

Forton Primary School

School Lane, Forton, Preston, Lancashire, PR3 0AS

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- This is a good school. Pupils benefit from a safe and secure environment, good teaching and effective leadership.
- Achievement is good. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Children benefit from a good start in Reception and Key Stage 1. They acquire skills of reading, writing and mathematics that exceed what is typical for their ages at the end of Reception and Year 2.
- In Key Stage 2, progress is accelerating quickly after a period when it was not good enough. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are now above average.
- The very large majority of parents are happy with the school. They work in close partnership with it for the good of their children and the community.
- The good curriculum is enriched by a wide range of activities. Pupils with gifts and talents are enabled to follow their strengths. Music and sport have a high profile and pupils have a good awareness of global and environmental issues.
- Pupils benefit from good personal, social, health and citizenship education which contributes to good behaviour. The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- The quality of leadership and management, including governance, is good. Senior leaders have a good understanding of how to improve the school and have been successful in doing so. Staff are well managed and good systems for training keep their skills up to date.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is not outstanding. The progress of the most-able pupils is not always rapid enough because they do not always get chance to get on with their work soon enough. Some pupils in Key Stage 2 do not develop the capacity to use their initiative enough in their learning.
- Achievement in Key Stage 2 is not outstanding. This is because pupils do not get enough opportunities to develop their skills of writing and mathematics in different subjects. Pupils' handwriting is not consistently good and pupils do not take the same care when writing in other subjects, as they do in English.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons and part-lessons, four of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector observed many aspects of the school's work in addition to observing learning in lessons. He conducted discussions with pupils to establish their views of the school and an examination was made of samples of the pupils' exercise books in each class. Evaluations were also made of the displays in classrooms and around the school.
- A range of documents was analysed and evaluated. These included: records of notable incidents including bullying, the tracking of individual pupils' progress, the school's plan for improvement, the use of additional funding for supporting pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, the impact of the primary school sport fund, and safeguarding and child protection arrangements.
- A meeting was held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher to evaluate their impact on the pupils' achievement. In addition, a meeting was conducted with the staff team.
- A meeting with seven governors, including the Chair, and Vice-Chair, of the Governing Body enabled an insight to be gained into the work governors do for the school. A conversation was also held with the local authority representative.
- The view of parents was gauged by evaluating the 20 responses to the on-line questionnaire, (Parent View), alongside responses to a questionnaire conducted by the school. In addition, an open meeting was held with 15 parents at the start of day 2 of the inspection.
- The views of staff were gathered by analysing the 10 questionnaires returned by staff and discussions with them during the inspection.

Inspection team

David Byrne, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is low. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- A below average proportion of pupils is supported by the pupil premium. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children 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.
- The current headteacher took up post in 2010 and two teachers were appointed in September 2013.
- The school offers an out-of-school club at the beginning and end of the day. Ofsted inspects this separately.
- The school has gained accreditation as a Healthy School and pupils have received a gold award from Young Wyre in Bloom. In 2013, the school gained the Intermediate International School award and also the Quality in Study Award (QiSS).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement from good to outstanding by:
 - making sure that time is not wasted for any pupils and that all pupils, and in particular the most able, are allowed to get on with their work promptly and are given more regular opportunities to use their initiative in lessons
 - enabling pupils to develop their skills in writing and in mathematics by providing regular opportunities to use these skills in all subjects
 - raising expectations of the standard of writing in Key Stage 2 in all subjects and insisting on handwriting that is consistently of a high quality.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Given pupils' individual starting points, achievement is good. From starting points to school that are typical for their age, learning moves forward at good rate and by Year 6 standards are usually above average and pupils are well equipped for their secondary education.
- In 2013, results at Year 6 dipped and the pupils' progress was slow. The school's actions have rectified this dip by improving teaching in Key Stage 2 and raising expectations for pupils' progress.
- Children in Reception achieve well in all areas of learning. They quickly develop confidence and independence and are keen to learn. Good teaching of the sounds letters make (phonics) helps children to make a good start in learning to read and write. This is reflected in the above average results of the Year 1 phonics check in both 2012 and 2013.
- Pupils achieve very well in reading because the school's consistent approaches, from Reception to Year 6, develop a love of books. Progress in writing is good, but better in Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2. Standards in writing at Year 2 are typically well above average. At Year 6 progress has increased rapidly and standards are currently above national expectations. When they leave the school at Year 6, most pupils use English grammar and punctuation well and spell correctly.
- The scope for raising the good standards gained in writing and mathematics to outstanding is limited because pupils are not applying their skills enough in a wide variety of subjects and different contexts. When pupils write in other subjects, for example, history, their standards are not as high as in their English books and less care is taken with their handwriting and presentation.
- Good teaching in mathematics at Reception and Key Stage 1 ensures that pupils learn and remember important concepts and calculation strategies. At Key Stage 2, standards have risen in the last year and by Year 6 are above average. Improvement is under way in the pupils' ability to use their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems and investigate numbers, but there remain too few opportunities for pupils to do this.
- The school has recently intensified its focus on ensuring that the most-able pupils in Key Stage 2 reach the highest possible standards. As a result, standards have risen. The high levels of challenge for the most able are not yet consistent in each class in Key Stage 2 and prevents achievement by Year 6 from being outstanding. Occasionally, the most-able pupils are not moved on quickly enough in lessons and spend too long practising skills they have already mastered which reduces how well they do.
- The school is committed to equal opportunities for all pupils. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive carefully planned support that helps them to make good, and in some aspects of their development, outstanding, progress.
- The very small minority of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding, including those entitled to free school meals, make good progress. Teachers are very well aware of their differing needs and track their progress carefully. The small numbers make statistical comparisons unreliable, but evidence indicates that the attainment gap between these pupils and others is not significant.

