

Great Preston VC CofE Primary School

Preston Lane, Great Preston, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS26 8AR

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate because teaching is not good enough to ensure they make sufficient progress from their starting points.
- Overall standards are below average and not high enough given pupils' starting points, particularly in writing, because pupils have insufficient opportunities to write at length.
- Teaching over time is inadequate; recent improvements have not been in place long enough to have had significant impact on raising standards.
- The more-able pupils, in particular, do not always have work that stretches them enough.
- While school leaders are now tackling weaknesses in teaching effectively, they are not doing enough to ensure that teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is accurate and that all pupils are challenged fully.
- Subject leaders are not involved enough in checking that classroom practice is consistently good.
- The governing body is very supportive of the school, although it does not hold senior managers closely enough to account for pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have made an effective start to tackling weaknesses in teaching. As a result the proportion of good teaching has increased this academic year and some pupils are making good progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for pupil-premium funding make expected progress because of the support they receive.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are kind and friendly and they enjoy school. They form good relationships and so feel safe and happy here.
- The school has worked hard to improve pupils' attendance; it is now above average.
- Team spirit among staff is good and all are committed to school improvement.
- Parents are very supportive of the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons, five of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' workbooks and listened to a number of pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, senior and middle managers, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 51 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View).
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and records of the school's observations of the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and how the school uses its funding, especially how pupil-premium money is spent. They also scrutinised documents relating to safeguarding pupils.

Inspection team

Rajinder Harrison, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maureen Coleman

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils whose parents are serving in the armed force) is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus is below average. The school has no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school met the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has had a high number of staff changes, including at senior leadership level, in the last two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that it is at least good throughout the school, in order to rapidly accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards in mathematics and English, particularly in writing, by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - all pupils have work that is at the right level of challenge
 - the more-able pupils are extended fully in their learning so they achieve as well as they should
 - introductions to lessons are sharper so that pupils have enough time to complete their tasks
 - teachers ask probing questions and give pupils more time to share ideas before they work independently
 - teachers explain to pupils clearly what they are going to learn and how they will know they have succeeded
 - teachers' marking provides pupils with clear and helpful guidance on how to improve their work and that pupils know how well they are progressing
 - pupils have more opportunities to write independently and at length in literacy and other subjects
 - children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have sufficient time to talk about what they are doing and to practise their writing.
- Improve leadership and management so that school improvement is more effective and rapid by ensuring that:
 - teachers assess pupils' progress accurately and that this information is used to plan work that challenges pupils to achieve their best
 - targets for pupils are sufficiently challenging and that all teachers ensure pupils achieve these targets
 - subject leaders are involved regularly in checking that classroom practice is consistently good

- the governing body has a clear and accurate view of the school's performance and uses this to hold senior leaders fully to account for their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate because the teaching has not been of a good enough quality to ensure all pupils make sufficient progress from their starting points.
- Although data from previous years indicate that their skills have not been as strong, children currently in the Early Years Foundation Stage entered school with skills that are typical for their age. For some, their personal development and literacy skills are less secure. Children settle quickly because staff help them feel safe and provide activities that encourage them to learn.
- Children make good progress in their personal development because day-to-day routines are established well. Their progress overall through the Early Years Foundation Stage is inadequate, however, because expectations generally are too low, especially of the more-able. As a result, while most children's achievement is broadly in line with what is expected at the end of Reception, very few do better, although many are capable of doing so. Some of their skills in literacy, particularly writing, are inadequate.
- Pupils' progress through Years 1 to 6, while good in a few classes, is inadequate overall, because teaching is too variable and not strong enough to secure good achievement. In some year groups, pupils have experienced inadequate teaching during their time at the school. Senior leaders are tackling the resulting gaps in pupils' learning rigorously through additional support but this has not yet ensured pupils attain the standards expected for their age.
- In 2012, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 6, while slightly better than in 2011, were below average overall because, while a small minority of pupils made good progress and achieved well, most did not. Pupils are currently making better progress because more of the teaching is now good but there is still underachievement in some classes, particularly among the more-able.
- Standards in reading and mathematics are rising more quickly than in writing because the school's action to improve provision in these subjects, particularly the teaching, has started to take effect. Standards in writing are markedly lower because pupils have too few opportunities to write independently and at length in literacy or in other subjects.
- Phonics (the relationship between letters and the sounds they make) are taught appropriately in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, ensuring that early reading skills are developed soundly. Pupils enjoy reading and most read regularly. The school's 'story sacks' encourage parents to read with their children at home and help extend their skills.
- As a result of the early identification of their needs and the appropriate provision made for them, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make expected progress.
- The school uses the pupil-premium funding for additional staffing and extra resources. As a result the attendance of the pupils supported by this funding has improved and they make at least expected progress. Their attainment is still below that expected for their age and too low when compared with all pupils nationally.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- As a result of weak teaching over time, pupils make inadequate progress. Although the quality of teaching is improving, it is still not strong enough to compensate for the inadequate teaching that has led to underachievement for too many pupils. While inadequate teaching is now rare, significant weaknesses remain.
- In too many lessons, teachers do not use information about how well pupils have learned in the past to plan work that extends their learning effectively, and their expectations of pupils, particularly the more-able, are not high enough. Work is not matched accurately to pupils' needs; it is too easy for some and too difficult for others. The more-able pupils sometimes end up waiting for others to catch up before the lesson can move on and this limits progress.

