

# Norden Community Primary School

Shawfield Lane, Rochdale, OL12 7RQ

**Inspection dates** 3–4 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Achievement has improved significantly since the last inspection. All groups of pupils make good progress. Attainment is above national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults help children develop social skills and engage in purposeful play. This prepares them well for their future education.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are interesting, pupils know what they are expected to achieve and they enjoy learning. Special programmes ensure that lower attaining pupils make the same good progress as others.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are respectful and caring. Different groups of pupils work and play well together. Pupils feel happy, safe and are looked after well.
- Senior leaders and governors are ambitious for the school. They carefully analyse what needs to be done to develop the school further. Their vision is shared by all staff and has led to improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement since the last inspection.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of experiences for pupils. This helps to develop their basic skills and contributes particularly well to their personal development.
- The school is well placed to continue to improve in the future.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Boys' attainment in writing, particularly in Key Stage 1, is lower than in reading and mathematics.
- There remain some variations in the quality of teaching, which means that the best practice is not seen consistently across the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, including one joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and evaluated the quality of pupils' work in a selection of their workbooks.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors took account of 21 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to the most recent parental survey carried out by the school.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documentation, including data on pupils' progress throughout the school, the school's evaluation of its effectiveness, the school development plan, records of monitoring of teaching and learning, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documentation in relation to safeguarding and child protection.

## Inspection team

Christine Potter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter Jones	Additional Inspector
Helen Gaunt	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. This is also the case for the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language has increased since the last inspection to approximately 35%, which is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average but is increasing year on year.
- There is a children's centre on the same site run by the local authority which is subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted.
- Before- and after-school care, not managed by the governing body, is provided on site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a number of awards, including Sport England, Healthy School status, Extended Schools Award and Eco School status.
- The school has represented the north west of England in gymnastics at national level for the past five years.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or outstanding by:
  - ensuring that adult support is always used as effectively as it is in the best lessons, to support and promote pupils' learning
  - ensuring that activities in lessons are always clearly planned and explained in order to promote the desired learning outcomes for all pupils
  - checking pupils' understanding and progress regularly during lessons and taking appropriate steps to reinforce concepts and skills
  - strengthening the role of middle leaders in monitoring teaching and enabling them to contribute directly to the professional development of staff.
- Improve boys' attainment in writing, particularly in Key Stage 1, so that it is in line with attainment in reading and mathematics, by:
  - ensuring that writing in other areas of the curriculum is focused on developing writing skills
  - making better use of experiences pupils gain through curricular enrichments to promote purposeful writing
  - systematically teaching grammar, spelling and punctuation throughout the school
  - using marking and feedback consistently to ensure that individual pupils know precisely what they need to do to improve their work and providing opportunities in lessons for pupils to put this guidance into practice.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The achievement of pupils has improved significantly since the last inspection. From starting points on entry to school that are typically below those expected for their age, pupils make good progress, and by the end of Year 6 now consistently attain levels in reading, writing and mathematics which are above national expectations. Rigorous tracking systems indicate that, although there are some variations in groups of pupils, progress is sustained across all year groups.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, good teaching and a caring approach ensure that children develop confidence and social skills, and quickly become independent learners. Activities are well matched to children's needs, and a stimulating and well-resourced outdoor environment mirrors the range of provision indoors and contributes to children's good progress. Children enter Key Stage 1 with skills slightly below those expected for their age.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make good progress in their understanding of sounds and letters (phonics) and use their skills effectively to tackle new words. Assessments indicate that phonics skills at age six are above local averages. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards that are broadly average, although boys' attainment in writing is lower than in reading and mathematics.
- Progress accelerates throughout Key Stage 2 as pupils consolidate and build on their prior skills and knowledge. An above average proportion make better than expected progress in both English and mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in Year 6 exceeds the national average. Although actions taken by the school, such as the promotion of pupils' speaking and listening, have led to an overall improvement in pupils' skills in writing, the attainment of boys in writing remains below that in reading and mathematics.
- The school is committed to closing gaps in attainment. Pupils who are not making expected progress are quickly identified. A range of highly effective and precisely-targeted interventions, together with good teaching and individual support, mean that all groups of pupils make similarly good progress. All disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those eligible for the pupil premium, and pupils for whom English is an additional language, made at least expected progress in 2012, with an above average proportion making better than expected progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching across the school is good and there are some outstanding elements. Teachers promote positive attitudes to learning and pupils say how much they enjoy their lessons. Pupils take pride in their work and standards of presentation are high.
- In the best lessons, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They provide good support for individuals and groups of pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils identified through the teacher's careful assessment of learning were given specific teaching to ensure they understood how to round numbers. However, in some lessons, teachers do not check pupils' understanding so effectively through questioning or assessment of work. Teaching assistants do not always have such a clear role in supporting pupils throughout the lesson.
- Teachers use skilful questioning to challenge pupils' thinking and encourage them to explain their ideas using appropriate vocabulary. Pupils ask questions which promote discussion, such as in a Year 5 literacy lesson where the use of 'because' as a potential starter for sentences became a topic of debate.
- Pupils are aware of their learning targets and regular reference to these is a feature of many lessons. However, marking, particularly in writing, is not always sufficiently detailed and focused on what pupils need to do to improve their work. Some targets are not personalised to give individual pupils the guidance they need. Pupils are not provided with regular opportunities to respond to written feedback and hence consolidate their skills.

