

# Catforth Primary School

School Lane, Catforth, Preston PR4 0HL

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|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>Inspection dates</b>                      | 13–14 July 2016             |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | Good                        |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement        |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | Good                        |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | Requires improvement        |
| Early years provision                        | Good                        |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good                        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' strategies for communicating and engaging with parents have not been sufficiently successful to win over the hearts and minds of some of them.
- Not enough pupils make the good progress they need to make to catch up and close gaps in their learning. Not enough pupils reach the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school.
- The headteacher's actions to improve the quality of teaching are having a positive impact. They have not yet fully dealt with the legacy of weaker teaching, however.
- A small number of children do not always behave as well as they could in lessons or at playtimes because of habits formed where teaching is weak.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good and some teaching is weak. Teachers do not consistently use assessments of what pupils can do in their planning to set work at the appropriate level of challenge for different pupils, including those who are most able.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to apply their developing scientific knowledge. Teaching does not consistently promote pupils' understanding of investigation and enquiry.
- The quality of presentation in pupils' books is not consistently good. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations and accept work that is poorly presented.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is tenacious in her determination to improve the quality of teaching. Her actions are bringing about improvements to the quality of education that pupils receive.
- The good quality of teaching in the early years ensures that children get a successful start to their education. They make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils are courteous, articulate and polite. Their attendance is above the national average.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements are secure. Pupils say teachers care for them well and that they feel safe in school.
- The systematic and effective teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) ensures that pupils achieve highly in the Year 1 phonics screening check.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - improving the effectiveness of communications with parents
  - developing greater opportunities for all parents to share in their children's learning and celebrate pupils' successes brought about by leaders' actions to improve the school.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to accelerate pupils' progress and ensure that greater proportions reach the highest standards by the time they leave the school by:
  - raising teachers' and teaching assistants' expectations of what pupils can do
  - ensuring that all teachers and teaching assistants consistently implement the school's agreed policies, including those for marking and the presentation of pupils' work
  - ensuring that all teachers consistently use their assessments of pupils' understanding to guide their planning so that pupils, including those who are most able, receive the right level of challenge in the work they are set
  - improving the quality of the teaching of science to develop pupils' understanding of scientific enquiry and give greater opportunities for them to apply their developing knowledge
  - ensuring that all adults have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons and at playtimes.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because of her rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. She has sought advice from the local authority to ensure the accuracy of her judgements and shared these with the governing body.
- The headteacher and governors have a clear vision for improvement that has been shared with staff. Senior leaders' determination and commitment to improve the quality of education has set high expectations for themselves and the rest of the staff. Leaders have taken robust and appropriate actions that have not always been popular with some staff but have brought about improvements to the quality of teaching that pupils receive.
- Planning to improve the school is clear and effective. Detailed plans include well-judged priorities based on leaders' accurate evaluations, which include the contribution of subject leaders and governors. Regular and effective reviews and evaluations of the impact of leaders' actions, particularly by the school effectiveness committee, drive continued improvement in the school at pace.
- The school has few pupils who are disadvantaged and consequently receives little funding through the pupil premium. Leaders use this funding effectively, however, to provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, their learning has accelerated and they make at least the expected progress from their starting points.
- Leaders' good use of the additional primary physical education and sport funding promotes pupils' greater involvement in sport. Specialist teachers and coaches provide expert training for pupils during physical education lessons. An increased range of opportunities provided by the funding promotes pupils' wider experience of sports, including football, netball, fencing, dance and the opportunity to participate in sporting events within the Preston primary sports partnership. Additional training allows some older pupils to become play leaders and support the play of younger pupils. Consequently pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, participate more in sport and adopt healthier lifestyles.
- Pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural understanding is nurtured well. Leaders ensure the promotion of fundamental British values and equality, irrespective of pupils' faith, gender identity or whether they have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. It is complemented by a wide variety of clubs and activities that develop pupils' sporting, artistic and academic interests, including book club and football club. Pupils have many opportunities to experience the wider world of modern British society through a variety of educational visits and residential trips. Consequently, pupils are well equipped for their next stages of education.
- Leaders have drawn effectively upon high-quality support from the local authority to take decisive action to tackle any identified underperformance in the quality of teaching. Members of the local authority's monitoring and intervention team work alongside the governing body effectively, as part of the school's standards and effectiveness committee. Here they regularly check the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress. They also hold the headteacher and the governing body rigorously to account to ensure that their actions help the school to improve rapidly.
- Parents are kept informed about the school by leaders' regular communications. Responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, show that most parents are happy with most aspects of the school. A number of responses and letters from parents expressed dissatisfaction with the leadership and management of the school, however, and raised concerns, particularly relating to the high turnover of teaching staff and its impact on staff morale. The governing body has investigated and responded to these parental concerns appropriately and in line with the school's complaints policy. Leaders and governors accept that communication with parents is not sufficiently strong to ensure that all parents form positive relationships with the school.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governance of the school is strong. The governing body shares senior leaders' vision and commitment to improvement and holds them stringently to account. Governors know the school well because many visit often. They receive detailed information from a variety of sources, including external specialists in quality assurance.
  - The governing body, particularly through the school effectiveness committee, monitors closely the

