

Poulton-le-Fylde Carr Head Primary School

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

Inspection dates

16–17 May 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The dedicated headteacher and leadership team have worked successfully to secure significant improvements to the school's work.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. It is good.
- Early years provision is good. It now ensures that children get a good start to their education and achieve highly. Progress at key stage 1 is much better than when the school was last inspected, as is achievement in mathematics across the school.
- The improvements that leaders have made to teaching now enable most pupils to make strong and sustained progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Most disadvantaged pupils progress as well as other pupils nationally.
- Pupils study a wide range of subjects and produce some high-quality work. Subject leaders check pupils' work and provide advice to colleagues. However, in some subjects, leaders are just beginning to assess pupils' progress. This is because the school's priority has been to improve achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy school, behave well and say that they feel safe. Pupils are very complimentary about the work that teachers do to make lessons interesting.
- Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular clubs and opportunities to take on responsibility to help the school run better.
- Leaders ensure that staff are vigilant in looking after pupils' welfare.
- Most parents applaud the school's work. Leaders and governors work well with parents and increasingly seek their views and opinions. Staff's and pupils' views are gathered informally.
- Pupils learn about British values and to respect people's differences. However, they do not yet have a complete understanding of the full range of diversity in modern Britain.
- Over time, pupils have not made the progress of which they are capable. However, leaders have taken positive and effective steps to arrest this underachievement, although there is still some way to go.
- The progress of some of the school's most-able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, is not consistently good. Similarly, some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not yet make consistently strong progress. Leaders' information to show how well pupils progress across the curriculum is not yet clear.
- Some improvement plans lack the detail that governors need to ensure that outcomes improve to consistently good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and across the curriculum. In particular:
 - ensure that the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is consistently good across the school
 - ensure that the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, reach the standards of which they are capable
 - ensuring that teachers assess pupils' progress consistently well across the curriculum.
- Further strengthen leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that improvement plans include sharp, measurable targets linked to pupil outcomes
 - enabling pupils to understand the full range of diversity in modern Britain.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and her leadership team have created an aspirational school culture in which pupils feel safe, supported and valued. Pupils are encouraged to do their best and have good opportunities to learn what it means to be a responsible member of the school and the wider community. Staff are motivated and committed. They consider that leaders respect their work and support their professional development.
- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has worked relentlessly and with a good degree of success to improve teaching and pupils' achievement. She has welcomed the increased support from the local authority, particularly in dealing with teaching weaknesses in key stage 1 and the early years. Significant improvement has been made to provision in the early years. At key stage 1, improvement has not been as rapid, but is now improving well.
- The headteacher's focus on improvement has remained resolute through a period of senior staff absence. Middle leaders have risen well to the additional responsibilities deployed to them during this period and are providing effective support for the headteacher.
- The headteacher has implemented an effective range of strategies to check on and improve teaching and learning. In addition, external moderation of teachers' assessments in reading, writing and mathematics has ensured that these are accurate and provide a reliable basis for leaders to track and evaluate pupils' progress.
- The leaders for mathematics and literacy support improvement well. Good use was made of a detailed analysis of pupils' past performance in the mathematics tests to secure further improvement. This has rightly led to aspects of the mathematics curriculum, including daily mathematics teaching, being adjusted to improve pupils' weaker calculation skills.
- The leader, with temporary responsibility for literacy, has had a good effect on improving writing. Staff training has ensured that teachers now have a better understanding of the increased skills that pupils need by the end of each key stage and how best to develop these. There are high expectations for pupils to write more frequently and develop the full range of writing skills across the curriculum.
- Leaders have effectively focused on improving pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics following historic underachievement in these areas. During this time, the breadth of the curriculum has not been diluted. Pupils study a wide range of subjects. These are frequently organised around half-termly themes or topics to appeal to pupils' interests, with educational visits, workshops and visitors planned to enrich learning.
- A good range of extra-curricular clubs, including for sport, choir and computing, enhance the curriculum. The code club for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 enables them to learn programming languages, which they use to create games and animations.
- The physical education (PE) and sports premium has been used to fund a variety of in-school and extra-curricular activities, including ballroom dancing, yoga, boccia and gymnastics. Leaders have evaluated that the funding has increased pupils' skills,

enjoyment, confidence and participation in PE and sport and that staff have also benefited from working with specialist teachers.