The quality of teaching is good

- The teaching team is a strong, supportive group who give that bit of extra to give pupils a good education. There is some individual flair, for example in music and physical education (PE) and international and environmental awareness.
- The quality of teaching is typically good, with examples of exceptional practice. Pupils benefit from lessons that usually capture their interest and give them the 'I can' attitude. Pupils receive sensitive support and respond positively to the efforts of adults to build their confidence in their own abilities.
- In Reception, children thrive on an exciting, stimulating and astutely planned range of activities.

Whether it is plotting the development of tadpoles to frogs, exploring their imaginative world as pirates or creating their own treasure maps, children learn quickly. The balance between learning through play and instruction from adults is just right. Children develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills at a good pace.

- Throughout Reception and Key Stage 1, pupils thrive on learning the sounds that letters make (phonics). Learning is reinforced through daily practice and children quickly learn to use this knowledge to work out words when they read and write.
- The school's approach to teaching literacy skills is successful, not only in promoting pupils' love of books, but also in developing competent writers. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are benefitting from a sharper focus on developing their grammar, punctuation and spelling and in developing their comprehension skills. At Year 6, this results in good, well-structured writing in English. The expectations for applying a good standard of writing in other subjects are not high enough and this holds back the overall achievement of pupils.
- Good leadership of mathematics is boosting the quality of learning and raising standards. Pupils are most enthusiastic about mathematics when their lessons are practical and enable them to have a say in what and how they learn. An example of this was seen by the inspector when pupils from Years 5/6 were totally engrossed in finding their own ways of solving problems and recognising and comparing different angles. Occasionally, however, the most-able pupils are held back by not being allowed to move on to the next stage of learning early enough.
- Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs receive skilled and caring support. They benefit from effective partnerships between teachers and teaching assistants which enable full inclusion in all aspects of school life and make good progress towards their individual targets.
- Regular checks on pupils' progress means that pupils' work in class usually builds effectively on their previous gains in knowledge, understanding and skills. Some pupils in lower Key Stage 2 report that work is too easy and pupils spend too much time repeating or practising work, rather than getting on faster.
- Marking is good, giving clear advice to pupils on how to improve their work. However, pupils are not always given time to follow up teachers' suggestions in order to correct their work or to reflect on what they need to do to raise their work to a higher level.
- Homework supports learning in class and the school works very closely with parents to get the right balance in terms of its quantity, quality and timing. Pupils benefit from accessing a good range of learning activities through the school website, which some parents report really motivates their children.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils benefit from good personal, social, health and citizenship education which contributes to good and often outstanding behaviour. It is not outstanding overall, because when lessons are not demanding enough some pupils understandably lose focus and get restless.
- Children's personal and social skills develop quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Skilled staff work in partnership with parents to promote shared values and attitudes to school. Children gain excellent foundations for their future behaviour. They become confident learners, playing and learning happily together, and negotiating when they have differences of opinion.
- This good start is successfully built on as pupils move through the school, with more and more expected of them. Increasingly pupils get opportunities to have a say about what they learn and they say that adults respect their views.
- Pupils have a good range of opportunities to take on responsibilities, which they relish. This includes sharing responsibility for the school garden, being accountable for others as members of the school council and acting as 'peer mediators' supporting others at play times.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- In the pupils' and parents' views, bullying is extremely rare. They have great confidence that any incidents are dealt with quickly. Well established systems successfully diffuse any incidents.

