

Ferney Lee Primary School

Ferney Lee Road, Todmorden, West Yorkshire OL14 5NR

Inspection dates

8–9 May 2019

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	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 made many changes to teaching and the curriculum. While there have been improvements, some have not been in place long enough to have had an impact.
- Most leaders are new to their posts and enthusiastic. They are still at the early stages of finding out what needs to be done to raise attainment further.
- Leaders track pupils' progress meticulously but assessment information is not yet used sharply to support teachers and hold them to account.
- While the curriculum is varied, it is not enabling pupils to gain a deep level of knowledge and to remember this knowledge over time.
- After a strong start in the early years, pupils' progress slows in key stage 1, particularly in reading.
- Over time, pupils' attainment has been rising slowly, but remains too low in mathematics and writing by the time they leave in Year 6.
- The quality of teaching, while improving, remains inconsistent. This is leading to some gaps in pupils' writing and mathematical skills.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the early years thrive as a result of enthusiastic teaching and an interesting curriculum.
- Pupils behave well both in class and during lunchtimes. They are well mannered and apply themselves well to work.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure, saying that there is always an adult to turn to if the need arises.
- Leaders have been successful in reducing exclusions and improving attendance.
- The governing body provides good levels of challenge and support to leaders.
- The curriculum is wide and rich, particularly in music and physical education and in helping pupils improve their spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and so improve outcomes further by:
 - widening pupils' vocabulary across the curriculum to ensure that their writing is rich and interesting
 - giving pupils more opportunities to reason and solve problems mathematically when they are ready to do so
 - ensuring that teaching assistants are well trained and contribute well to pupils' learning
 - ensuring that the pupil premium is having a stronger impact on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes in key stage 1.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in reading in key stage 1 by:
 - ensuring that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics that builds on the knowledge that children in the early years have gained
 - ensuring that pupils are given opportunities to use and apply the phonics they have learned to their writing
 - providing more targeted support to those pupils in Year 2 who did not reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
 - ensuring that middle leaders evaluate the impact of what they do and what difference it is making to pupils' outcomes
 - improving the curriculum further so that there is greater depth to what pupils are learning
 - using assessment information more sharply to hold teachers to account for the progress that pupils make, particularly when pupils are moving from one year to the next.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Much has been done since the previous inspection to improve teaching and raise attainment. There have been successes, particularly in the early years and in pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare. However, much still remains to be done and some improvements have not been in place long enough to make a strong impact.
- Middle leaders are new to their posts. They are at the early stages of improving teaching and the curriculum and are keen and enthusiastic. However, they do not evaluate the impact of what they do and what difference it is making to pupils' outcomes.
- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders are now tracking pupils' progress regularly. However, the information they gather from assessments is not used sharply to support and hold teachers to account, particularly when pupils are moving from one year to the next.
- There are strengths in the curriculum. However, it is structured so that one topic follows another, with little or no overlap or revisiting of past topics. This means that, while pupils study a broad range of topics, they do not study them in depth or remember what they have been taught in depth. This is particularly the case in science, history and geography.
- The curriculum provides rich, lively, learning experiences. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoyed school a great deal. This has contributed to the much-improved attendance. Music is high-profile in the school. During the inspection, pupils sang complex East Asian songs well, being led by teachers from a local music charity. Numerous pupils learn musical instruments formally and pupils play ukuleles in class.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively. Professional sports coaches help to improve teachers' skills. All pupils take part in sports activities. Additionally, during the Friday afternoon 'enrichment' time, many pupils take part in extra sports, including circuit training and judo.
- The many other activities which pupils can take part in during enrichment time, develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. This includes activities such as 'incredible edible', which introduces pupils to horticulture and sustainable lifestyles.
- The pupil premium is having a good impact on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes in key stage 2. However, it is not making sufficient difference to outcomes in key stage 1. Too few disadvantaged pupils reach the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check or reach the attainment of which they are capable in key stage 1.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have been successful in building very positive relationships with parents, almost all of whom are supportive of the school. Events such as pyjama parties help parents to support their children at home, for example by reading bedtime stories. Moreover, these improved relationships with parents have helped to drive up attendance.
- Morale among staff is high. The staff questionnaire indicated that staff are all proud to

work at the school, that behaviour is managed well and that the school is well led and managed. In addition, all staff indicated on the questionnaire that leaders are considerate of their well-being.