- The school now makes appropriate use of additional funding to support those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The arts have a high profile and music is a strength. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching and learn to play an instrument in key stage 2. They learn about different styles of art and the work of artists, sculptors and designers. Through their study of world religions, pupils gain an understanding of different beliefs and customs and of the need to respect this type of diversity. However, the curriculum does not enable pupils to develop a comprehensive understanding of the full range of diversity in modern Britain.
- The school's development plan includes broad priorities to improve outcomes for pupils, the overall quality of teaching and aspects of leadership and management. The actions to improve outcomes for key groups, for example disadvantaged pupils, the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, has an increasingly sharper focus.
- Leaders pay particular attention to pupils who have not made the progress that leaders expect of them. There is now a sharper focus on the progress of key groups, such as the most able pupils and those who are disadvantaged. As a result of this renewed focus, most pupils now make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders recognise, however, that the most able pupils, the most able disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities should make faster progress.
- Leadership of science and PE is strong. All subject leaders have received training for their role and undertaken various monitoring tasks to inform them of the quality of provision and pupils' learning. However, assessment of how well pupils are progressing in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not yet strong enough.

Governance of the school

- Governors are a keen and dedicated team. They are frequent visitors to the school and, through their links with classes and subjects, know pupils and staff well. Governors have undertaken regular training to improve their expertise. They routinely evaluate their role and impact.
- Governors ask probing questions about pupils' achievement. They do not shy away from challenging leaders. For example, they continue to address the lack of clarity in development and actions plans which prevents them from being able to hold leaders more fully to account. Governors and leaders are committed to improving outcomes through sharper improvement planning so that outcomes improve to consistently good.
- The introduction of coffee mornings to improve communication with parents has proven to be a useful initiative. This is in response to previous parental concerns that the governors were not actively seeking the views of parents and responding to them. Governors commit to finding ways to continue to engage parents more fully in their child's learning.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. While some of the safeguarding information on the school's website was out of date at the start of the inspection, in practice the school has a strong safeguarding culture.
- Rigorous systems are in place to ensure that staff and volunteers are suitable people to work with children. Staff training is regular and up to date. Staff have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and of how to act if they are concerned about pupils' welfare. Leaders respond quickly to concerns that are raised.
- Communication with professional agencies is good and record-keeping is thorough. The school provides parents with useful information to help them keep their children safe, for example when using the internet.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers are a committed team. They are receptive to advice and training to develop their practice and improve pupils' learning. This is very evident in pupils' mathematics and writing books. These show pupils' progressive learning over the year and good consistency of teachers' adherence to the higher expectations leaders have set for improving achievement. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to explain new ideas clearly. They use questioning well in lessons to assess pupils' understanding and inform their decisions about the extent of support pupils need and how soon pupils are ready to undertake more-challenging work.
- Pupils appreciate teachers' efforts to make lessons interesting. In pupils' favourite subjects they are inspired to learn, for example they enjoy solving mathematical problems and conducting scientific investigations. Pupils explained that some teachers make learning more fun than others, but explained: 'They are all good in their own way.'
- The most able pupils' views about whether the work they are given challenges them sufficiently were mixed. Some felt that the balance of work was just right. Others considered that it was occasionally too easy and a small number felt that it was frequently too easy in mathematics. Checks on pupils' mathematics books showed that teachers are mostly getting the challenge for these pupils right but this is not yet consistent in all year groups.
- Skilled teaching of phonics helps pupils develop as confident readers and writers. This year, teachers have ensured that pupils have significantly more opportunities to develop the full range of writing skills they need by reinforcing writing across a range of subjects. Pupils' books show that teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation are more consistent.
- Teachers are increasingly developing pupils' problem-solving skills in a range of subjects. In Year 2, for example, pupils pondered over photographs of historical artefacts and came up with reasoned ideas for their uses.
- The school's assessments and pupils' books show that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies. Historically, some pupils' needs were not accurately identified. This has now been

rectified. The lack of timely support, however, has left some with gaps in their learning. All pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are now receiving additional support. As a result, some are making rapid progress. However, not all teachers are confident in making accurate assessments of the small steps in progress that pupils make or using assessment information to set targets for the next steps in pupils' learning.