Pupils are encouraged to evaluate how they treat others and reflect on how others feel. The school keeps pupils safe and pupils develop an excellent understanding of how they can manage their own safety, including when they use the Internet and in avoiding bullying of all types.

- Pupils have an advanced awareness of how to keep fit and healthy. They cycle to school where practical, get involved in the Walk to School event and participate in active play at play times.
- Attendance is high, which reflects the pupils' enjoyment of school and the great value placed on education by their parents. There have been no exclusions.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong and caring leadership by the headteacher has developed a good staff team who have high morale. Together, leaders and staff share the same ambition for the school, to continue raising achievement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are an effective team which leads by example by ensuring that their own work is of a high standard. Communication between staff is very good; everyone is involved in regular staff meetings and understand the school's targets for improvement.
- Frequent checks on how well pupils learn in lessons and regular reviews of individuals' progress make sure that if a pupil is falling behind, action is taken to help them catch up. Senior leaders use their accurate evaluation of the quality of teaching to set clear goals for pupils' achievement, and to support teachers to improve their skills through training. Leaders reacted quickly to the dip in results at Year 6 in 2013 by improving teaching in Key Stage 2.
- Teachers are given time by senior leaders to carry out their role of managing subjects. This contributes to the effective management and development of most subjects; for example music is a rapidly developing strength, physical education has a high profile and international links are very well managed, contributing to the pupils' good levels of spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences in addition to the required lessons. Some of the highlights are the residential trips, including one to the Isle of Man for older pupils; another is participating every two years in the Young Voices Choir in Manchester alongside 8000 children. A further example is the way pupils with particular gifts and talents work with similar pupils from other schools to refine their skills.
- The school has strong community involvement supporting village events such as the Forton Field Day and local church events. Links to a school in Ghana widen pupils' understanding of a culture different from their own and partnerships with a local secondary academy enhance learning for pupils.
- The school works in close partnership with parents and this is a key component in the school's success. Leaders provide frequent and plentiful information for parents in a range of ways. Termly reports of each child's achievements, weekly newsletters and a comprehensive website give a good insight into school life.
- The local authority provides effective support. It keeps a close eye on the school's performance and offers support where concerns arise. It helps the headteacher and governors by checking that the school is tackling the most important issues and that senior leaders are accurate in their views about how well pupils are learning.
- The school uses the primary school sport funding well. It is enabling pupils to develop skills in a wider range of sports and is developing the school's links with a local sports company. This is developing the skills of staff in teaching aspects of sport they are less familiar with, for example, gymnastics and athletics. It is too early to measure the impact of the new initiative on the pupils' well-being and health.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an accurate view of the school's performance and they compare it to similar schools nationally. They regularly check on the quality of teaching and understand the need to secure the highest possible achievement across Key Stage 2.
 - The governing body is very well informed by the headteacher about all aspects of the school.

Governors verify what they are told through their own activities, observing learning and talking to pupils, listening to parents and analysing the school's performance data.

- Rigorous systems check that the finances of the school are used wisely, and that funding intended for specific purposes such as the pupil premium grant and primary school sports funding has the necessary impact on pupils' achievement. Together with the senior leaders, governors make sure that the quality of teaching is taken into account when deciding about levels of teachers' pay, so that best practice is encouraged.
- The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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	119128
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	439869

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	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Huddart
Headteacher	Paula Wells
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2009
Telephone number	01524 791188
Fax number	01524 791188
Email address	bursar@forton.lancs.sch.uk

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