

Roe Lee Park Primary School

Emerald Avenue, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 9RP

Inspection dates

3 – 4 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not sustained the high performance reported at the last inspection.
- Pupils' outcomes require improvement. Progress is too variable across subjects and year groups.
- Too many pupils have writing skills that are below the standard expected for their age because key writing skills are not taught systematically from the early years onwards.
- Most pupils achieve average standards in mathematics and reading. However, a below average proportion of pupils achieve higher standards in these subjects at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching requires improvement in Years 1 to 4. It does not build on pupils' prior learning well enough to make sure all groups of pupils make good progress. Activities are sometimes too hard for low ability pupils or too easy for the most able.
- The school's marking policy is not used consistently well across Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement. Some activities are not challenging or stimulating enough. Language and mathematical skills are not developed as well as they could be.
- Middle leaders' roles need further development so they can drive improvements in their subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders know what needs to improve and there are early signs of improvement in some areas, such as mathematics. Leaders are taking appropriate action to secure further improvement.
- Leaders have created a happy and harmonious community where pupils feel safe and staff are highly motivated.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- All staff work as a team and are fully committed to securing improvements as rapidly as possible.
- Governance is strong and the Chair of Governors provides effective leadership. Governors are well informed and are now providing focused support and challenge for school leaders.
- Pupils develop good personal and social skills and their behaviour is good. They behave well in lessons and are sociable in shared areas.
- There is some effective teaching that provides a model for improvement across the school. For example, teaching and assessment is good in Years 5 and 6. There is some good teaching in reading, science, sports and music.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, in Years 1 to 4 so all pupils make at least good progress in all subjects by:
 - making sure teachers build on pupils' knowledge and skills and provide pupils with activities that are matched appropriately to what they need to learn
 - making sure pupils are taught the skills they need to achieve higher standards, such as reasoning and problem solving in mathematics and the use of inference in reading.

- Improve teaching and raise achievement in writing by:
 - ensuring spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught systematically from the early years onwards
 - ensuring teachers receive appropriate professional development to improve their subject knowledge
 - making sure pupils are helped to extend their vocabulary in a range of situations
 - giving pupils experiences to write at length in different styles and subjects so they become confident with the key features of different types of writing.

- Improve provision in the early years by:
 - making sure children can access stimulating resources easily, particularly for writing and mathematical exploration
 - ensuring that the activities that are provided for children are challenging enough to extend the knowledge and skills of the more able
 - developing the environment so that it supports children to develop language and mathematical skills both indoors and outside
 - ensuring that adults develop children's speaking skills and extend their vocabulary in a range of activities.

