

Broad Oak Community Primary School

Brunswick Street, Parr, St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 2JE

Inspection dates

4–5 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher has an excellent understanding of the needs of the school. She is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher and a good team of both senior and middle leaders who are ensuring the school continues to improve.
- The hard work and commitment of all staff have successfully raised attendance and improved the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Governors are supportive and have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Pupils are proud of their school, feel safe and enjoy learning. Their behaviour is good and they show courtesy and respect to one another.
- Parents expressed positive views about the school and agree that their children are safe and secure.
- The early years provides children with a good start in an environment that is welcoming and safe. It provides them with good opportunities to develop their skills, particularly in language, which are especially low when they start.
- Across the school pupils make good progress, including those who are disadvantaged and those who are disabled and have special educational needs. From below typical starting points, pupils reach standards which are similar to the national average by the time they leave Year 6.
- Teaching is good and is successful in engaging pupils' interests and promoting good progress. Relationships are very positive which creates a positive working environment.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching does not yet result in pupils making outstanding progress.
- The work set does not always challenge pupils enough, especially the most able, to ensure that they reach their potential.
- Marking does not always provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve and they are not always given the opportunity to respond to this.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a good number of lessons or parts of lessons, five of which were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also looked at pupils' work.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from four different year groups reading, and talked with them and other groups of pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the school improvement consultant.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure safeguarding.
- The inspectors spoke to parents, took account of the 16 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's consultations with parents and other communication from parents. They also took account of the 59 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Vanessa MacDonald, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Marliyn Massey	Additional Inspector
David Willis	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Broad Oak Community School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a very small proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection there have been changes in senior leadership. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher started in their new roles in September 2012; both were existing members of staff. Other senior leaders and middle leaders are also new to post since the last inspection, including the leader of the early years provision and the special educational needs coordinator. The early years leader is currently on a planned absence and her position is being covered by a middle leader, supported by senior leaders.
- The early years is comprised of a morning and afternoon Nursery and full time Reception classes.
- There is a breakfast club provided for pupils which formed part of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to be of an outstanding quality in order to raise pupils' achievement further by:
 - making sure that work set always provides a suitable level of challenge, especially for the most-able pupils so that more pupils attain the higher standards
 - ensuring that marking consistently gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve and that they always have time to respond to this.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has an excellent understanding of the key priorities of the school and together with the deputy headteacher they have a relentless and determined focus on continuing to improve the outcomes for pupils. This has resulted in improvements in attendance, the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils. This drive for improvement is fully shared by all staff and governors.
- Leaders at all levels are fully involved in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Senior and middle leaders have high ambition and have good capacity to bring about further improvements. Senior leaders have accurately identified which areas are priorities and the actions needed to improve pupils' progress further, particularly in mathematics and writing and for the most able.
- Middle leaders are developing their skills well. Through working both as a group and within their respective teams they have a good understanding of how to improve their particular areas of responsibility further. They are regularly involved in checking on the quality of teaching through scrutinising pupils' work and how well they are doing and through observing teaching and learning around the school.
- The regular meetings that teachers have to discuss how well pupils are doing are thorough and enable leaders to identify quickly where pupils may be at danger of falling behind and any actions that are needed. This exemplifies the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- There are clear procedures in place for managing the performance of staff and these are linked to teachers' pay and career progression. Opportunities for additional training are closely linked to the school's priorities and leaders at all levels are involved in supporting one another's professional development.
- Pupils are provided with a range of additional experiences through visits and visitors to the school. These include a visiting poet, links with the local church and musical opportunities such as violin and drumming. They are taught about differences between themselves and others and what is right and wrong. This supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and ensures any discrimination is not tolerated.
- The curriculum is well planned and topics are chosen to capture pupils' interests and to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Leaders have recognised the need to provide more challenge for the most able in order to raise the number of pupils achieving the higher levels and have purchased new resources and increased opportunities for focused group work.
- Primary school sport funding is used well to promote the development of both pupils' and teachers' skills through the use of a specialist coach. Opportunities for pupils to be involved both in lessons and through the lunchtime and after-school clubs have increased and more pupils are involved in a wider range of activities. This helps to support pupils' well-being and helps them to keep healthy.
- The local authority provides light touch support for the school. The school improvement consultant works closely with the leaders, including governors, to support further improvement.
- Partnerships with external agencies are good and provide pupils and their families with additional support, particularly those who are more vulnerable. Parents who responded to Parent View and those spoken to during the inspection are highly supportive of the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The governors are well informed and have become increasingly involved in checking on how well the school is doing. One example of this was through a governors open day where they had opportunity to look at pupils' books, talk to pupils and leaders about their work. This means that they are able to challenge senior leaders more effectively about improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Governors understand the procedures for managing teachers' performance and how this links to teachers' pay progression. Governors have undertaken a range of training to support them with their roles in school and use the skills within the governing body to support aspects of the school's work such as in health and safety and financial management. Governors have ensured that funding is used appropriately to improve pupils' outcomes. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils through targeted group work, employment of specialists, such as speech and language and play therapists, the breakfast club and smaller class sizes. Governors ensure that safeguarding meets requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that the teachers act 'like a family' and that they are caring. Behaviour logs show that there are very few occasions when there is inappropriate behaviour and that there are very clear procedures in place to manage this swiftly when it does occur. Parents and staff fully agree with this positive picture.
