

# Northbrook Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131674
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	395755
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Diane Auton

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	119
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Titherington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Melling
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 November 2008
<b>School address</b>	Bannister Drive Leyland PR25 2GB
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Diane Auton

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited six teachers in their classrooms and observed nine lessons or part-lessons. The inspector listened to pupils reading and observed the teaching of letters and the sounds they make in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. She held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, a group of pupils and a group of parents and carers. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, school self-evaluation, safeguarding and equality policies and minutes of governing body meetings. The inspector reviewed information provided by parents and carers in 17 completed questionnaires. She also took into account the views of pupils in Key Stage 2 and those that staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller in size than most primary schools and the number of pupils on roll has decreased since the time of the previous inspection. Year groups are uneven in size and the school is arranged in five classes, three of which are mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. In 2011 the school did not meet the government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than the usual transition points is well above average. In each of the last two years, a large proportion of pupils joined the school during Key Stage 2, with a significant proportion arriving in Year 6. In Year 6 in 2010/11, over a third of pupils had joined the school during Key Stage 2, and more than a quarter joined during the year. In 2011/12, more than half of the Year 6 cohort joined the school during Key Stage 2 and over a third arrived between Year 5 and Year 6.

The school has achieved the Active Mark and Healthy School status. A before- and after-school club is provided on site by an independent company. This provision is subject to separate inspection by Ofsted and reports are available on the Ofsted website.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not outstanding because, although overall achievement is good, attainment is uneven across the key stages and subjects. This is because there has not been enough time for good teaching to have a full impact on the attainment of pupils who are newly arrived in the school in Key Stage 2, particularly those who join in Year 6.
- Most children's skills are below those expected for their age when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage. They progress well in the Reception class and in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, all pupils make good progress from a variety of starting points and attainment is rising year by year. Attainment in mathematics is average. Pupils across the key stage are working at broadly average levels in reading and writing, although overall attainment in English is still slightly below average in Year 6.
- Good and often outstanding teaching contributes consistently well to good achievement. Lessons provide challenge for pupils of all abilities and appropriate support for those with additional learning needs. Teaching ensures that pupils build continuously on their skills, year on year.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good. They show positive attitudes to learning. Newly-arrived pupils settle in quickly, gain confidence rapidly and their progress accelerates. Pupils feel safe in school. They show consideration for others and are keen to take on responsibility.
- The headteacher, supported by able senior staff and knowledgeable governors, has created a strong team ethos, with a sharp focus on continued school improvement. The leadership of teaching and management of performance are good. The school's creative curriculum provides interest and enjoyment; work is on-going to ensure more frequent opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in their topic work across other subjects.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 2 by further developing structured support programmes for those pupils who need them when they join the school during Years 3 to 6.
- Ensure that the school's creative curriculum gives effective support to the school's on-going drive to raise achievement by:
  - providing a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills in literacy in their topic work
  - regular and systematic evaluation of the impact of topic work on improving pupils' basic skills.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

In lessons, pupils are industrious and responsive learners. They listen and concentrate well, follow instructions and do their best to present their written work neatly. They collaborate well with each other when working in a group or with a partner. Their books show a good output of work and provide clear evidence of good progress across the year.

Children progress well from below average starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that they begin Year 1 with skills that are just a little below those expected for their age. Their personal, social and emotional development is particularly good and they gain very positive attitudes to learning. Attainment levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are, for the second year, in line with national expectations. This represents good progress in Years 1 and 2 and sustained improvement in the outcomes for this age group over time.

Although overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2011 was below average, all of the pupils who had been in the school for the whole of their primary education made good progress and reached or exceeded nationally expected attainment at the end of Year 6. Those who had joined the school during the key stage made equally good progress and achieved well in relation to often lower starting points on entry.

This year, attainment in Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics is higher than in 2011, with an increase also in the proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. It is now average in mathematics but it is still slightly below average in English. As in the previous year, the attainment of pupils who have attended all through the school is average or better. The school's assessment data, evidence seen in lessons and in pupils' work all confirm that progress is good, across the school, for all pupils. Inspection evidence shows that pupils who join the school with low attainment levels often make rapid and accelerated progress, although there is not always enough time for them to bring their attainment fully into line with national expectations.

Regular teaching of letters and the sounds they make is having a positive impact on improving pupils' reading skills. Pupils from Key Stage 1 read to the inspector, showing great enjoyment and interest and demonstrating confidence in using their skills to sound out and understand new words. Attainment in reading is average by the end of Year 2 and it is improved, but slightly below average, in Year 6. Attainment in writing is also a little below average overall, but is improving well as pupils move up the school, with some of the more-able pupils in Year 6 now producing high quality written work. Attainment in mathematics is average in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress, in line with that of their peers, because of the carefully-targeted support provided for them. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve well and their attainment is in line with that of their peers. Most parents' and carers' responses indicate that they feel that their children's learning and progress are good and inspection evidence supports these views.

