

R L Hughes Primary School

Mayfield Street, Ashton-in-Makerfield Wigan, Lancashire, WN4 9QL

Inspection dates

17–18 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- The headteacher has successfully led the school to good improvement since the previous inspection. Effective changes have raised the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Progress for most pupils is good. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress due to the effective teaching and special arrangements school makes for them.
- Teaching is good in the majority of lessons, with some that is outstanding.
- The curriculum provides many enrichment activities that have a positive impact on the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They say they feel safe and that bullying is rare. Excellent relationships in lessons create a positive environment in which pupils can learn.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although pupils use their grammar and punctuation skills accurately, their writing lacks imagination.
- The quality of teaching is not always checked closely enough to ensure it is always good. Teachers do not always provide pupils with enough opportunities to write in other subjects or give them time to discuss their work with others.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons. In addition, the inspection team made a number of shorter visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, two members of the governing body, and members of the senior and middle management teams. Representation from the local education authority was made by telephone.
- There were 37 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to take into account in planning the inspection. Twenty three staff questionnaires were also scrutinised.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read, spoke to them about their learning and looked at work in their books. They looked at a number of documents, including the school's own tracking data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and those documents relating to attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Robert Pye, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Allyson Ingall

Additional Inspector

Pamela Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- R L Hughes Primary School is a larger than average sized primary school. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average, but is increasing rapidly.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The current headteacher was due to retire at Christmas, but is continuing until Easter 2013, until the newly appointed headteacher can take up the position.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and the progress pupils make, especially in writing, by:
 - inspiring pupils to write more imaginatively
 - ensuring pupils have ample opportunity to plan and discuss their work with others before they start to write
 - applying a consistent approach to writing in other subjects so that pupils have more experience of writing in different styles, for instance, play scripts and letters
 - making sure that the checks made on teaching look closely at how pupils are learning, especially in English lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills that are typical for their age although some aspects are weaker especially in writing. In response to effective teaching, overall progress is good, especially in social and communication skills that prepare children well for Year 1.
- Throughout the school the quality of learning is good. Pupils enjoy school and are motivated to learn by enthusiastic staff.
- Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is good. Attainment in Key Stage 1 improved significantly in 2012 as a direct result of embedding basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, attainment is rising and is above average in reading and almost at this level in mathematics. Writing is broadly average and improving, especially in the use of basic skills. Data on progress, inspectors' lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work show that this improvement is set to continue.
- Pupils read particularly well and extensively across all subjects. In mathematics, pupils quickly learn their tables and apply this knowledge well to a range of different mathematical challenges.
- Writing has improved significantly since the last inspection with a good focus on teaching basic skills. As a result, pupils use punctuation in the right places and most spell correctly. However, writing lacks imaginative vocabulary that makes it interesting for the reader.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do as well as the other pupils because of the good support they are given in lessons and through additional support, often on a one to one basis for reading and mathematics.
- The school provides effective support through additional staffing resources for those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium. This ensures that pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals reach similar standards and make equally good progress as other groups in the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. This enables pupils to make good progress.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers make good use of opportunities to enhance children's learning. For example, children in the Nursery class had great fun learning about the world around them as teachers encouraged them to play safely in the newly fallen snow.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2 teaching is good. The teaching of reading and mathematics is especially effective. In one Year 6 mathematics lesson, outstanding teaching enabled pupils to make rapid gains in their understanding of fractions because:
 - the pace of the lesson was brisk and built upon what the pupils had already learnt
 - the enthusiasm of the teacher, coupled with her exceptionally strong subject knowledge, inspired pupils so they were very enthusiastic about what they were learning
 - the work was skilfully adapted for pupils working at different levels and so all pupils were being 'stretched'
 - sharply-focused questions made pupils think deeply about the problems they were working on
 - the teacher had very high expectations.
- Teachers have become skilful in teaching pupils how to improve their reading. Teaching of the use of phonics (the knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to help them read unfamiliar words) is given high importance. It is taught in small groups with work set at the correct level for pupils. Activities are practical and make learning enjoyable. Teachers encourage pupils to read at home.
- The teaching of writing is successful in reinforcing accurate use of punctuation and grammar.