- Behaviour around the school is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to one another and to adults around the school. It is common practice for pupils to hold the doors open for one another and to thank each other. In the dining hall older pupils support younger pupils with clearing their lunch trays, a job they take seriously.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are interested in their work. They are keen to learn and enjoy the opportunities they have to work together and support one another. Occasionally, some pupils become restless when the work they are doing is not hard enough.
- Pupils take on their responsibilities with pride. Members of the school council talked about how they felt it was important to be able to represent their school and be a role model. They have been involved in the purchase of new equipment for use outside at playtimes, for example.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and say that there are very few incidents of bullying in their school. They are confident that any incidents would be swiftly sorted out by very caring staff.
- Pupils, particularly older ones, have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe on the internet and when using other technology. For example, younger pupils are taught about how to keep safe through visits from the police and ambulance services.
- Attendance has improved and last year was average. Recent information shows that this is continuing to improve. The number of pupils who are frequently absent has decreased as a result of the concerted actions the school has put into place. The breakfast club, which supports pupils, and their families, whose attendance has not been as good as expected, is having a positive result on improving the attendance of these pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and inspection evidence shows that this is resulting in good achievement across the school.
- Classrooms are well organised and provide pupils with calm and purposeful environments, where relationships between adults and pupils are positive. This supports their effective learning.
- Activities are well planned and teachers and learning assistants have high expectations of the pupils. In one class, pupils were analysing written work done by previous pupils to identify where there were examples of how a character had been described from their novel. They used this to develop their own writing to good effect, using amusing and well structured sentences to describe the character.
- The use of adults to support pupils' learning is good. Learning assistants provide good quality support and have a clear focus and appropriate resources within each lesson to ensure those pupils they are working with make good progress.
- Teachers plan activities which engage and interest pupils. Dressing up as a witch to mix 'magic spells' using mathematical shape patterns in a younger year group ensured children's interests were maintained. The use of technology by Year 6 pupils to make effective links between their history topic on the Second World War and features of writing developed their literacy and history skills well. On occasion, some pupils are not given work which is hard enough, particularly the most able and this can slow their progress.
- Teachers ask questions based on good subject knowledge and which encourage pupils to think carefully and to explain their answers, developing their speaking and listening skills further and deepening their understanding. This was evident in a Year 1 class where pupils had to use different adjectives to describe settings.
- Pupils work is regularly marked and there have been improvements in the quality of marking and the guidance pupils receive. However, this is not yet consistent across the school and pupils are not always given clear guidance in how to improve their work across all classes or subjects. Opportunities for pupils to respond to this guidance are also not always regularly provided.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils usually start Key Stage 1 with skills that are below those typical for their age. They make good progress across both Key Stage 1 and 2 to reach standards which are similar to those found nationally. The standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014 improved on the previous year, particularly in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading and writing.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2014, the standards reached by pupils were similar to those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics though the proportions at the higher levels were lower than those found nationally in writing and mathematics. However, a significant proportion of pupils within this year group were disabled or had special educational or additional needs and whose attainment was lower than that of their peers. Although the majority of these pupils made the progress expected of them this was lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils making the progress expected of them was similar to that found nationally though the proportion doing better than expected was lower in both writing and mathematics in 2014 and lower than previous years' results.
- Inspection evidence and school information shows that the majority of pupils in different year groups across the school made the progress expected of them and a high proportion did better than expected in 2014.
- There have been improvements in the standards reached by pupils in writing because there are greater opportunities for pupils to write in different subjects. In addition, the school has bought resources, including reading books, and planned activities which are designed to engage boys more in their reading and writing, such as using the novel *The Highwayman*.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in mathematics at both Key Stages 1 and 2 is lower than that found nationally. The school has reviewed the way in which mathematics is taught and is increasing the opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve problems. Additional targeted group sessions for some pupils and recently purchased additional resources to challenge the most able pupils are beginning to address this.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the standard in the most recent phonic check (letters and the sounds they make) at the end of Year 1 is the same as that found nationally. The good teaching of phonics and an emphasis on developing pupils' language skills results in good progress from their below typical starting points. Pupils enjoy reading and younger pupils are using their skills to read unfamiliar words with increased confidence and fluency.
- Disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress. In 2014, the attainment of these pupils was approximately two terms behind non-disadvantaged pupils in school in reading, half a term in writing and spelling, grammar and punctuation and two and half terms behind in mathematics. When compared to all pupils nationally their attainment was approximately one term behind in reading, and two terms behind in writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that across school these pupils make good progress and the attainment of some of these pupils is sometimes above that of their peers. This shows that the school is closing the gaps in the performance of different groups of pupils.
- The provision for pupils who are disabled or have special education needs is well managed and organised. The majority of pupils make good progress from their different starting points because of the support they receive from effective learning assistants and through specific additional group sessions.
- Overall, the most able pupils make good progress. However, some of these pupils do not always achieve the highest standards of which they are capable because they are not always given work which is hard enough to challenge them.
- The small proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar good rates of progress to their peers because of the additional support they receive to acquire language skills.

