in lessons and keen to contribute their ideas. Occasionally, some pupils do not focus fully on their learning, especially when activities are not challenging enough.
- When teaching is motivating, pupils concentrate well, persevere and grapple with some complex ideas. In Year 6, for example, pupils conducted a high level discussion about responsibility and accountability, while learning about Islam. They reflected on the Islamic faith thoughtfully, showing respect and understanding.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is exemplary. Pupils are well mannered and sociable. Their welcoming smiles and 'good morning' greetings provide a pleasant start to the day. At break times, pupils enjoy participating in team games and chatting. Pupils are confident that adults will deal effectively with behaviour that is not up to usual standard.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Their social skills are developed well in lessons, in sports and enterprise activities and in various leadership roles, for example on the school council or 'eco team'. They talk confidently about moral issues and show respect for cultural diversity. Their spiritual awareness is promoted well through a range of activities.
- Pupils have many opportunities to extend their learning and develop social and leadership skills in various clubs and activities. The 'Ready Brekkers' morning club, for example, helps pupils get off to a good start.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils feel safe because they are cared for well. Bullying is rare and is logged and dealt with effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including the harm that can be caused by using derogatory language about race, sexuality or appearance.
- Pupils who are vulnerable or who have difficulties managing their behaviour are supported effectively in the nurture group and through individualised or small group support.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe on the internet and social media and in the wider community.
- Attendance is above average and there are few exclusions.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The activities provided for pupils at Key Stage 1 do not support progression in pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as well as they could. There are times when activities occupy pupils but do not build on their prior learning sufficiently, so pupils do not make the progress they are capable of over time. Assessment is not used precisely enough to make sure pupils of all abilities are given the right amount of challenge or support from day to day.
- Across the whole school, work in mathematics is not always pitched at the right level to enable pupils to consolidate their skills or deepen their understanding. The most able pupils sometimes find work too easy and others find work too difficult because their misunderstandings are not picked up. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills, to develop their reasoning and solve problems.
- There is some good practice in teaching. Where it is most successful, teachers have good subject knowledge and question pupils effectively to deepen their understanding. They give pupils interesting activities that help them to make links across different subjects and apply their skills. In Year 3, for example, pupils thoroughly enjoyed creating a persuasive poster linked with their topic on the Romans. They produced good quality writing because the teacher explained the features of successful persuasive writing very clearly.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning. They are deployed effectively, are

knowledgeable and skilled in supporting learning in small groups. Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs are supported effectively, so they make good progress.

- Pupils' reading skills are promoted well in guided reading sessions and in different subjects and contexts. In Year 1, for example, the teacher and teaching assistants supported small groups in developing their skills well during guided reading. In Year 4, pupils applied their skills expertly to find out information from an internet news site.
- Pupils' writing skills are promoted well at Key Stage 2 across a range of subjects. Opportunities to develop writing skills in other subjects are more limited at Key Stage 1.
- Teachers' marking has a variable impact on pupils' learning. Where it is effective, comments help pupils to correct errors and improve subsequent pieces of work. Some marking does not lead to improvement because the comments are too general or are not pitched at pupils' level of understanding. Pupils do not always have chance to apply the advice because they move on to new topics before addressing errors.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement at Key Stage 1 declined in 2013 and 2014. Pupils made insufficient progress from their above average starting points and too few pupils attained the high levels they were capable of in standardised assessments at the end of Year 2. This decline has been halted; pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to achieve higher standards in 2015.
- Despite this rise in standards, pupils' progress is not consistently good in writing and mathematics across Key Stage 1. This is because teaching does not build on pupils' knowledge and skills systematically in these subjects. Activities do not meet pupils' learning needs well enough. Pupils make good progress in reading, where teaching is more personalised.
- Pupils' attainment at Key Stage 2 in 2014 was above average in reading, writing and mathematics but was not as high as expected, given pupils significantly high prior attainment. Pupils did not make the progress they were capable of. Attainment in grammar, punctuation and spelling was well below average.
- Teachers predict that the current Year 6 cohort is on track to achieve higher standards in 2015. These predictions are reflected in the pupils' writing books, which show good progress across a range of subjects. However, there is limited work in pupils' mathematics books, particularly relating to the application of knowledge through reasoning and problem solving.
- Pupils make good progress in writing across Key Stage 2. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are now taught explicitly, so pupils write with increasing accuracy. Pupils build on their reading skills effectively in school and at home. Pupils' progress in mathematics is more variable. Work does not always provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils so they do not make the rapid progress they are capable of.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils were around two terms behind others in school in reading and two and a half terms behind in mathematics and writing. They were two and a half terms behind other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. From their starting points, they made better progress than other pupils in school and other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics but did not do as well in reading. Gaps between disadvantaged and other pupils are narrowing lower down the school. Pupils are supported well in small groups and are able to extend their experience in a range of provision before and after school.
- The most able pupils do not always make the rapid progress they are capable of because teaching does not provide sufficient challenge or opportunities to deepen their knowledge. Consequently, pupils do not always reach the highest standards that they are capable of.
- The relatively few disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They receive effective support from teaching assistants, which ensures they make good progress from their various starting points.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children enter the Reception class with varied knowledge and skills, having attended a range of different pre-school provision. Their knowledge and skills are mostly typical for their age, although there are some children with more developed skills, particularly in literacy, communication and mathematics. Year groups vary; in classes further up the school children's skills were above those typical for their age on entry to the Reception class.
- There has been a lot of disruption to teaching in the early years this year. Leaders are starting to bring about improvement but they are at the early stages. Liaison with pre-school providers is not developed

and assessment is not used well enough to make sure children learn effectively from the start.

- The quality of leadership has not been good enough to ensure children make good progress from their individual starting points. While children are sufficiently prepared for the Year 1 curriculum, they have not made the progress they are capable of.
- Teaching requires improvement as it is too variable in impact. Teaching and guided activities do not always provide enough opportunities for children to build on their knowledge and skills as quickly as they could. There are times when taught activities are not paced well enough to sustain children's interest.
- There are strengths in teaching that can be built on. Where teaching is most effective the adult provides children with a clear explanation of what they are learning and interesting activities in which children can apply and consolidate their skills. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to promote children's learning in all areas. Staff supporting children with disabilities or with special educational needs are sensitive to their needs and support them well, so they make good progress.
- The environment is organised well and is bright and interesting for children. The outdoor and indoor spaces have interesting activities set up where children can act in role, such as the café and birthday party. These areas provide good opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills and they learn to share and cooperate with each other. However, despite there being many activities to develop children's skills in writing and mathematics, children do not routinely choose to complete these activities. Consequently, children do not all have a balanced experience during the day in order to develop their independent learning skills across all areas of learning.
- The staff team works well together to ensure children are supervised closely and kept safe. Children's behaviour is good and they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Children respond to instructions and show kindness and consideration towards others. The staff have recently accessed 'Step into Quality' training with the local authority to enhance children's engagement, motivation and ability to think for themselves.
- Parents have regular contact with staff and are now working more closely with the school. Parents share the achievements of children out of school, such as swimming awards, and this helps staff to plan activities that build on children's interests and achievements.

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	119276
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	461751

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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ben Norman
Headteacher	Angeli Slack
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2012
Telephone number	01253 883558
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	bursar@carrhead.lancs.sch.uk

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