

Castle Hill Primary School

Castle Hill Street, Tonge Moor, Bolton, Lancashire, BL2 2JT

Inspection dates 22–23 October 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Over the last three years, the progress pupils make has not been fast enough in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils' achievement has not been good.
- In 2013, very few pupils, including the most able, made progress which was above expectations.
- Pupils have not achieved as well as they could, especially in Key Stage 2, because teaching over time has been inconsistent.
- Pupils are sometimes overly reliant in lessons on adult support and are not provided with enough opportunities to learn independently, and become more resilient in their learning.
- Attendance remains below national average and there have been a high number of fixed-term exclusions.
- In the previous three years, leaders, including governors, have not ensured teaching has improved quickly enough to rapidly raise standards.
- Not all subject and middle leaders have the skills to monitor the quality of teaching and learning so that they can play a bigger part in driving continued improvements.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have high expectations of all pupils and governors make a strong contribution to checking how well the school is doing.
- Children have a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress.
- Teaching is improving quickly. As a result, the school's latest assessment information for pupils currently attending the school is more positive.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and enjoy positive relationships with adults. This is a welcoming school which provides a positive climate for learning.
- The work the school does to support vulnerable pupils is a strength. As a result, these pupils progress well from their low starting points.
- The school contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 parts of lessons taught by 11 teachers.
- Inspectors carried out shorter visits to lessons to assess pupils' work and progress and also visited an assembly and guided reading sessions.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and members of the governing body. Discussions also took place with a representative of the local authority and a National Leader in Education, from Ladywood Primary School, Bolton, who provides external support for the school.
- Inspectors looked at the school's documentation for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. They scrutinised improvement plans, as well as a range of policies and assessment information. They also looked at pupils' work in books during lessons.
- The views of parents were considered through the school's own questionnaires. Not enough parents expressed their views of the school through the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for it to be considered.
- The views of 26 members of staff, expressed through a staff questionnaire, were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Gary Kelly, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gillian Burrow

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Castle Hill Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and children from service families) is well-above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average and the proportion who speaks English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported by school action is above average; the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-above average.
- Over the last three years, the school has had high proportions of pupils who arrive at the school other than at the usual times, many of whom are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Over the past two years there have been significant changes to the school's leadership. A new deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have been appointed and there have been changes to teaching staff.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to ensure pupils make consistently good and better progress between Year 1 and Year 6, in English and mathematics by making sure that:
 - teaching is consistently good or better in its impact over time
 - teachers make good use of assessment information and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly the most able
 - teachers consistently assess pupils' progress throughout lessons to ensure that all are making good progress and work meets the needs of all pupils
 - teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to work by themselves to develop their independent learning skills and be more resilient in their learning, by working things out for themselves and becoming less reliant on adults.
- Improve attendance further so that it is in line with national expectations by:
 - continuing to work closely with families so that fewer pupils, particularly disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are absent from school.
- Improve leadership and management further by:
 - ensuring all senior leaders, including governors, respond quickly and effectively to any evidence of underperformance in teaching and achievement
 - further developing the skills of middle leaders so they can take a lead role in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because, although the majority of pupils currently attending the school are making good progress, over the last three years this has not been the case, and too many pupils have left the school in Year 6 not having reached the standards expected of them because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- In 2012 and 2013, pupils' attainment in test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in combined reading, writing and mathematics was well-below national expectations.
- Over the last three years, the progress pupils make in Key Stage 1 has not been consistently good in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In addition, the progress pupils make between Years 1 and Year 6 has not been fast enough, and not enough pupils have been able to achieve more than is expected of them. This is particularly the case for a small number of the most-able pupils who have not achieved highly enough.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage displaying the knowledge, skills and understanding which are well below those typical for their age. Due to improved teaching and opportunities for children to develop their independent learning skills they make good progress and are now better prepared for learning in Year 1.
- The school's current information for pupils attending the school shows that pupils are now increasingly making good progress across all year groups and in all lessons, although this has not consistently been the case across the school over time.
- The school provides high-quality activities for younger pupils to develop their knowledge of letters and sounds. They are increasingly confident in building letters and sounds into words and sentences. In 2012 and 2013, Year 1 pupils achieved above national expectations in a check of their understanding of the sounds that letters make (phonics).
- The proportions of pupils making and exceeding their expected levels of progress are increasing across the school. This is because of the school's improved systems to track underachievement and its concerted effort to improve the quality of teaching.
- The school has significantly high proportions of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs. However, because of improved teaching and the high-quality support and intervention provided by highly skilled teaching assistants, the gaps in achievement between these pupils and their peers are closing.
- Pupils who arrive partway through the school year are catching up quickly because of the high-quality support they receive.
- In 2013, Year 6 pupils supported by the pupil premium funding attained less well than others in English and mathematics. However, the school's latest assessment information shows that this gap has narrowed to just over a term behind their peers in both English and mathematics because of improved teaching. This reflects the school's commitment to ensuring every pupil has an equal opportunity.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are catching up quickly with their peers. This is because they are fully involved in classroom activities, and develop speaking and listening skills quickly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time requires improvement because it is not yet consistently good to ensure pupils' achievement is good.
- Teachers generally, but not always, use assessment information to plan lessons which enable pupils to learn at a pace which suits their ability levels, ensuring most pupils make good progress. However, in a small number of lessons, some pupils, including the most able, are not

challenged enough to deepen their knowledge and make better progress.