The early years provision is good

- The majority of children join the nursery with skills which are below those typical for their age, especially in their language and communication. A notable proportion of children over the last few years are identified as being disabled or having special educational needs or having specific language development needs and start the nursery with skills which are significantly below those typical for their age. Although children make good progress from their different starting points only about half of them reached a good level of development in 2014.
- The children benefit from additional support through the use of special programmes to enhance their language and also from the work of the school's own speech and language and play therapists. This

makes sure that children make good progress from their individual starting points.

- The leadership of the early years is good. There is continuity with the current middle leader building on and developing the work of the senior leader. This ensures that the provision is good and areas for development are clearly identified from a well-informed view of achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Teaching is consistently good in the early years. Adults work very well together to identify the different needs of the children to ensure that they move forward at a good rate. Occasionally those children who are most able are not given work which challenges them enough.
- There is a strong emphasis on speaking and listening so children learn quickly and are given plentiful opportunities to practise their language, especially in Nursery. The small but growing number of children who speak English as an additional language also make good progress because careful attention is paid to their language acquisition. The teaching of phonics is good so that children develop their reading and writing skills well.
- Children are happy and content in both the Nursery and Reception settings and work well with each other and the adults who look after them. Adults make sure that children are safe and there are clear procedures in place both indoors and outside. During the inspection, some activities were linked to Bonfire Night and children were taught about keeping safe through dressing up and making pretend fires.
- Their behaviour is good and sometimes exemplary and they are taught and show respect for one another from the start. A display celebrating the different cultures the children come from and opportunities to learn about these supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

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	130259
Local authority	St. Helens
Inspection number	448863

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	489
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	T Shields
Headteacher	Melanie Hignett
Date of previous school inspection	5 May 2010
Telephone number	01744 678182
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