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - checking that teaching supports pupils who have low starting points to catch up quickly and provides the most able pupils with enough challenge to enable them to achieve higher levels
 - developing the role of middle leaders so they are able to check the impact of initiatives on outcomes for pupils and drive improvements in their subject
 - ensuring that teachers consistently apply the school's marking policy.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not been able to sustain the high levels of achievement that were reported at the last inspection. They recognise that action has not been taken quickly enough to prevent a decline in pupils' outcomes in 2014. They are aware of what needs to be done and have clear plans in place to secure the necessary improvements. There were some signs of improvement in 2015 and there are strengths in some areas of teaching, providing leaders with the capacity to secure further improvement.
- Leaders have a sound understanding of performance across the school and are taking action to ensure pupils make good progress in each year group. It is too early, however, to see the full impact of these measures. While there is some improvement in reading and mathematics, progress is not rapid enough in writing. There is still variability in the progress pupils make in different year groups.
- Leaders have been successful in creating a harmonious, happy and nurturing environment where pupils feel safe. Pupils from different backgrounds enjoy working and playing together. Staff promote equality rigorously and foster highly positive relationships within the school.
- Leaders and governors are outward looking. They have commissioned a full review of the use of the pupil premium funding from a National Leader of Education and secured the services of a school improvement partner, also a headteacher of an outstanding school. These links provide governors with greater insight into the school's performance, enabling them to provide effective challenge and support for school leaders. Links with other schools through the local cluster enable leaders and teachers to share good practice and ideas.
- Procedures to manage teachers' performance are focused on the right priorities to raise achievement and improve teaching. Relevant professional development is planned to improve teachers' ability to extend the learning of the most able pupils in mathematics and to teach writing skills more effectively. It is too soon, however to see the impact of these. Some teachers require further help to develop their own subject knowledge in spelling, grammar and different types of writing.
- Middle leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and areas of responsibility. However, their roles are not developed enough to enable them to check the impact of initiatives and drive improvements. Checks on pupils' written work have not been focused sufficiently on pupils' progress and standards.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that the school's marking policy is applied consistently by all teachers.
- Leaders make good use of additional funding. Following a full review, leaders have changed the way the pupil premium is used; it is now having much more of an impact and on raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Sports funding is used effectively to give pupils a wide range of experiences including cycling, outdoor education and archery. Pupils are fit and healthy and develop good physical skills. They are rightly proud of their success in local sports competitions.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and interesting for pupils. Sports and music are particular strengths and pupils do very well in these subjects. Pupils' experiences are enriched through a range of clubs before and after-school and at lunchtime. As well as sports, pupils enjoy cooking, singing, craft and gardening. Mathematical skills are reinforced well in many subjects but pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length in a range of different styles across the curriculum.
- Values, such as democracy, freedom of speech and respect for different cultures are taught effectively in many subjects and through assemblies. For example, pupils gain a good understanding of modern day values compared to those in the past when studying the impact of different settlers in Britain.
- Parents are very positive about the school. The vast majority who responded to Parent View would recommend the school and feel it is well led and managed. Parents who spoke with inspectors were pleased with the 'community feel' of the school, saying that 'children get on really well', they 'love coming to school' and 'staff are approachable'. Some parents feel that communication about their children's progress could be improved, particularly for parents who do not speak or read English.
- In line with their policy of minimal support for outstanding schools, the local authority has had very little engagement with the school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have a thorough understanding of the performance of the school. They are aware that several aspects of the school's work require improvement. They are working effectively to secure these improvements and now provide good support and challenge to leaders.
 - Governors manage the performance of the headteacher well; they have set appropriate targets to raise pupils' achievement. They have an accurate overview of the performance of staff. Most staff

progressed through pay thresholds several years ago.

- Governors maintain a good overview of finances and use additional funding effectively.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All statutory requirements are met. Teachers' training is up to date and teachers are well informed about possible risks of extremism and radicalisation and keeping children safe when using the internet.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching does not enable pupils to make consistently good progress in each year group and all subjects. The most effective teaching is in Years 5 and 6, where pupils make the most rapid progress. However, pupils have too many gaps in their learning by the time they get to Year 5, so they do not achieve the best standards they are capable of by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching does not take enough account of pupils' ability and prior learning, so the work does not challenge the most able sufficiently and is too hard for lower ability pupils at times. Teaching does not build systematically on what pupils know so some pupils, particularly those with low starting points, have gaps in their learning.
- Writing skills are not taught effectively enough to enable pupils to develop a fluent style in different types of writing. Pupils have limited opportunity to write at length in different subjects, in their own words and in a range of styles. Pupils' vocabulary is not developed well enough in the early years and at Key Stage 1. As a result pupils do not always use the right words in their writing are not able to check that their writing makes sense. This applies equally to pupils speaking English as an additional language and those whose first language is English.
- Spelling, grammar and punctuation are not taught systematically and errors are not corrected early enough. Errors in pupils' work sometimes persist because pupils do not take notice of their teachers' feedback. There are occasions when the teachers' comments on pupils' work have errors in spelling and punctuation, which therefore do not model good practice for the pupils. Some pupils do not know how to spell commonly used words, apply spelling patterns or use basic punctuation correctly when they get to Year 5.
- There is some good practice in teaching and assessment on which to build. In Year 5 for example, pupils are able to edit and improve their work because they are provided with very clear guidance. Reading is taught effectively in guided reading sessions in all years; inspiring pupils to read for pleasure and helping them develop skills to read for information. Mathematics teaching is stronger across the whole school so all groups of pupils make expected or sometimes better progress.
- Sports and music are taught especially well. Pupils really enjoy music; they sing and play instruments with enthusiasm and skill. Year 1 pupils, for example, enjoyed creating their own musical compositions and created increasingly complex musical patterns. Pupils participate in a range of sports and are proud of their achievements.
- Teaching assistants are directed well and make an effective contribution to teaching within the classroom and when they are directed to work in small groups. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because their work is adapted appropriately and they receive good support.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is good.
- Teachers have very positive relationships with pupils. They are encouraging and nurturing, so pupils grow in confidence.
- Pupils make a positive contribution to their school and create a harmonious, happy atmosphere. They show respect for teachers and look out for each other.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is promoted well. Pupils learn from each other and enjoy celebrating different cultures and faiths. They have a good understanding of global events and debate moral issues thoughtfully. Pupils' social skills are developed well; they collaborate with their work and play together sociably.