- Support staff are a valued part of the teaching team and many make a strong contribution to teaching and learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are keen to take up the variety of responsibilities offered. They speak enthusiastically about their roles as members of the school leadership team, school council, and as play leaders and digital leaders. Through the process of election to some of these roles, pupils gain a useful insight to the value of democracy.
- In discussions, pupils explained how studying history has helped them to learn about the development of democracy and how laws have changed over time, such as voting rights for women. Pupils say that they have lots of opportunities to debate issues and express opinions in lessons and through drama.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They know the importance of telling an adult if they experience bullying or see it happening to someone else. While pupils reflected that there is a small amount of bullying, they consider that teachers are good at resolving any issues that occur.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They recognise that teachers help them to learn how to keep safe in different situations, including when using the internet.
- The school's breakfast club and lunchtime friendship club are popular and productive aspects of the school's support and welfare arrangements for specific groups of pupils.
- Pupils are very aware of the need to respect people's differences but they do not have a comprehensive understanding of the diversity of modern Britain. They said that they occasionally hear some racist and homophobic name-calling and explained that this occurs when teachers are not in earshot. Pupils do understand, however, that both types of behaviour are wrong.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. During the inspection, pupils behaved very well in lessons, at playtimes and when moving around the school. In their exchanges with inspectors, pupils were sociable and exceptionally well-mannered.
- The school's records of behaviour over time, including incidents of bullying, show that inappropriate behaviour is dealt with robustly and in line with the school's behaviour and safeguarding policies. Records show that pupils' behaviour meets the school's high expectations.

- Pupils' good sense of right and wrong was evident in discussions with inspectors. Pupils thought carefully about their experiences of behaviour in school and gave honest opinions. Most expressed very positive views. Pupils explained that behaviour is generally better in lessons than at lunchtime and better when lessons are taught by their class teachers. Pupils were very clear that teachers would always deal with any behaviour concerns they shared, but were less satisfied with the response of lunchtime staff.
- In visits to classrooms pupils listened carefully to their teachers, answered questions readily and applied themselves well to their work. Pupils' books show that they complete a good amount of work and most take pride in this and present it well.
- Attendance is above average and few pupils are persistently absent. Where incidences of persistent absence have occurred, most have been beyond the school's control. The school has good systems to promote regular attendance and quickly follow up any unreported absences.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because over time pupils have not made the progress of which they are capable.
- While current pupils are now achieving far better in reading, writing and mathematics than at the time of the previous inspection, the progress of the most able pupils, the most able disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not yet consistently good. In some other subjects the extent of progress made by pupils towards the standards expected for their age is unclear because the priority has been to improve achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Over time and across the school, pupils' progress in mathematics has generally been weaker than in reading and writing. The school's 2016 end of key stage 2 test results reflected some improvement on the previous year, but this was not marked. In part, pupils' test results still reflected the gaps in learning from earlier underachievement. This was also the case at key stage 1. Weaker mental calculation skills were the main issue. This also affected pupils' ability to complete problem-solving tasks.
- Current pupils' work and the school's assessments show that pupils' learning is deepening and becoming more secure. Books show significantly more evidence of good calculation strategies and pupils successfully completing reasoning and problem-solving tasks, although some of the most able pupils are not always challenged well enough.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected standard in the 2016 phonics screening check was above average. As they move through the school, pupils have the phonics skills needed to help them read and write. The pupils recognise that their reading has improved and say that they now enjoy reading much more. Across the school, most pupils have good attitudes to reading. The majority are making the progress that the school expects and developing skills appropriate for their age.
- Previous underachievement in key stage 1 has now been stemmed. Overall progress this year has accelerated and earlier gaps in pupils' learning have closed.
- Standards and progress in writing are improving rapidly across the school. Pupils are developing skills in writing for a range of purposes and developing stamina to write at

length. Pupils' books show that skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar continue to improve.