- Teachers spend too long on their lesson introductions, ask too few questions to check that pupils understand what they are learning and give pupils insufficient time to discuss their ideas and learn from each other before settling to tasks. The tasks often just keep them busy rather than extending their learning. These weaknesses particularly limit the quality of pupils' independent work, especially writing.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not always have enough time to talk about their learning and have insufficient opportunities to practise their writing.
- Where teaching is good, teachers make lessons interesting and fun through discussions that extend pupils' learning. For example, in a lively Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils enjoyed questioning each other to extend their problem-solving skills.
- In good lessons, teachers make sure pupils understand the purpose of what they are learning and remain enthusiastic ask probing questions to check pupils' understanding and give pupils the help they need to succeed. Detailed, constructive marking sometimes shows pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. But teachers' marking is not always effective and pupils have little idea as to whether or not they have achieved their targets.
- In most lessons, teachers deploy teaching assistants well to support particular groups, especially lower-attaining pupils. This enables these pupils to make expected progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is typically good and they enjoy learning. Even where teaching is less effective, pupils persevere, behave well and try their best. Many pupils said, 'School is fun.'
- Pupils are thoughtful, polite and considerate. They show respect to others and make a positive contribution to the school's happy environment. They show high regard for staff and these positive relationships encourage pupils to seek help if they need it.
- Pupils feel safe and well looked after at school. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and talk confidently, for example, about why the internet might pose dangers to children.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including name-calling. They say that incidents of bullying are rare and staff deal with them effectively, if they occur. The school takes prompt action to tackle any form of discriminatory behaviour.
- Pupils are kind and supportive of others. They work together sensibly and play safely so that accidents are rare. Opportunities to take responsibility around school, for example through Year 6 pupils helping younger ones at lunchtimes, provide purposeful ways to extend pupils' moral and social development. Through various activities, pupils gain a good understanding of different cultures and the need to respect diversity.
- Staff are very positive about pupils' behaviour and their eagerness to participate in activities. For example, pupils enjoy many activities, including coaching from a local rugby team, that extend their experiences of the wider world.
- Most parents are very positive about the way the school cares for their children and supports their learning.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Following a number of effective staff changes in the last year, the school has started to improve. Greater focus on mental tasks and problem solving is reflected in pupils' improving performance in mathematics. Action to improve provision for literacy has had a positive impact on raising pupils' achievement in reading, but the impact on writing is less evident. The difference that their actions have made to raising pupils' standards, particularly in reading and mathematics, shows that school leaders are capable of making further improvement. There is still some way to

go, however, particularly in improving teaching.

- The headteacher has high expectations of staff and leaders are very committed to giving pupils the best education. Effective teamwork is driving school improvement. The headteacher ensures that staff have the training and support they need to improve their skills and observes lessons regularly to check teachers' performance.
 - The school's development plan is focused well on raising standards by improving teaching. Robust action has been taken to eradicate weak teaching and a greater proportion is now good. However, new teachers have not been in post long enough to have had the impact required to ensure all pupils make the rapid progress needed to raise standards overall.
 - Senior leaders review pupils' progress regularly but are not checking rigorously enough that the teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is wholly accurate and that all pupils are challenged fully. The introduction of meetings to review pupils' progress is too recent to have had sufficient impact on accelerating pupils' progress.
 - Subject leaders are not involved sufficiently in identifying inconsistencies, for example, in teachers' planning and marking, and checking that all pupils achieve successfully.
 - Support from the local authority is sought and offered, for example, for staff training and reviewing the school's performance but this support has not been sufficient to raise standards quickly.
 - Many extra-curricular activities extend pupils' learning beyond school and promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils talk enthusiastically about various activities. They learn to value cultural and ethnic differences by exploring world religions but do not have enough opportunities to visit communities different from their own to extend their understanding further.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are very committed to the school and ensure that pupils are safe and enjoy learning. Governors check that policies are up-to-date and finances managed well. For example, they ensure that pupil-premium funding is used to support the pupils for whom it is intended. Governors' training is relevant and up-to-date, for example, in helping to ensure the school meets all safeguarding requirements. Governors have a limited overview of the school's performance, because they do not question sufficiently the accuracy of the information they receive from senior managers, particularly regarding pupils' progress. The governing body has supported senior leaders in eradicating weak teaching and this led to the high turnover of staff seen in the last two years. However, governors recognise the need to drive improvement more rapidly by holding senior managers fully to account for the progress pupils make in every class and to ensure that this progress is good. Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that pay awards link to performance management and that procedures to measure performance are satisfactory. The school now has the staffing necessary to move forward more rapidly.
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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	134913
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	402652

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Brass
Headteacher	Debra Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2009
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