

Trawden Forest Primary School

Dean Street, Trawden, Colne, Lancashire, BB8 8RN

Inspection dates

25–26 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have yet to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good. Consequently, there are too many peaks and troughs in pupils' rate of learning as they move through the school and this limits their overall progress.
- Although standards are improving, boys' attainment is lower than girls' and the gaps in the performance of disadvantaged pupils against other pupils nationally are still too wide.
- In some lessons, the tasks set for pupils to complete independently are overly complex or beyond their level of understanding. Pupils become confused and sometimes they stop working and misbehave or disrupt other pupils' learning.
- Leaders' assessments of the amount of progress pupils are making towards reaching the expected standards for their age are too generous. Leaders' overly positive picture of standards in books masks the weaker progress of some groups of pupils, including boys and pupils who have special educational needs or disability.
- Teachers do not always give pupils enough chances to use their skills in mathematical calculations in other subject areas.
- Boys' progress in writing is weaker than in reading and mathematics because teachers' narrow focus on punctuation and grammar in some classes limits boys' opportunities to think creatively and write about things that interest them.

The school has the following strengths

- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors offer a much-increased level of challenge to school leaders on pupil outcomes and this is beginning to have an impact on raising standards.
- Leaders have secured good teaching and provision in the early years. As a result, children's progress has improved rapidly and an increasing proportion of pupils are ready to begin the Year 1 curriculum at the end of the Reception Year.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are improving steadily at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' improved progress in reading in this key stage is supported by good teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make).
- Relationships are strong and pupils are confident to ask adults for help if they need it.
- The curriculum offers a wide range of activities to help children understand how to keep safe and is enriched with interesting visits and visitors to the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching until it is consistently at least good in all year groups so that all groups of pupils, including boys, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs or disability make good progress from their starting points by:
 - making sure that the work set by teachers for pupils to complete independently is at the right level for their ability and moves them forward in their learning
 - ensuring that pupils always understand what is expected of them and how to be successful when working independently
 - giving pupils enough opportunities to practise their skills in mathematics across a range of subject areas
 - making sure that pupils, especially boys, have enough opportunities for creative writing on topics that appeal to their interests and enthusiasms.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that leaders' assessments of pupils' progress towards age-related expectations are reliable for all year groups and do not mask potential underachievement.
- Improve outcomes for pupils so that:
 - the proportion of pupils who are ready for their next stage in education by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6 is at least in line with the national average
 - boys' outcomes in writing are closely in line with girls' at the end of all key stages
 - disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability make consistently good progress from their individual starting points.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium (additional government funding) should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have developed a collective vision for school improvement leading to raised outcomes for pupils. However, they have yet to secure solidly good teaching leading to consistently good progress across all year groups and this is why leadership requires improvement.
- Considerable changes to the leadership team and high staff turnover over the past few years mean that leaders' hard work and investment in improving teaching have not always been sustained.
- A few parents expressed concerns about the impact of frequent changes of teachers in some year groups and of the unusually high deployment of supply staff on pupils' learning and confidence. Senior leadership is now secure, and leaders and governors are doing all they can to ensure the long-term stability of teaching and support staff.
- Leaders do not have a fully accurate overview of weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment. Monitoring of pupils' work in books, for example, focuses too much on improvements to teachers' marking and pupils' handwriting and presentation rather than gaining a secure view of the progress pupils are making from their individual starting points. Consequently, some pupils are not doing as well as they should because they are not being taught well enough to meet their needs.
- Leaders' analysis of pupils' progress is overly reliant on outcomes at the end of Year 6 and does not take enough account of outcomes in other year groups and key stages. Pupils' relatively strong performance in Year 6, where the teaching is good, masks variations in the quality of teaching in other year groups and limits overall attainment.
- The system in place to measure pupils' progress towards age-related expectations is not yet fully understood and used with equal reliability by all teachers. Teachers' views of progress and those of senior leaders do not always match, and this limits the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning.
- The school's vision and values encapsulate equal opportunities for all pupils and staff. However, leaders have yet to ensure that boys make as much progress as girls and disadvantaged pupils make as much progress as other pupils nationally. Furthermore, leaders and governors do not ensure that the curriculum provides enough opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of, and tolerance for, sexual and gender differences and this leads a few pupils to make inappropriate homophobic comments.
- The headteacher is the designated safeguarding officer and has ensured that all staff have appropriate training on how to keep pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism and understand exactly what they need to do if they suspect a pupil is in danger.
- Good leadership of the early years, together with effective support from the local authority, has resulted in good teaching and improved outcomes for children at the end of the Reception Year.
- Leaders have begun a cycle of reviews in relation to subject leadership and this is having a positive impact on the curriculum in relation to, for example, physical education (PE) and music. The newly established leader of computing has supported pupils in developing a strong awareness of e-safety and how to protect themselves from harm when using social media. Good leadership of mathematics has resulted in higher standards in this subject at the end of Year 2 and an improving picture of progress for pupils currently in Key Stage 2.
- Leaders' arrangements to monitor the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or disability are increasingly robust. However, too few checks are carried out within the classroom to give leaders timely information on whether or not support strategies for these pupils are fully effective so that swift action can be taken where this is not the case.
- Parents generally say that they feel welcome in school and staff are approachable. A very small minority of parents comment that the level of communication between home and school could be better and that they do not have enough information on their children's progress or about any changes taking place to staffing. Leaders are working to improve this through text messages and more frequent and informative newsletters.
- Pupils appreciate that the curriculum is enriched with a wide range of interesting visitors and outings, including residential visits. A recently introduced range of topics specifically designed to appeal to boys is helping to improve boys' engagement in learning although it is too early to measure the full impact of this on improving boys' progress in writing.
- Leaders have begun to exploit the wider curriculum to develop pupils' awareness of different cultures in modern Britain and of British values such as democracy. Children learn about the similarities and differences in faiths through religious education lessons and understand the need for tolerance and respect for others' views or beliefs.