school's budgets and academic outcomes, including the impact of additional funding through the pupil premium and for primary physical education and sport, to ensure best value.

- Governors have secure understanding of the schools' policy for managing teachers' performance, including its link to teachers' pay increases, and ensure that it is robustly applied.
- Governors make good use of the local authority training and support available to them to keep up to date and ensure that the school continues to improve.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
  - The governing body ensures that the school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding, including the careful checking of the suitability of all adults who work in the school.
  - Checks relating to safeguarding are thorough and clear systems are in place to record information accurately and share it with relevant organisations, as needed. Any concerns regarding the safety or welfare of children are acted upon quickly and appropriately. Consequently, the school has a culture where pupils' welfare is a priority.
  - Leaders and other teachers are vigilant in protecting pupils from the dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism because they have undergone the relevant training.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**    **require improvement**

- For some time, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do have not been high enough, particularly for the most able pupils.
- The teaching of reading and writing has improved. Reading and writing skills are often taught systematically and culminate in opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to more challenging and complex tasks. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes not high enough, however, to ensure that pupils' learning accelerates and they make up lost ground.
- The quality of teaching of mathematics is improving because of a sustained focus by leaders. Some teaching systematically builds pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts because teachers use their assessments of pupils' attainment well to present suitably challenging work. More often, teachers do not amend their planning to take into account pupils' understanding. Consequently, some pupils do not receive the challenge they need to make the best progress they can from the work teachers set for them.
- The way teachers plan activities that challenge the small, but increasing, number of pupils identified as most able is inconsistent. Particularly in Year 1 and the Reception Year, teachers plan tasks that challenge the most able pupils well. This better teaching has been brought about by recent appointments to the staff, appropriate training and support from the local authority, and increased challenge by leaders is raising expectations. These levels of challenge are not universal throughout the school, however.
- Work seen in pupils' books shows that a minority of teachers do not consistently follow the school's policies on marking and feedback. As a result, some pupils do not receive the best guidance to help them improve their work.
- The quality of teaching of science is not consistent across the school. Although all pupils undertake practical science investigations, some teaching does not promote the development of systematic scientific enquiry. In particular, some pupils are not given enough opportunities to use observations and conclusions to develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Committed teaching assistants support learning throughout the school effectively, particularly for pupils who are the least able, disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In some classes, teaching assistants have clearly planned tasks with sharply focused expectations. For example, in one lesson a teaching assistant worked tirelessly to develop a small group of pupils' secure understanding of equivalence in money. At other times, however, teaching assistants are less effective because they are not directed clearly enough to ensure their best impact. As a result, it is more difficult for teachers to hold teaching assistants to account for the impact they have on pupils' learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants often use questioning well to check pupils' knowledge across a wide variety of subjects. Some adults use questioning frequently to deepen pupils' understanding and develop their reasoning. However, this is not consistent across the school. Where questioning is best used, for example in the early years, teachers and teaching assistants respond rapidly to opportunities presented by pupils and promote links to learning across different subjects through their choice of questions. As a result, children deepen their understanding and knowledge quickly because they are encouraged to give reasons and explain their answers.

- Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to identify and use links between different subjects to make learning interesting. For example, one teacher linked geographical studies of rainforests and deforestation to writing balanced arguments.
- Teachers' effective promotion of reading, including the use of the school's new library, ensures that pupils' reading skills develop well. Teachers monitor home reading activities with rigour, particularly in early years and lower key stage 1, to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. Consequently, pupils make good progress towards becoming proficient readers.
- Phonics is taught well. Teachers and teaching assistants have appropriate training and secure subject knowledge. Consequently, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers regularly make effective use of homework to consolidate and extend pupils' learning, particularly in basic skills such as reading, spelling and mental calculation.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy attending because they say teachers and teaching assistants help them to understand their learning in lessons. Pupils know how to stay safe and look after themselves because of the teaching they receive. They speak confidently about staying safe while online. Pupils are also confident about how they would keep safe within their local community. Visitors to school, including local police officers, enhance pupils' knowledge.
- Pupils effectively carry out a variety of roles of responsibility, particularly in key stage 2. School councillors contribute well to school developments.
- Pupils are well supported to become good citizens. They have a good understanding of democracy and the role of the monarchy because of the effective promotion of fundamental British values by leaders and teachers.
- The school has good relationships with outside agencies and is active in referring any concerns that may place children at risk of harm and in following up actions to ensure that pupils remain safe.
- Pupils' pride in their work is inconsistent. In some year groups, a legacy of weaker teaching and lack of challenge has resulted in pupils developing poor habits in how they present their work. Where children have received better-quality teaching for some time, however, their standard of presentation is often high.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are generally polite and courteous to adults and each other. They welcome visitors and willingly engage in conversations about their work and school life.
- Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school. Consequently, attendance is higher than the national average for all groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils proudly wear the badges they receive for full attendance each term. Very few pupils are regularly absent from school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of all types of bullying. Most pupils say it is rare, though some say it does happen on occasions. They are confident that, if any bullying or misbehaviour does occur, adults would rapidly take action to deal with it. A minority of pupils share the concerns of their parents about the changes of staff and ways of teaching in school. Pupils have clear views about equality and tolerance and were at pains to point out the need for all to respect each other in school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good because of the quality of teaching they receive and their relationships with teachers. However, a small minority of pupils find it more difficult at times to behave as well as they should because of a legacy of less-well-established expectations and routines. Consequently, on rare occasions learning is disrupted. Adults now deal with this effectively, however.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- Pupils' standards in key stage 2 have declined since the last inspection. The work in pupils' books, however, shows that leaders' actions are turning the tide and are bringing about faster progress and improved attainment, particularly in the early years and upper key stage 2.
- In 2015, the proportions of pupils achieving the standards expected for their age were generally above national averages in reading, writing, and mathematics at the end of key stage 1. However, at the end of key stage 2, the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standards were below national averages.
- In the key stage 2 tests in 2015, pupils made significantly less progress from their starting points than is expected of them in reading and mathematics. In writing, pupils' progress was in line with the national average but less than that seen in previous years. Too few pupils made better than the expected progress because teachers do not provide high enough expectations and challenges in their teaching.
- The work in the books of pupils currently in school shows quickly improving rates of progress and standards in nearly every year group. In some year groups, however, the rapid improvement in the quality of pupils' work is only relatively recent and linked to the decisive actions of the headteacher and governors. Better quality teaching, brought about by the reorganisation of staffing, appropriate training and sharper accountability, has clearly improved pupils' achievement in nearly all classes. Pupils do not make consistently good progress throughout the school because of the impact of previously weaker teaching. Overall, most pupils are appropriately prepared for their next stages of their education.
- The overall proportion of most-able pupils is much smaller than that seen nationally. In some year groups, however, the proportion of most-able pupils has grown to be closer to the national average because of the better-quality teaching pupils received. Most-able pupils make the progress that is expected of them but they do not often do well enough to reach the highest standards, particularly at the end of key stage 2. This is because a historical lack of ambition for these pupils meant that teaching did not present sufficient challenge to them. The headteacher has correctly identified this issue and taken the right actions to tackle it.
- The very small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points because of the good quality of support and care they receive.
- There are too few disadvantaged pupils in each year group to undertake any meaningful statistical analysis, but work in their books and school-based information shows that, throughout the school, they make the expected progress and generally achieve what is expected for their age.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points in their understanding of phonics because of the good teaching they receive. As a result, the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 has risen rapidly and been sustained well above the national average. In 2015 and 2016 all pupils achieved the required standard.