However, not enough is done in some lessons to encourage pupils to use more interesting words or phrases to add excitement to their work. In some lessons, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to plan and discuss their work with others before they start writing. Older pupils do not have regular opportunities to write extensively across different subjects in order to practise writing in different styles and purpose.

- Most teachers manage lessons well. For instance, the use of green tickets linked to house points is used particularly well to motivate pupils to achieve.
- Marking is used to good effect because it clearly shows pupils what they need to do next to improve their work. Challenging homework is set regularly and allows pupils to extend their learning further.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and are eager to learn. Behaviour in lessons and attitudes to learning are good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils settle quickly to their work and learning is rarely disrupted.
- The 'traffic lights' system was used effectively as a way of letting the teacher know when pupils required help. This gives pupils confidence because teachers are quick to offer support.
- Pupils are courteous and helpful. They take on a significant range of responsibilities aimed at helping each other. For example, in addition to play and sports leaders, digital leaders helped other pupils carrying out tasks on the school's computers.
- All pupils are represented through the school council. This group have been instrumental in leading charity work and providing equipment for their peers, for instance, the football nets. Likewise the eco-council have helped create a central garden and organised bird boxes adjacent to the school.
- Pupils have no concerns about bullying. They are aware of different types of bullying especially when using the internet. The school teaches them about how to avoid danger and pupils have a good understanding about how to stay safe. The parents who responded to the Parent View agree their children are safe and happy in the school.
- Attendance is average and punctuality is good.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has successfully raised achievement since the previous inspection and maintained a high level of staff morale. All staff are clear about the way ahead and changes have improved teaching and achievement since the last inspection. Actions for future improvements are precise and the school is well placed to improve.
- Parents are supportive of the school. They and their children confirm that this is a happy school. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and any form of discrimination is not tolerated.
- The monitoring of pupils' progress is good. This leads to staff having a clear understanding of pupils' needs. Teachers are expected to explain any lack of progress and action that is being taken. They are set targets based on the progress of pupils and this influences career progress and pay.
- Teaching is monitored regularly by senior leaders. However, guidance does not always focus on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, especially in English, and there are variations in the quality of teaching between classes. Nevertheless, the monitoring of the quality of teaching is linked to training needs and this is valued by staff. For example, training for teaching reading comprehension skills to older pupils was evident in effective guided reading sessions observed during the inspection.
- Leadership of the curriculum is good. As a result, there are very clear and effective methods for teaching, spelling, handwriting and punctuation and grammar. Although opportunities to practise

skills are evident in some subjects, opportunities to write at length in different styles are not fully exploited across subjects.

- Since the last inspection, the range of experiences for pupils has increased significantly. They now have opportunities to experience more sport, music, drama and art, frequently involving the use of visits or outside expertise. For example, a whole class of pupils enjoyed participating in a guitar lesson. These experiences contribute to the positive promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The local authority provides effective support and has been fully involved in supporting the governing body throughout the appointment of the new headteacher. The school makes good use of outside agencies to support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- All elements of safeguarding pupils' welfare and safe recruitment are in place.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body contributes well to the management of the school. By reviewing data about pupils' progress, governors have a clear overview of how the school is performing. They challenge decisions and ask questions about pupils' achievement. The governing body is well informed about the quality of teaching and holds the headteacher to account for actions taken to improve the quality of teaching through the professional training of staff. They take advice from the local authority when setting the headteacher targets and check that other staff have ambitious targets linked to salary progression. Members of the governing body manage the budget well especially checking on how effectively the pupil premium has been spent in order to raise achievement.

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

Unique reference number	106424
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	403015

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	531
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carl Simmons
Headteacher	Lynne Carroll
Date of previous school inspection	23 April 2008
Telephone number	01942 701147
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