

Meadowhead Junior School

Anglesey Street, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 4QG

Inspection dates

14–15 March 2017

| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
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| 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 |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable. As a result, pupils do not make good progress from their starting points.
- Assessment information about pupils' abilities is more accurate than it was, yet it is still overgenerous. Teachers do not use this information consistently enough to plan for pupils' range of abilities and needs.
- The leadership and management of English are not good enough. There is not enough support for pupils with weak literacy skills.
- The teaching of reading is not effective enough. There is insufficient focus upon high-quality discussion to support pupils' comprehension and inference.
- Teachers' lack of subject knowledge hampers their ability to stretch the most able pupils.
- The most able pupils are not consistently challenged in their learning. The school's expectations of pupils' achievement are high but they are not matched by the quality of teaching.
- Governors are passionate about achieving the best outcomes for pupils. However, they do not challenge senior leaders rigorously enough about the standards that pupils achieve. Statutory requirements for the information published on school websites are not met and a few policies are not up to date.

The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is good. Great attention is paid to well-established routines, both in the classroom and outside. Pupils say that they feel safe at school, and parents agree.
- Standards in mathematics are rapidly improving due to much-improved leadership.
- There is a very popular and healthy breakfast club, where pupils eat good-quality food. They exercise with sports coaches to stay healthy.
- Attendance has improved greatly since the previous inspection, due to a relentless drive from senior leaders and governors.
- The quality of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - strengthening teachers' subject knowledge
 - providing better support for pupils with weak literacy skills
 - ensuring that information about pupils' abilities is consistently well used to inform teaching.
- Raise attainment in English and for the most able pupils by:
 - improving the teaching of reading
 - improving the quality of questioning to provide more stretch and challenge.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that governors challenge leaders more rigorously about the standards that pupils achieve
 - ensuring that statutory requirements for the school's website are met and that policies are up to date
 - improving the leadership and management of English
 - diverting some pupil premium funding specifically to support the most able disadvantaged pupils.

An external review of governance 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 managers' evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning presents a more favourable picture than is the case because their assessment does not take enough account of what teaching is normally like. Too much emphasis is placed upon the outcome of specific lesson observations and not enough on the quality of work in pupils' books.
- The leadership and management of English are not effective enough. There are too many inconsistencies in the teaching of reading and not enough support for pupils with weak literacy skills.
- The pupil premium funding has been successfully used to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, to improve these pupils' well-being, to provide music tuition for them and to ensure a smooth transition from the infant school. All these initiatives have had a positive impact. However, there has been less impact on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, especially those who are the most able.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used well. As a result, sport has a much higher profile in school and pupils get involved with a wide range of sports including dodge ball, cricket, archery, cycling and gymnastics.
- Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well to provide some good social, emotional and academic support. Support is most effective when teachers have been given specific strategies to use with pupils.
- The headteacher has high expectations. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Checks on teachers' performance are in place and have been used effectively to challenge some underperformance.
- The curriculum is creative and incorporates lots of outdoor active learning. Pupils have the opportunity to visit the school's allotment to learn how to grow vegetables. The curriculum focuses upon building key skills. Effective use is made of subject specialists for the teaching of music and art.
- Funding received for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well to provide some good pastoral support. It is used less well to improve the quality of teaching for pupils with weak literacy skills.
- Pupils recognise the importance of British values through religious education and visits to local places of worship and fundraising. These experiences help to prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- The local authority provides effective support for the school. The school is part of a local cluster which enables teachers to assess pupils' work together. This has helped improve the accuracy of assessment.

Governance of the school

- Members of the governing body are highly supportive and committed to improving the school but they have not held leaders sufficiently to account.

