

Heathfield Primary School

Henniker Road, Bolton, Lancashire, BL3 3TP

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- From their different starting points, all pupils make good progress. By age 11, pupils' standards of attainment are average and rising rapidly.
- The quality of teaching is good and so pupils achieve well during their time at the school.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve particularly well.
- Lessons and activities are thoughtfully planned to ensure that pupils enjoy their work and develop lifelong learning skills.
- Pupils behave well and work hard in lessons. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe.
- The school takes good care of pupils and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- The headteacher has been instrumental in driving forward improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. In this work she is supported very well by keen and effective senior and middle leaders.
- Checks on the progress of every pupil are regular and rigorous. Consequently, any who are falling behind are given extra help to catch up and those who are capable of moving on more rapidly receive additional support to enable them to do so.
- The governing body is well informed and provides good challenge and support to help the school improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teaching still requires improvement to be good.
- Not all pupils have enough opportunities to use mathematical skills in a purposeful way to solve problems.
- While all groups of pupils make good progress and the gap between the attainment of pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable and other pupils in the school is narrowing, the gap is still too wide.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, four of which were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors analysed pupils' work and the school's data about their attainment and progress. They held two formal discussions with pupils and spoke to others informally in lessons and at breaks and lunchtime.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders and with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- A discussion was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and analysed a range of school documentation. This included: safeguarding records and those relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance; records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning; the school's self-evaluation summary and improvement plans and teachers' planning.
- Inspectors spoke to some parents as they brought their children to school and took account of 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and a small number of written comments.

Inspection team

Margot D'Arcy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Naila Zaffar

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care or whose parents are in the armed forces, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection, a number of new staff have been appointed, including a new headteacher. The school is in the process of appointing a new deputy headteacher.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club and has gained a number of awards, including Active School Award and International School Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement to outstanding by:
 - embedding recent initiatives to provide more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematics skills in purposeful, real-life, problem solving activities
 - further reducing the gap between the attainment of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium and other pupils.
- Further improve the quality of teaching so that it is never less than good by:
 - ensuring that in all lessons, especially mathematics, pupils are given work that is matched precisely to their different learning needs
 - ensuring that there is an appropriate balance of time between pupils listening to teachers talking and being actively involved in their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When they begin in the Reception class, children's knowledge and skills are generally below and sometimes well below those typically expected for their age. By the time pupils leave Year 6, their standards of attainment are in line with pupils across the country.
- Reception children settle into school quickly and make good progress in learning how to work and play together. Their speaking and listening skills develop well in the wide range of activities provided and they make good progress in learning about the sounds that letters make, which helps them begin to read and write. They learn about numbers and patterns and are helped to work things out for themselves. By the time they begin Year 1, children's attainment is much closer to what is expected for their age.
- During Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils continue to make good progress in reading and writing. Pupils' standards of attainment in the recent national assessments and tests of pupils in Years 2 and 6 were in line with the national averages. By the end of Year 6, the progress of all groups of pupils was in line with or better than the same groups nationally. Moreover, the attainment of pupils currently in school is improving rapidly, as a result of the school's success in creating more interesting opportunities for reading and writing, particularly targeting boys' interests.
- The most recent mathematics assessments and tests for pupils in Years 2 and 6 showed that their attainment was in line with other pupils of the same age across the country. Pupils currently in the school continue to progress well in many aspects of mathematics. However, not all are having the same good opportunities to understand the relevance of mathematics to everyday life or to apply what they have learned to solve problems.
- There is no significant difference in the rates of progress made by pupils in receipt of the pupil premium and others at the school. However, while all of the Year 6 pupils in this group reached the nationally expected levels of attainment in the 2012 English and mathematics tests, none did better than this. The school monitors the progress of pupils in this group carefully and has been successful in reducing the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils but this is still too wide. Compared to other pupils at the school, the Year 6 test results showed that these pupils were approximately a year behind in English and 18 months behind in mathematics.
- The school is vigilant in checking on the achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The progress of these pupils is good overall but at Key Stage 2 it is stronger in reading and writing than in mathematics.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language develop good competence in learning English and progress very well in other areas. The 2012 Year 6 tests showed that these pupils made outstanding progress, attaining higher standards than other pupils in the school and pupils in the same groups nationally.

The quality of teaching is good

- Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved. Across the school, much of the teaching is consistently good, including in English and mathematics. Teaching is frequently outstanding in Years 5 and 6. Some teaching still requires improvement, particularly in mathematics.
- Most teachers' regularly and accurately assess how well pupils are learning and skilfully use this information to match work to their different needs. This feature is central to pupils' good progress. When it is combined with the innovative strategies that are being implemented to promote pupils' independent and collaborative learning skills and address their different learning styles, progress is rapid and secure. Good teaching reflects these features well and outstanding teaching showcases them.
- In the very best lessons not a moment of learning time is lost so pupils learn quickly. Teachers ensure that pupils are clear about what they intend them to learn, as well as why and how this

will be useful. For example in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, in which pupils were learning to convert measures of capacity from metric to imperial, they were clear that this would be useful if they were to travel to or work in countries that do not use metric measures.