### **Quality of teaching**

Parents and carers strongly agree that their children are taught well. Inspection evidence supports their views, showing that teaching is good overall, with some outstanding practice seen during the inspection. Firm foundations for learning and progress are set in the Reception class. Throughout the school, teaching is well matched to pupils' learning needs. Lessons are well-structured and the pace of learning is brisk. Pupils are given a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn and achieve. Individual learning targets are used effectively, helping pupils to understand what they need to do to bring their work up to the next level. Constructive marking gives them clear advice about how to improve their work; this is especially effective in Year 6, where pupils are increasingly able to evaluate their own progress accurately.

Well-trained teaching assistants contribute effectively to the learning and progress of all pupils. They also help to support pupils who join the school with low attainment, as well as disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The school has developed a range of effective interventions and strategies and teachers are flexible in their approach to addressing the issues individual pupils present. Teachers strive, in this way, to close gaps in attainment between its newer pupils and those who have been there from the start of their education. Their efforts have already met with some success, especially in mathematics. They understand that work on developing structured support programmes for individuals is on-going and that the whole-school focus on improving literacy skills in Key Stage 2 must continue.

The curriculum is planned well to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This was seen, for example, in Year 6's in-depth study of life in Victorian times, which was the product of very effective teaching. Pupils took part in a wide range of activities around the topic, including the production of empathetic, personalised accounts of life in the city during the industrial revolution. Their writing reflected how seriously they had thought about and discussed what life must have been like in those times and how detailed and successful their researches had been.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils thrive in an environment where every child is known, cared for and valued. This environment and their positive attitudes are helping them to achieve well in both their personal and their academic development. Pupils' behaviour in school is very good. They feel safe and secure in school. They trust the adults who care for them and they are confident help is always on hand should they have a problem. A small number of parents and carers in their survey responses indicated concerns about behaviour in school, but most feel that the school manages behaviour well.

Pupils are able to explain their understanding of different types of bullying; they say that the adults in school make sure that bullying does not occur. The school provides extensive and sensitive support for potentially vulnerable pupils and their families, including collaborative work with a range of agencies that support pupils' health, social and learning needs. Pupils and parents and carers spoke appreciatively of the work of the nurture group and the school's counsellor, saying how helpful and supportive they had found these provisions to be. In a typical comment, a pupil said that he is now making better progress than previously, as a result of the support he has been given, and that he believes he is now, 'a more responsible person than I used to be'. Attendance is average and has improved over the past two years, as a result of effective actions taken to address identified persistent-absence problems.

## **Leadership and management**

Members of the governing body and staff at all levels share the headteacher's vision for taking the school forward and his commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for pupils. Senior and middle leaders all contribute well to assuring the quality of the school's work. The leadership and management of performance are effective, with a programme of continuous professional development underpinning on-going improvements in the quality of teaching. This has helped to ensure that teaching is consistently good or better.

Regular progress reviews give leaders a clear overview. The information gained is used well to identify promptly when pupils need extra support. Provision for pupils who have additional learning needs is led and managed very well, with a wide range of effective interventions contributing well to pupils' good achievement. Leaders know the school thoroughly and they understand the challenge presented by high pupil mobility. The school development plan provides clear guidance for taking the school forward, with a sharp focus on raising achievement and meeting the needs of all pupils, regardless of their length of time in school. All of this means that the overall impact of strategic leadership is positive and the school has good capacity for continued improvement.

Governors ensure that safeguarding is given appropriate priority and the school complies with statutory requirements for safeguarding. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. The school's ethos is highly inclusive and discrimination is not tolerated. Gaps in performance between subject areas are closing as a result of increasingly effective actions being taken to raise the overall attainment of pupils who are relatively new to the school.

The school's curriculum is good. Subjects are brought together in topics that are interesting, relevant and engaging for pupils. Increasingly, opportunities are being found for pupils to practise their reading and writing skills outside of literacy lessons and this is contributing to the improvements in English seen in the current year. The school views this as an on-going priority area and keeps its curriculum under continuous review. A wide variety of enrichment activities enhances the curriculum and adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show a good understanding of the sound moral values the school promotes. There are many opportunities for them to reflect on important issues and they show mature and thoughtful attitudes in their discussions.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



22 June 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Northbrook Primary School, Leyland, PR25 2GB**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. It was a great pleasure to meet you all and I enjoyed my conversations with you very much.

I found that Northbrook is a good school. It is a very happy school too and I was very pleased to hear you say how much you enjoy all of the activities that are provided for you. Your education gets off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and you carry on doing well right through the school to the end of Year 6. I saw that you are very polite young people. Your behaviour is very good and you feel very safe in school. The adults in school look after you well. They make sure you are well taught. Because of this, your learning and progress are good.

These are some things I have asked the school's leaders to do next, because I think they will help your school to carry on improving:

- Carry on finding ways to help those of you who join the school during Key Stage 2 to settle in quickly and make really rapid progress.
- Make sure that there are plenty of opportunities in your topic work for you to practise your skills in reading and writing.

You can help with all of this by continuing to be happy learners and by always trying hard to do your very best work. Thank you again for an enjoyable two days and best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Diane Auton  
Lead inspector

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