- In the majority of lessons, a range of learning activities and resources, matched to pupils' needs and abilities, motivate pupils and promote learning effectively. However, in a small number of lessons, tasks are insufficiently focused on achieving the desired learning outcomes for different groups of pupils. Teachers do not explain clearly to all pupils what is expected of them. Pupils are, therefore, less engaged and do not make such good progress.
- Lessons provide many opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in different contexts. The school has rightly identified a need to use writing widely across the curriculum. Year 5 pupils develop skills for persuasive writing such as the use of alliteration and rhetorical questions as they design posters promoting environmental awareness. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to focus precisely on improving writing skills in other subjects. Pupils' written work sometimes lacks accuracy in grammar, spelling and punctuation because the approach to teaching these aspects is not well-structured throughout the school.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils are exceptionally polite, welcoming and respectful. There is a calm and orderly atmosphere as pupils move around the school. They are thoughtful and caring towards one another, including towards those with disabilities. Pupils willingly take responsibility and are conscientious in roles such as playground buddies and eco-councillors.
- The school's systems to promote good behaviour are well understood by staff and pupils. Behaviour is well managed and pupils mostly have good attitudes to learning. Minor low-level disruption occurs occasionally in lessons where pupils are less engaged.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and understand the importance of attending regularly. Attendance is above average.
- Pupils feel safe and well looked after. They appreciate the measures taken by the school to keep them safe. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe in other situations, including when using modern technologies. They talk knowledgeably about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse.
- Incidents of bullying and racism are extremely rare. Pupils know that name-calling is hurtful and unacceptable. Pupils feel that any issues are quickly and successfully resolved and that friendships are strong. Parents unanimously agree that the school keeps their children safe.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Senior leaders demonstrate commitment and ambition. They have high expectations of all staff and pupils and this has contributed to the raising of achievement and to improvements in behaviour and teaching since the last inspection. More rigorous systems for assessment and monitoring, together with more accurate self-evaluation involving all staff, have enabled precise targets for improvement to be set.
- Performance management systems are an integral part of school improvement. Staff at all levels, including those who are newly qualified, feel a strong sense of accountability and are well supported. A high profile is given to staff development, which is closely linked to school priorities and to individual staff needs. However, the role of middle leaders in monitoring and improving teaching is not well developed.
- The local authority provides both challenge and support for the school and has contributed effectively to improvements since the last inspection.
- The school provides a very inclusive environment. Staff go to considerable lengths to ensure that there is no discrimination and that provision matches the needs of individual pupils, for example, by ensuring that disabled pupils have full access to school trips and other curricular enrichments.
- Parents are highly appreciative of the work of the school. Questionnaire and case study evidence indicates that the school works closely with parents in order to meet the needs of the pupils.
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and has contributed to raising standards.

Cross-curricular work is becoming established as a tool for enhancing pupils' basic skills. However, enrichments which broaden pupils' experiences, such as educational visits and visitors to school, are not always used fully to provide purposeful opportunities for pupils, particularly boys, to develop their writing skills in meaningful contexts.

- An exciting range of well-attended extra-curricular activities including sport, music, dance and woodwork provide a bridge between the school and the community. These place an emphasis on developing pupils' social skills, cultural awareness and responsibility for one another from a very young age and make an outstanding contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - has improved since the last inspection and its impact is now good
  - has high expectations, asks challenging questions and effectively holds the senior leaders to account
  - is well-informed and involved in school life through class and curriculum links
  - ensures that financial resources, including the pupil premium, are managed well so that staff and resources are deployed to meet the needs of all pupils.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105774
<b>Local authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	400799

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	437
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Stephen Haslam
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Linda Cotton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 September 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 641013
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