- The 2016 end of key stage 2 test and assessment results for disadvantaged pupils showed that they made similar progress in reading, writing and mathematics to pupils nationally with the same starting points. The school's assessment information for current disadvantaged pupils shows that they are making the progress the school expects, given their prior attainment. However, leaders have introduced strategies to accelerate pupils' progress further to ensure that more pupils are well prepared for secondary school by the end of Year 6.

Early years provision

Good

- There has been good improvement to the school's early years provision. The stronger links that have been forged with pre-school providers have supported the children's smooth transition into full-time schooling. Good assessment systems are now firmly established and used well by staff to plan individual children's next steps in learning and to track progress over time.
- Children's starting points on joining the Reception class are at least typical for their age. Effective teaching ensures that the children make good progress and attain above-average standards by the end of the year. The good use that is made of additional funding for disadvantaged children ensures that they too make strong progress. By the end of the Reception Year, most children, including those who are disadvantaged, are well prepared for work in Year 1.
- From the outset, good links with parents are established. This, and the caring and supportive relationships of the teaching staff, ensure that children settle quickly and are ready and eager to learn. Throughout the day, the children show good interest in the range of activities and resources provided indoors and outside. Both environments have been structured so that children can explore their ideas and interests and undertake challenges set by teaching staff.
- Staff training has improved the overall quality of teaching, which is good. In play situations, staff intervene well to develop children's ideas and reasoning skills through discussion and questions, such as 'How do you know?', 'How did you work that out?' and 'Show me.' Staff regularly assess children's achievements, capturing many of these electronically to share with parents and compile a picture of children's progress over the year.
- In focused teaching activities, the children listen well and are keen to share what they know with their teachers. For example, children were clearly fascinated by what they had learned about the life cycle of the spider and could explain this in detail. The teacher built well on this enthusiasm in a writing session. While demonstrating how children could record their understanding of the spider's life cycle, the teacher provided excellent opportunities for the children to use phonics skills to segment words. Letter formation sentence construction, punctuation and spaces between words were all reinforced well. The children were intently engaged and quick to pick up the teacher's intentional mistake of using upper-case letters in the middle of words.
- Good behaviour, manners and consideration for others is constantly promoted. The children understand the class routines, grow in confidence and socialise well.

- The early years is being temporarily led by a member of the leadership team. Although this leader has no prior experience of the phase, there has been a clear commitment to researching good early years practice and learning as much as possible from the experienced early years staff.
- Safeguarding arrangements in the early years are effective.

School details

Unique reference number	119276
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10032190

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Aly Spencer
Headteacher	Angeli Slack
Telephone number	01253 883558
Website	www.carrhead.lancsngfl.ac.uk
Email address	head@carrhead.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 June 2015

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about its pupil premium strategy, PE and sports premium, most recent key stage 2 results and the content of the curriculum for Year 6 on its website.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is broadly average.
- The deputy headteacher is currently absent from the school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum

expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each year group, checked pupils' books and listened to some pupils read. They reviewed the school's assessment information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- A range of school documentation was reviewed. This included the school's evaluation of its effectiveness, the school's development plan, safeguarding information, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and information about teachers' performance.
- Two formal discussions were held with pupils and other pupils were spoken to informally in lessons and at playtime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors held separate discussions with senior leaders, middle leaders, governors and two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered 33 responses to Parent View, including 26 written responses. Inspectors also considered an email from one parent and recent letters and email communications from parents to school leaders.
- Inspectors considered 10 responses to the online pupil survey and 11 responses to the online staff survey.

Inspection team

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