Governance of the school

- Since the last inspection, there have been many changes to governance. The new chair of governors has overseen a thorough skills audit, where gaps in governors' knowledge have been addressed. All governors now have a good understanding of national standards in reading, writing and mathematics as well as the need to maintain a rich, vibrant curriculum.
- Supported by the local authority and an external consultant, governors now have an accurate picture of what needs to be done to improve the school further. Governors were instrumental in securing a permanent headteacher and establishing a stable senior leadership team.
- Governors are beginning to hold senior leaders to account. For example, they are inviting subject leaders to governors' meetings to hear at first hand the difference they are making to pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a good culture of safeguarding. Records are kept securely and all staff are kept abreast of current national safeguarding requirements. Staff are well aware of what they must do when faced with a safeguarding concern.
- Thorough systems are in place for the vetting and checking of new members of staff.
- A new computerised system has been introduced to log safeguarding concerns. Inspectors found that teething problems during its introduction have led to a time lag between the reporting of concerns and their resolution. Inspectors looked into this in detail, concluding that no pupils were at risk. The issue was immediately rectified by school leaders.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- While teaching, learning and assessment have improved, particularly in key stage 2, weaknesses remain. Attainment, particularly in key stage 1, is not as high as it could be as a result.
- Teaching assistants are not having a strong impact on pupils' learning. Gaps in their training mean that they do not support pupils' reading well in key stage 1. Some of the tasks they do with pupils across other subjects are repetitive and mundane.
- In the majority of lessons, pupils are taught to use an increasing range of punctuation. They are taught grammar skills to make their sentence writing interesting and are taught to spell words correctly. However, their vocabulary does not progress as quickly as other aspects of their writing. By the time they have reached Year 6, they still use a

fairly narrow range of vocabulary, which limits the overall quality of their writing.

- In mathematics, pupils are taught the basics well, including in key stage 1, where the quality of teaching is more variable. Pupils learn key mathematical facts, such as their times tables. This makes them fluent to tackle more complex mathematics as they progress from one year to the next. However, pupils do not always move on to solving problems or reasoning mathematically when it is clear they are ready for this additional challenge.
- In reading in key stage 2, pupils make good progress. This is because teachers ensure that pupils develop their comprehension skills well. Pupils offer well-considered answers to questions that require them to make predictions or find evidence in the text. Teachers make sure that pupils read a variety of different texts, including poetry and literature from different periods in history.
- During key stage 2, across different subjects, pupils' handwriting improves quickly. They present their work neatly, forming their letters correctly, and are immensely proud once they are awarded their 'pen licence' so they can exchange their pencil for a pen.
- In music and PE, visiting teachers have exceptional subject knowledge and know just how to get the very best out of pupils. In one ukulele lesson, pupils behaved impeccably, as they learned to play three chords using a variety of rhythms.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe and secure from any threats of bullying or harassment. They say that if they did feel vulnerable, that they would feel comfortable talking to an adult in school. School records confirm that bullying is rare.
- Pupils receive good information about how to stay safe when using the internet. They are well aware of what they should do if faced with any unwanted messages on their mobile phone or when using social networking.
- There are many rich opportunities for pupils to make a positive contribution to school life. Some pupils are members of a 'junior inspection team', who evaluate the quality of teaching and the curriculum, writing a report for school leaders. Some are members of the 'eco club' which promotes sustainability and ecological awareness. These opportunities develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well.
- The breakfast club is well attended and ensures that those pupils who need additional support receive it before lessons start. Moreover, the resident school counsellor provides good support to pupils. A 'drop-in' service for parents enables them to see the counsellor for advice and support to manage their children's behaviour at home.
- Within the rich and varied curriculum, children learn about life in a modern, democratic, inclusive Britain. They learn about cultures and religions other than their own and how to embrace diversity. As one pupil put it: 'The fact that we are all different makes things interesting.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In lessons, pupils apply themselves well to their work, concentrate hard and present their work neatly. Only very occasionally, where teaching is repetitive or does not interest pupils, does their attention wane.
- During lunchtimes and playtimes, pupils behave well. They use play equipment sensibly and with consideration for others. They are well mannered and polite to each other and to adults.
- Attendance has improved considerably as a result of a range of strategies including closer relationships with parents. Overall attendance is now broadly average and persistent absence is close to national figures.
- The proportion of pupils who receive fixed-term exclusions was previously above the national average. However, improvements in behaviour has resulted in fixed-term exclusion figures now being below average.
- Good support is provided for pupils who need additional help to manage their behaviour. A school counsellor works with pupils who have social, emotional or mental health issues. A good system of rewards encourages pupils to behave well.
- Parents who responded to the questionnaire reported that they were happy with behaviour in the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- After a strong start in the early years, pupils' attainment stalls during key stage 1, where attainment in all subjects is below average. In the key stage 2 national tests in 2018, pupils made at least average rates of progress. In reading, pupils made strong progress and their attainment was above average. Over time and in key stage 2, there is an improving picture of progress and attainment.
- Inspection evidence indicates that pupils currently in key stage 2 are making good progress, although there are still gaps in their learning from a legacy of weak teaching. Pupils currently in key stage 1 have below-average skills as a result of continued inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening was well below average, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- While phonics is taught daily in key stage 1, there is not yet an agreed approach to how it should be taught. This is leading to gaps in pupils' understanding of how sounds relate to letters. For those pupils who do not reach the standard required in the phonics screening, these gaps persist well into Year 2. This is because when teaching assistants listen to pupils' reading, they do not identify or address gaps in learning in pupils' reading logs. In turn, this lack of accurate recording does not help teachers to identify and address these persistent weaknesses.
- Pupils' progress in writing also slows in key stage 1. This is, in part, related to the weak phonics teaching. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to practise writing the