- Pupils are safe and feel safe in school. They feel safe from bullying because it is extremely rare and they are confident that staff will deal with it effectively should it occur. Pupils are able to talk about different types of bullying including that based on appearances or sexuality. Racist and homophobic incidents are extremely rare. Pupils from different backgrounds play happily together.
- Pupils know how to keep safe when they use the internet or social media and on roads and railways.
- Older pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They persevere, concentrate well, participate in lively discussion and collaborate effectively. Younger pupils listen carefully and try hard with their work. However, their opportunity to persevere with challenging tasks is more limited and their productivity is variable between classes, because teachers' expectations are not consistently high.
- Pupils especially enjoy reading and learning in science, music and sports; they develop effective skills to help them succeed in these subjects.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and courteous around school. For example, they hold doors open for each other and wait their turn patiently in the canteen.
- Pupils play together with great enthusiasm in the playground. They use the resources from the 'play pod' imaginatively and energetically. At times their play becomes boisterous, requiring some intervention from adults, but they show regard for their own and others' safety.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils listen well, follow instructions, and complete the tasks they are given. Disruption to learning is extremely rare.
- Attendance has improved and is broadly average. Persistent absenteeism has reduced with effective action to engage families. Exclusions are rare and carefully planned. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View feel their children are safe and pupils are well behaved. Those who spoke with inspectors were positive, stating for example, 'my children are very happy', 'children feel safe because the school is like a family. Everyone gets on well'.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils currently in school have variable outcomes, reflecting the variability in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' outcomes in reading and mathematics are broadly in line with age related expectations in each year group. Most pupils make expected or sometimes better than expected progress from their starting points in these subjects. Standards are broadly in line with age related expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils' outcomes in writing are below expectations for each year group. This is because key skills in writing are not taught systematically from the start and pupils have limited opportunities to write at length and practise their skills.
- Pupils do very well in sports and music because these subjects are taught effectively and capture pupils' interest. Pupils also enjoy and achieve well in science and art. They learn to use a range of skills in topic work, including use of historical sources and researching for information. Pupils in Year 4 are really enjoying their topic on Romans and talk knowledgeably about what life was like for Roman soldiers.
- Pupils' attainment in national tests at the end of Year 6 has been broadly average for a number of years, but it dipped significantly in 2014 in mathematics and writing. Standards improved in 2015 to broadly average in reading and mathematics but remained significantly below national in writing.
- Pupils' attainment at Year 2 was broadly average in 2015 in reading and mathematics but few pupils reached higher standards. Attainment in writing was well below average.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils has improved following a review of provision. Gaps have closed over the last three years. In the 2015 Year 6 tests disadvantaged pupils did better than other pupils in school in reading and were around a term behind other pupils nationally who are not disadvantaged. In writing, they did better than others in school and were two and a half terms behind other pupils nationally. In mathematics they were a term behind others in school and two and half terms behind other pupils nationally. Gaps narrowed to a similar extent at Key Stage 1.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because tasks are adapted appropriately and they receive good support in class, individually and in small groups.