- While teachers explain new ideas fully and well, they provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work things out for themselves, take risks with their learning and explain the methods they have used. In the very best lessons, teachers are expert at getting the balance between these elements just right, skilfully employing a 'Tip, Tip, Tell' strategy. Teachers also involve pupils very effectively in reflecting on their learning to decide how well they have met the learning objectives in lessons.
- Teachers use key questions, such as such as 'Water: Beautiful or Destructive?' and 'What makes a Superhero?' to plan exciting lessons that link learning across the full range of subjects. These capture pupils' interest and motivate them to work hard and learn well.
- Throughout the school, literacy skills are taught particularly well. Both teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in teaching pupils about how to blend letter sounds to read and write. The teaching of mathematics is good in many respects, but too few teachers are providing really purposeful opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in real-life problem solving activities.
- Lessons are less effective when teachers talk for too long, thereby limiting the time pupils have to be actively involved in learning. Specific weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics were due to work not being adapted well enough pupils' stage of intellectual development.
- Most teaching assistants make a very good contribution in lessons or when delivering specifically tailored programmes to boost the learning of small groups or individuals. The impact of their work, whether it be to support pupils who are finding learning more difficult or increase the progress of more able pupils, is rigorously checked to ensure that it is having the desired effect.
- Teachers provide very good ongoing verbal feedback to pupils about their learning. They replicate this in their written comments in pupils' books, with good 'fix it' references to help pupils improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils understand and agree with the school's high expectations of their behaviour and benefit greatly from the clear guidance they are given about treating adults and each other with respect. They are sociable and polite and have a clear understanding of right and wrong.
- In lessons pupils behave very well. They listen carefully to their teachers and most show high levels of interest in their work, to which they apply themselves enthusiastically. When asked to discuss ideas with a partner or work cooperatively as part of a group they do so maturely. For the most part, this type of behaviour is the norm in lessons at Heathfield.
- Occasionally, when pupils are faced with work that is not sufficiently challenging or adapted well enough to their stage of development, for example in mathematics lessons, they lose interest. Some begin to chat about things that are not related to their work and some simply stop working and sit quietly doing nothing because they are unable to do what is expected of them.
- For the most part, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an integral element of all lessons. Pupils are fired-up by the many opportunities to think, talk about and investigate ideas about people, places and phenomena in the world today and in the past. Even the youngest pupils are developing lifelong learning skills within the school's highly effective programme that teaches them to coach each other.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different types of bullying and prejudice-based behaviour. They understand that all behaviours of this type are wrong and hurtful. Pupils say that while there are some behaviours of this nature in school they are not widespread. Pupils were clear that they felt safe in school and said that they had confidence to speak to their teachers about any issues or worries that they had.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average. Most arrive punctually and attend

regularly, but absence rates of some pupils, including those in receipt of the pupil premium, are higher than for others. The school is working vigilantly, including with key professionals, to ensure that all pupils attend regularly and benefit fully from what is provided.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led. The headteacher's high aspirations for pupils and relentless approach to ensuring that they achieve their best, both academically and personally, has driven the good improvements that have occurred since the school's previous inspection. All of the recommendations made at that time have been addressed fully.
- Since her appointment, the headteacher has successfully harnessed strengths within the existing staff and of those she has appointed herself to build an increasingly effective team of senior and middle leaders. These individuals share her commitment and vision for the school's future improvement and are just as passionate about promoting pupils' development as effective, lifelong, learners.
- The headteacher and other leaders regularly check on how well teachers are helping pupils to learn. Where additional training or support is needed to ensure improvement, this occurs. Staff understand that pay progression is linked to effective teaching.
- A close watch is kept on the attainment and progress of all pupils and the information used to plan improvements. Pupils who may be falling behind are given extra help and checks are made to ensure that they catch up quickly. In the same way, more-able pupils are targeted for additional support to ensure that they achieve their potential.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and skills in literacy, information and communication technology, science the arts and humanities. Numeracy skills are promoted effectively, but the school has rightly prioritised the need to improve opportunities for pupils to use and apply these skills to solve problems. Thinking skills are a central component of all lessons. Pupils also benefit from enrichment afternoons, where they work with pupils from different year groups, and interesting visits and visitors. Regular 'blogging', particularly between teachers and pupils at Key Stage 2, is another key element of the curriculum, including for homework. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well across the whole curriculum.
- The school meets statutory requirements relating to safeguarding and equality of opportunity. It works hard to involve parents, seek their views and keep them informed. Most parents are happy with the way the school cares for and educates their children.
- The local authority has provided a range of effective support for the headteacher and governors in moving this school to good.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed and actively involved in checking the school's performance, for example by taking part in learning walks around the school. They receive good information from the headteacher about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and discuss this fully. They have used the performance management system very well to retain, promote and reward good teachers and to tackle underperformance. Finances are managed effectively, including the pupil premium. Governors are fully aware of how this grant funding has been spent. The detailed checks that school leaders conduct on pupils' progress has ensured that governors have been kept informed about the positive impact this spending has already had on reducing the gap between these pupils' attainment and others.

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	105172
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	404969

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Victoria Roberts
Headteacher	Joanna Lindon
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2011
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