sounds, words and sentences they have learned in phonics. However, it is also because there is insufficient attention paid in lessons to the very basics of early writing. This includes basic punctuation, letter formation and sizing, pupils' pencil grips and eradicating common errors such as confusion between the letters 'p' and 'b'.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make accelerated progress during their time in key stage 2. In the 2018 national tests, pupils made exceptional progress in reading. Their progress in writing and mathematics was similar to that of all pupils in the school and nationally.
- As the quality of teaching has improved over time in key stage 2, so the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils have improved. Over time, there are diminishing differences between their attainment and that of others nationally. In the 2018 national tests, disadvantaged pupils' attainment in reading was above that of others nationally.
- Outside of reading, writing and mathematics, pupils gain valuable skills to prepare them well for the next stage in their education. A broad curriculum enables pupils to take part in science experiments, to learn about cultures and religions other than their own and to lead fit, healthy lifestyles.

Early years provision

Good

- Over time, the proportion of children reaching the early learning goals in reading, writing and mathematics has been well below average. This is because these key skills were not being taught routinely in the curriculum. Moreover, expectations of what children could do and achieve were woefully low. There is now a 'no excuses' culture, where expectations are high, learning is fun and consequently standards are rising quickly.
- A new curriculum has ensured that children are taught to read and write simple words. They are then given many interesting tasks to do both indoors and outdoors to ensure that they use and apply these skills. Outdoors, children play games to find hidden numbers and letters. Indoors, children play games which require them to read and write letters and numbers.
- Adults model language well to children. This ensures that those children who arrive in Nursery with skills and abilities that are below those expected of their age make good progress. Before long, these children are speaking in full sentences, are inquisitive about the world around them and are taking part in cooperative play with their friends.
- The curriculum has also ensured that children gain valuable experiences, such as developing their physical strength, their hand-to-eye coordination and their curiosity in things such as science. During the inspection, many children enjoyed working with an adult volunteer to fill planting troughs to grow their own food.
- Children behave well and, in the main, follow the routines that have been set. They happily tidy up after themselves and respond promptly to teachers' requests. They learn the importance of being nice to one another and have good manners.
- Safeguarding in the early years is afforded the highest importance. There are clear routines for parents to pick up their children. Equipment is checked regularly to ensure that it is safe to use.

- The arrangements to assess children’s developing skills are robust. They ensure that any children who begin to fall behind are quickly identified and that they receive the right support for their needs.
- Parents are well informed about their children’s progress. They are encouraged to work in partnership with school staff to assess their children’s skills. Many parents come to the school for ‘stay and play’ sessions.

School details

Unique reference number	107478
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10087510

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Liz Upton
Headteacher	Kelly Williams
Telephone number	01706 254848
Website	www.ferneylee.calderdale.sch.uk
Email address	admin@ferneylee.calderdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 January 2017

Information about this school

- Ferney Lee Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language or who are from minority ethnic groups is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is above average. The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.
- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher, who was previously the deputy headteacher, had been in post for two weeks. Additionally, both deputy headteachers were newly appointed.
- In October 2018, the school moved to a newly constructed building.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons and two assemblies. They listened to pupils reading in Year 2 and Year 5 and looked at the work in pupils' books to evaluate their progress over time. Inspectors spoke to pupils, staff, governors, a representative from the local authority and an external consultant who has been working with school leaders. The lead inspector spoke with a teacher from a music education charity working with the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised various documents, including the summary of self-evaluation, safeguarding information, various policies and the tracking of pupils' progress.
- The 12 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered by inspectors, along with eight staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Robert Jones, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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