- The picture is not so positive for those pupils who are low attaining on entry and need to catch up. Too many pupils are working below the standards expected for their age in Year 5 and Year 6, especially in writing. Pupils with low starting points have not been helped to catch-up lower down the school.
- The most able pupils make expected progress across Key Stage 2 but very few pupils reach higher standards at Key Stage 1. The proportion of pupils reaching higher standards at Key Stage 2 is below average. Pupils have limited opportunities to work at higher standards, for example in applying mathematical skills to reasoning and problem solving and using inference in reading.
- Pupils from Pakistani, Indian and White British backgrounds achieve similarly. Differences in achievement are more pronounced between ability groups and dependent on starting points. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve similarly to other pupils in school.
- Pupils who join the school other than at the usual time make similar progress to others, from their starting points. They are welcomed into school and make friends quickly.
- Pupils are prepared adequately for the next stage of their education. The majority leave school having achieved average standards or above in reading and mathematics. Their writing skills lag behind however.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Many children have knowledge and skills below those that are typical for children their age in language, literacy and mathematics, when they enter Nursery.
- Practitioners provide a range of activities, enabling children to experience all areas of learning and make expected progress from their starting points. However, the activities do not build on prior learning well enough to enable children to make the fast progress they need to make in order to catch up with age related expectations in language, communication, literacy and mathematics.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception class is well below average, so too many of them are not ready to start the Year 1 curriculum. There are signs of improvement, however; the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased over the last three years and this upward trend is continuing.
- Disadvantaged children generally make the same, adequate, progress as other children in the early years. Additional funding is used effectively to provide extra support. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well by adults who are multi-lingual. They make similar and sometimes better progress than children speaking English as their first language.
- Children enjoy choosing activities. The role play areas are popular, for example the boys 'working' on the 'building site' were imaginative and creative. However, many of the activities that children can choose do not always meet their varied abilities and interests. There are not enough opportunities for children to write or use their mathematical skills independently or to investigate, explore and extend their learning for themselves. Resources are not easily accessible; for example, children do not have free access to good quality writing materials and mathematical apparatus.
- There are some missed opportunities to promote speaking skills and develop children's vocabulary through display or through talking with them during activities.
- Teaching about the sounds that letters make (phonics) is effective. Children are developing their phonic skills well and they enjoy reading activities.
- Children are safe, well supervised and treated with kindness. Children feel safe and well cared for. Their behaviour is good because they know what is expected of them. All safeguarding requirements are met and practitioners have the relevant qualifications to ensure children's health and safety.
- Children show enthusiasm and are keen to learn. They develop good personal, social and physical skills. They are friendly to each other and work and play together happily.
- Leaders are aware of what needs to improve in the early years and have identified actions to secure improvement. They are addressing the needs of early years practitioners effectively through further training and development and links with other early years settings.
- Links with parents are strong and parents are pleased with the provision. They say, for example, that children are 'really enthusiastic and love coming' and that 'staff are very welcoming and approachable'.

School details

Unique reference number	119127
Local Authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection Number	10002593

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Amina Diwan
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Mr Mark Geldard
Telephone number	01254 56297
Website	http://www.roelee.com/
Email address	office@roleepark.blackburn.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27-28 June 2012

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was deemed a section 5 inspection following a one day section 8 inspection conducted by the lead inspector. Four Ofsted inspectors joined the lead inspector on the second day.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each class. The headteacher joined the lead inspector in brief visits to classrooms on the first day. Inspectors looked at pupils' books during lesson observations and carried out a separate, detailed scrutiny of their work on a random sample of books in a range of subjects, with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, met with groups of pupils and talked with many others during lessons and break-times.
- They met with senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and three governors, and a representative of the local authority. The lead inspector spoke with the school improvement partner by telephone.
- Inspectors looked at documentation including the school's self-evaluation, improvement planning, policies and procedures to safeguard pupils.
- Inspectors took account of 23 parents' responses to the on-line questionnaire 'Parent View' and spoke with several parents at the entrance to the school at the start of the day. The views of staff were also taken into account, informed by 37 returns to the Ofsted questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Sandra La Porta	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Helm	Ofsted Inspector

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