- Occasionally, pupils rely too heavily on the teacher and teaching assistants to support their learning and are not provided with opportunities to solve problems by themselves and in groups.
- In a small number of lessons, teachers did not make regular checks on the progress pupils were making during the lesson. As a result, some pupils did not make at least good progress.
- During this inspection, all teaching seen was good, and some teaching was outstanding.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is consistently good providing pupils with guidance on how to improve their work and the next steps in their learning. Pupils are regularly given opportunities to respond to teachers' feedback in books so they can improve their work and learning further.
- The school has recently implemented more effective tracking and monitoring procedures which are used effectively to support pupils who fall behind, particularly for those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. As a result, vulnerable pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium are making better progress across the school.
- Teaching assistants and mentors are highly skilled and deployed effectively, in encouraging pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable to engage fully and make progress in a manner which is sympathetic to their needs.
- When teachers plan opportunities for pupils to work together, as in an outstanding Year 2 English lesson, pupils respond well and provide support for each other in how to improve. In a Year 5 music lesson, pupils created music electronically that the class then listened to and evaluated, sharing their critical understanding and opinions maturely.
- Improved teaching of literacy and numeracy, including as part of work on other subjects and through the school's creative curriculum, has led to clear improvements in the standards of pupils' spelling, punctuation, grammar and mathematics work, which is evident in pupils' books.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Behaviour and safety require improvement because attendance still remains below national expectations. Although persistent absenteeism is reducing over time, it remains below the national average. The school knows it needs to work even more closely with families, particularly of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, so their attendance is more regular.
- There are still too many occasions where pupils are excluded from school for short periods. However, due to the high-quality support and intervention put in place to support the needs of the most vulnerable, the numbers of fixed-term exclusions are reducing over time.
- The school supports the needs of a large proportion of pupils who can occasionally demonstrate challenging behaviour. There are dedicated mentors and skilled teaching assistants working alongside teachers who deal sympathetically and effectively with these pupils, ensuring the learning of others is not interrupted.
- Inspectors found behaviour and safety around the school to be very positive, and pupils were polite, friendly and get on well with each other and adults. Generally, pupils do as they are asked and try hard to meet the school's expectations of good behaviour and conduct. Inspectors observed generally good behaviour in lessons and the school's records of pupils' behaviour show that over time it is also typically good.
- Pupils told us they enjoy coming to school which provides a very caring, supportive environment in which pupils want to learn.
- The school ensures high expectations of behaviour and clear routines to promote good behaviour are embedded from when children start school. Pupils of all ages have good attitudes to learning in lessons and want to do well.
- Parent View, the on-line system for gathering the views of parents about the school did not register enough respondents to be able to be considered, however, the school's own questionnaires suggest that parents are happy with the way the school deals with any incidents

of bullying. They believe behaviour to be good and that their children are safe at the school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because plans and strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning have not yet fully demonstrated a measureable and positive impact on pupils' achievement over time. In addition, although attendance continues to improve, it has not yet reached national expectations.
- Previously, leaders and managers did not eradicate underperformance quickly enough and, as a result, pupils' achievement did not improve rapidly.
- The skills of middle leaders require further development, to enable them to take more responsibility for ensuring the quality of teaching and learning in their areas continues to improve.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have ambitious plans to bring about sustained improvement. Plans are underway and there is a collective sense of purpose to continue to improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement further.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children enjoy a strong start to their education.
- The impact of improved leadership can be seen in the good and better teaching observed during this inspection. In addition, the school's latest assessment information is more positive for current year groups in the school.
- The school's strategy to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills has brought about improvements for pupils who currently attend the school. This strategy is now consistently applied across all subjects and year groups.
- The headteacher and governors have ensured there is a clear link between progression up the salary scale and performance for leaders and teachers at all levels and professional development is clearly linked to the school's priorities.
- The school's creative curriculum and the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school. Pupils have many opportunities to participate in music, singing, art, sports and extra-curricular activities.
- Pupil premium funding is used increasingly effectively to close gaps between eligible pupils and their peers.
- The school's allocation of the new primary sport funding is being used effectively. Delivery of physical well-being and sports activities to further promote pupils' healthy lifestyles is delivered by specialists who are developing the skills of the school's staff to ensure longer-term sustainability in this area.
- The school's own questionnaires show that parents believe the school is well-led and managed.
- The local authority, alongside a National Leader in Education is providing the school with a good level of support to improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide challenge and support for senior leaders and are a regular and visible presence in the school. They have an accurate view of the school's performance and what needs to be done to further improve the quality of teaching in the school. Governors have ensured that there is strong performance management now in place, linking any increases in pay to teachers' performance in the classroom. The governing body has ensured the school's financial health and has a good understanding of the use and impact of pupil premium funding. Governors ensure barriers to learning are removed for the most disadvantaged. All statutory duties are met, including arrangements for safeguarding.

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	105150
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	426077

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marion Kershaw
Headteacher	Sarah Curley
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2011
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