- The primary PE and sports funding is used well to increase participation in sport and encourage children to develop healthy lifestyles. External coaches give children access to a wider range of physical activities, including, for example, karate, and also support teachers in developing their skills in teaching physical education.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved since the last inspection following an external review supported by the local authority and governors' active participation in further opportunities for training and development, for example in interpreting historic published data on outcomes for pupils. This means that governors now offer a high degree of challenge and support for school leaders.
 - Governors check that leaders' decisions to award staff with pay increases reflect improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils and are increasingly effective in holding leaders to account for tackling underperformance.
 - Governors check that the pupil premium is used appropriately. However, they have yet to ensure that these pupils make consistently good progress so as to close the gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding has a high priority in the school. There are rigorous systems and procedures in place to protect both children and staff. Governors ensure that the school buildings and grounds are well maintained and secure and that appropriate pre-employment checks are made on all staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching is improving but its quality varies considerably between year groups and limits pupils' overall achievements in the school.
- Some teachers do not plan activities that build on what pupils know and can do. In a few lessons, all ability groups complete the same work. Some less-able pupils find this work too hard and lose concentration when left to work independently and without adult support.
- In some writing lessons, teachers place too much emphasis on grammar and punctuation. This limits pupils' creativity and makes the task unappealing, particularly to boys. For example, in one lesson in Key Stage 1 the objective was for pupils to complete a diary entry, writing as a survivor from the Titanic. However, pupils were additionally required to include a range of features including conjunctions, noun phrases, adjectives, conjunctions and apostrophes. Most-able pupils rose to the challenge, but some boys and less-able pupils were understandably confused and struggled to write an opening sentence.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving and pupils now have more opportunities for practical work in lessons. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to solve problems and deepen their understanding in mathematics across the curriculum.
- Phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is taught well and this builds a solid foundation on which pupils can develop into fluent and confident readers. Daily guided reading sessions help pupils develop their skills in comprehension. Leaders are currently working to provide an increasing range of books that are particularly appealing to boys and encourage children to read more widely and for pleasure.
- The quality of marking has improved and frequently gives pupils really useful guidance on how to edit or improve their work. However, this is not consistent throughout the school. Some marking is unhelpful; for example, in one class there were a few examples of marking where the teacher had required pupils to correct a spelling mistake by writing the word out several times, and later ticked this as being correct although the pupils had actually still misspelled the word.
- Some teaching assistants are skilled at providing good support for those pupils who need to catch up in lessons, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability. However, extra help given outside the classroom is not consistently good enough to help all of these groups of pupils to achieve their best.
- Relationships are strong. Teachers encourage pupils to participate and contribute to lessons and pupils are comfortable in doing so.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils say that there is some bullying in school but they know the teachers will deal with it firmly. There is only one recorded incident of bullying within the last 18 months, although a very small number of pupils and parents say that bullying does take place in school and they have told staff about this. Small nurture groups for pupils and school-wide anti-bullying weeks reinforce the message to pupils that bullying is harmful and totally unacceptable.
- Pupils report that there are sometimes incidents of homophobic name calling, but racism is extremely rare.
- Pupils' general attitude around the school and in corridors is good. Pupils are inquisitive and greet visitors politely. They stand aside and let others through doors, and there is no pushing and shoving in corridors. Older pupils enjoy opportunities to behave responsibly; for example, they act as playground buddies for younger pupils in the school yard.
- Parents and children benefit from the breakfast and after-school club, which helps children to be ready for learning in the morning and supports working families. The vast majority of parents agree that children are safe and happy in school.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe on the internet. They are aware that they should never give details about themselves online and should always tell an adult of any inappropriate content. Pupils are also taught about road and cycling safety and the risks of talking to strangers or getting into a stranger's car.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well and treat one another and the adults in the school with respect. Most pupils are keen to learn. However, in those lessons where children are uncertain of what they need to do or the work is too difficult for them to complete without adult supervision, pupils become restless and occasionally disrupt other pupils' work with silly behaviour, such as petty squabbles over pencils and glue sticks.
- Pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work are improving, but vary between classes and subject areas. In some classes, pupils' work in topic books is not as tidy as it is in their English and mathematics books.
- Attendance has improved and is broadly average for all groups of pupils.
- The number of pupils excluded from school for a fixed period of time has reduced. There have been no exclusions so far in the current academic year.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are low, but are beginning to show improvement.
- In 2015, the standards reached by boys in all three subjects were lower than those reached by girls. Disadvantaged pupils were almost two years behind other pupils nationally and their progress across Key Stage 2 was weak despite their making up some ground in Year 6. Currently, the proportion of pupils on track to reach age-related expectations at the end of Year 6 indicates that outcomes will be higher this year, although boys and disadvantaged pupils still have some way to go to catch up with other learners.
- Most-able pupils receive an appropriate level of challenge in most lessons. For those pupils currently in Year 6, evidence in books shows that the quality of their written work is beyond the level normally expected for their age.
- An average proportion of children leave the early years equipped with the skills, knowledge and understanding needed for Year 1 and an increasing proportion of children are beyond this stage. This represents rapid improvement over time due to the good quality of teaching and provision. Similarly, outcomes from the Year 1 phonics check are above average.