- Governors have not challenged senior leaders rigorously enough about the standards that pupils achieve.
- Some school policies are not reviewed thoroughly and some statutory requirements for the school website have been overlooked.
- Governors regularly visit the school to meet with leaders and managers, for example to check the quality of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/ or disabilities.
- Governors have successfully focused upon raising attendance for all groups of pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The single central record of checks on adults' suitability to work with children meets requirements. Most policies and procedures are up to date, although the anti-bullying policy does not explain clearly to staff or parents the procedures for reporting and recording instances of bullying. All relevant staff have been appropriately trained to deal with child protection, including the prevention of terrorism and safer recruitment.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school, and parents agree. The school keeps careful records of child protection issues and involves other agencies in a timely manner. Case studies show that the school engages with other agencies quickly and effectively to support pupils and their families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. The teaching of reading is not good enough. Pupils are not prompted to think in enough depth about the meaning of the words they read or to draw inferences from the text.
- The least able pupils do not receive enough support for literacy. Some struggle to write using correct capital letters, finger spaces and full stops and the teaching they receive does not consistently help them improve their basic literacy skills.
- Teachers do not always use information about pupils' abilities well enough to ensure that planned learning poses an appropriate level of challenge. Too often the most able pupils complete work that they can already do.
- Teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving. There are some good examples of very effective support for individual needs but not all teaching is tailored well enough to allow this group to make good progress.
- On occasions, teachers' ability to ask challenging questions or prompt a detailed discussion is impeded by their lack of subject knowledge.
- Music is taught very well. Pupils were observed singing enthusiastically in time with a rhythm. The songs were fun and engaging, prompting great enthusiasm and good behaviour.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics is improving. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they can apply mathematical methodology to challenging questions and some of

the least able pupils receive good support to understand basic concepts, for example place value.

- In Year 4, pupils were learning about teeth in science. The most able pupils made strong progress due to a good level of challenge. Scrutiny of their books showed that this was typically the case. However, the least able pupils made less progress due to a lack of support for writing.
- There is some very high-quality assessment that leads to better progress, but this is not the case across all classrooms. Some assessment remains overgenerous and does not help pupils improve their work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school employs a well-being coordinator, who knows pupils and their families extremely well. She bridges the gap between home and school and often provides support for pupils in their homes. She is well respected by pupils and families alike.
- There is lots of effective work to support those pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. 'The meadow' is a nurture room designed to help pupils observe positive role models, using good manners and sharing. This work is very well focused and rigorously evaluated.
- Pupils are encouraged to be healthy by eating fruit at breaktimes, regularly brushing their teeth and doing plenty of physical exercise.
- An effective policy is in place to combat bullying and pupils know whom they would tell if they had a concern. However, the anti-bullying policy does not make clear to pupils or parents the procedure they should follow or what response they should expect in the event of any bullying.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Many classrooms are beautifully decorated with vibrant displays designed to engage pupils' attention and to encourage their positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are typically polite and considerate.
- Pupils' behaviour in assembly was impeccable. They stood smartly in their uniforms, sang beautifully and were proud ambassadors for their school.
- Lunchtime is very well organised. Pupils get on well together and play happily using the vast array of climbing equipment and ball games. Pupils are very well supervised. Any squabbles are sorted out quickly.
- Attendance is broadly average, which represents a significant improvement from that recorded at the time of the previous inspection. The attendance of different groups is rigorously monitored and there is excellent home-school liaison for those pupils who find regular attendance difficult.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not make good progress from their starting points. The least able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities struggle to catch up because the quality of teaching and support is not always good enough.
- The outcomes for disadvantaged pupils remain below those of those pupils who are not disadvantaged, but they are improving due to some well-targeted support and effective use of the pupil premium funding. However, none of the pupil premium funding is diverted into improving progress for the most able disadvantaged pupils, so for this group, the impact is minimal.
- The school's assessment information shows that pupils are making better progress this year. Analysis of pupils' work and lesson observations show that the school's assessments are more accurate than previously but still overgenerous for the most able pupils.
- Through analysing pupils' work and lesson observations, it is clear that pupils are making much better progress now in subjects such as mathematics, writing, art, music, physical education and physical education.
- Pupils' readiness for secondary school is limited by their outcomes, particularly in English.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 119121 |
| Local authority | Blackburn with Darwen |
| Inspection number | 10024194 |

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.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 261 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Michaela Shorrocks |
| Headteacher | Allison Chadwick |
| Telephone number | 01254 209871 |
| Website | www.meadowheadjuniors.co.uk |
| Email address | Allison.Chadwick@meadowheadjunior.blackburn.gov.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 30–31 January 2013 |

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the content of the curriculum for each subject in relation to each academic year and pecuniary interests for governors.
- This is a larger than average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium is more than twice the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is high.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also below average.
- 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.

- The school receives support from the local authority school improvement partner.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, school policies, and records relating to safeguarding, self-evaluation information and a range of other documentation.
- There were 19 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, to be considered. Inspectors spoke with many parents in the school playground before school and at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors met with members of the governing body.
- Meetings were also held with senior and middle leaders and representatives from the local authority.

Inspection team

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Sally Kenyon, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Lesley Curtis | Ofsted Inspector |
| Tim Lucas | Ofsted Inspector |
| Ann Dimeck | Ofsted Inspector |

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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