## Early years provision

## is good

- The teacher responsible for early years provides strong leadership. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and, alongside the headteacher, plans relevant improvements. These include better use of the school's electronic assessment system to enhance the involvement of parents in children's learning and improvements to the outdoor provision to make it more accessible during inclement weather.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is good and improving. This is because the teacher and teaching assistant have good subject knowledge, reflect upon their practice and act on secure advice. Leaders ensure that assessments are accurate by regularly checking them with other providers and external specialists in quality assurance.
- Adults working in the early years have established good partnerships with parents. Consequently, parents are well informed about their children's progress and are confident that staff will act quickly to deal with any concerns.
- The small number of children who enter the early years do so with a range of levels of development. Children from all groups, including disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make at least good progress from their starting points. This is because of the quality of teaching and care they receive. Consequently, the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of

development has remained above the national average for the last two years and continues to improve. Pupils are well equipped to begin learning through the national curriculum in key stage 1.

- Teachers make effective use of both indoor and outdoor space to provide stimulating and focused activities that are closely linked. Activities capture pupils' interests and provide both excitement and learning. For example, pupils were excited to make cakes using chocolate while also learning about the effect that heat can have on different ingredients. Adults' good use of questioning and links between subjects ensure that children do not miss out on opportunities to learn. For example, a teaching assistant's good use of questioning helped a group of children to explain their thinking and develop their understanding of why some toy cars travelled further than others did after sliding them down a ramp.
- Children are polite and courteous. They welcome visitors to their classrooms and are keen to show what they have been learning. They play well together and effectively develop their inquisitiveness and social skills to become eager learners because of adults' encouragement and good use of questions. Adults consistently demonstrate respect and courtesy to pupils, which they copy with enthusiasm.
- Children are kept safe because well-trained and vigilant staff implement the school's safeguarding policies with rigour. The school is well equipped to act quickly and appropriately to deal with any concerns.
- Leaders ensure that welfare requirements are met.

## School details

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 119160     |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Lancashire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 10000782   |

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

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 5–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 70   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Anita Davies   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Julie Bainbridge   |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01772 690451   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.catforthprimary.co.uk">www.catforthprimary.co.uk</a>   |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:head@catforth.lancs.sch.uk">head@catforth.lancs.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 17–18 January 2012   |

## Information about this school

- Catforth is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has few pupils supported through the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is average.
- The school operates a breakfast club and after-school club during term time. These are managed by the governing body and were included in the inspection.
- The school does not meet the requirements for publishing information about the reporting of the implementation of its special educational needs policy and governors' terms of office on its website.
- The school has been subject to significant staff changes in the last two years.
- The government's floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics, do not apply to this school because of the small size of each year group.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a range of lessons and looked at pupils' work. He talked with pupils about their lessons and school life. The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, governors, representatives of the local authority and a number of staff with different roles in the school.
- The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and the management of the school, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- The inspector spoke with parents, considered the 26 responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View, and took account of the written communications he received.
- Inspectors also took account of responses made by staff through the staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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