- Standards at the end of Year 2 show a steady trend of improvement over the last three years in reading, writing and mathematics. Boys' attainment in writing is lower than girls', but there are no gaps in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils compared with other pupils nationally.
- The impact on pupils' progress of providing an extra teacher in Year 6 each morning is seen in pupils' accelerated progress in this year group. Leaders have now provided similar support for pupils in Year 5 to help them catch up in their learning, but it is too early to see an impact of this on progress.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs or disability is variable. The school's current tracking information shows that their overall progress is broadly as expected from their individual starting points.
- Progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is not yet consistently strong. Pupils' development of skills in, for example, scientific investigation, is limited because the topic-based curriculum does not always offer frequent and regular opportunities for scientific enquiry.

Early years provision

is good

- Cohorts vary, but the majority of children join the school with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. They make good progress and are well prepared for Key Stage 1 with good skills in reading, writing and number.
- Teaching is good in the Reception class. Adults capitalise on the progress made for those pupils who have previous nursery experience in other settings and support those without this experience in swiftly catching up. Expectations of both behaviour and learning are high.
- Adults are skilled in knowing just when to intervene in children's play to extend their thinking and deepen their understanding. Equally, they know when to stand back and let children pursue their own interests.
- Children have frequent opportunities to develop their skills and concentration through independent learning and play. Consequently, they make good progress across all areas of learning.
- There are ample opportunities for children to practise their writing, number and reading skills throughout the school day. Phonics activities are well matched to children's stages of development. Additionally, children are encouraged to develop their understanding further through experimentation or by applying their knowledge to different or unseen words in their continuous provision for learning through play.
- Leadership in the early years has been effective in securing good teaching. Assessments are thorough and detailed. As yet, parents do not contribute to the Learning Journey books that record their children's progress, but plans are in place to encourage parents to do this and to engage further in their children's learning.
- Leaders in the early years ensure that children are safe. The atmosphere is calm and purposeful. Children behave sensibly, listen well and respond to instructions. Classroom routines, such as tidy-up time, are well established and help children to feel secure as they learn and play together.

School details

Unique reference number	119180
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10002231

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	189
Appropriate authority	the governing body
Chair	Mark Gardner
Headteacher	Karen Hawkins
Telephone number	01282 865242
Website	www.trawden.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	head@trawden.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 November 2013

Information about this school

- Trawden Forest Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Early Years receive full-time education in the Reception class.
- The majority of children are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability is slightly below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to schools for disadvantaged pupils who qualify for free school meals or for children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school does not meet the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- A breakfast- and after-school club operates on the school site.
- There has been considerable staffing turbulence since the last inspection. The headteacher took up her post in September 2014.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of learning activities across both key stages, in the early years and in a range of subjects. One of the observations was jointly undertaken with the headteacher. Pupils' books from different year groups and subjects were looked at.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and two other school leaders. Inspectors met with five members of the governing body. A meeting was also held with two local authority representatives. Inspectors also met with groups of pupils and spoke to pupils informally throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through the 44 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors reviewed the 11 staff questionnaires and 14 pupil surveys returned during the inspection.
- The inspection team studied information about achievement and the assessment of learning. They examined any records relating to behaviour and attendance, and looked at a range of other documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work
- A review of safeguarding records and procedures was carried out.

Inspection team

Jan Corlett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Yvonne Mills-Clare

Ofsted Inspector

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