

Little Bollington CoE Primary School

Lymm Road, Little Bollington, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 4SZ

Inspection dates 24–25 January 2013

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The achievement of all groups of pupils is good. Pupils progress well across the school and attainment is above average in both English and mathematics. In Year 6, for example, there are examples of girls making particularly good progress in writing and producing work of a high standard.
- The quality of teaching is good in all key stages and there is outstanding practice too. Teachers observe their colleagues in the classroom and enjoy sharing good practice with each other. Teachers use information about how well their pupils are doing effectively and provide activities which interest and get the best out of them. Pupils demonstrate impressive attitudes to learning.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the previous inspection and behaviour and safety are now outstanding. Pupils are very proud of their school and feel safe. They get on very well with each other and also speak highly of the adults, teachers and teaching assistants, who work with them.
- Good leadership and management at all levels and an accurate understanding of how well the school is doing have ensured that the school continues to thrive and that pupils' welfare lies at the heart of everything it does. Members of the governing body have a good awareness of the school's performance and are actively involved in improving the quality of teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of boys' writing is not as good as it could be. They are sometimes not enthusiastic enough about writing and do not always have enough opportunities to talk about their ideas before they begin to work.
- The school needs to involve more parents in the learning of their children, for example, by encouraging parents to work alongside their offspring in school and in supporting their children's learning beyond the classroom.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or part lessons. Each of the four teachers was observed at least twice. He also listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 read.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils and three members of the governing body, all of whom are parent governors. The inspector also had discussions with a representative of the local authority, subject coordinators, senior leaders and support staff. He also spoke informally with parents and grandparents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- The inspector took account of the 32 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and of the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school at work and looked at internal and external pupils' progress and attainment data, pupils' work, school development planning and the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance. In addition, he considered minutes of governing body meetings and documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

James Kidd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is much smaller than the average sized primary school. It comprises of four mixed-age classes.
- Pupil numbers have increased markedly since the previous inspection.
- More pupils join the school, at other than the usual times, than in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those looked after by the local authority, is above average and has doubled since 2010.
- The percentage of pupils supported at school action is above average; the percentage supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above that usually seen.
- Most pupils are White British and there are few pupils with English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Little Bollington Church of England Primary School is an Investor in People, holds the Inclusion Quality Mark and also the Food Council Bronze award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve boys' skills in writing and thus raise their attainment further by:
 - expanding the range of books they read, to ensure they are more enthusiastic and more motivated to write about what they have learned
 - giving them more opportunities to talk about their work before they put pen to paper.
- Further involve parents in the learning of their children by:
 - providing more opportunities for parents to work alongside their children at school
 - encouraging families to support their children's learning beyond the classroom.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Small pupil numbers, wide variations each year in children's skills on entry to the Reception Year and increasing numbers of pupils joining the school at other than the usual times, make any judgement on skills on entry difficult. For example, in 2012 only five Year 6 pupils had joined the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage; there is a similar picture in the current Year 6 group.
- Although pupils' skills on entry have declined, they are broadly typical for their age overall. All groups of pupils make good progress across the school and attainment in English and mathematics is above average. Achievement is, therefore, good and standards have risen since the previous inspection. Boys' writing across the school is, however, not as good as that of girls.
- Pupils enjoy learning and children in the Reception class are delighted to take visitors into their classroom to show them their work and to sing the alphabet. Their writing is improving apace and, along with Year 1 pupils; they even greet adults accurately in French! In Year 2, they read well and talk avidly about their visit to the hat-making factory in Stockport. In Years 3 and 4, they consider the writing of their classmates and suggest ways it can be improved, by the use of similes for example. In Years 5 and 6, pupils use the 24-hour clock with accuracy and older girls, in particular, produce writing of a high standard and which shows creativity and imagination. Pupils in Year 6 read aloud confidently.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively and a new teaching assistant has been employed to work directly with those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. There are also additional resources in the Reception class to promote children's early literacy skills. As a result, the attainment of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is rising. Gaps between their performance and that of other pupils in the school are closing. The few pupils at early stages of learning English and those who join the school other than at the usual times also progress well as a result of the good support they receive.
- Strong, focused support from the talented team of teaching assistants ensures that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers.
- All parents who responded to the on-line survey believe their children are making good progress. The school recognises, however, that more could be done to encourage parents to visit school to work alongside their children and also to support their children's learning beyond the classroom.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers use information about how well their pupils are progressing well to plan work and activities which help them to make good progress. Parents are entirely satisfied with the teaching their children receive.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults in the classroom are strong. Pupils, for example, enjoy working in pairs and in groups to support each other in their learning. Even when not closely supervised, they get on well with their work and are not afraid to ask for help when they find things difficult.
- In the best lessons, for example, in an outstanding Years 5/6 numeracy session, there are high levels of challenge from both the teacher and support assistant and pupils were fully aware of what they were going to learn. In such lessons, adults expect the best from their pupils and ask them very searching questions to see how much they have understood.
- Similarly, children in the Reception Year and pupils in Year 1 are learning to work by themselves and are becoming increasingly aware of the good progress they are making in writing, for example. Their classroom is adorned with the wide range of work they have completed and they are delighted to show this to visitors.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils are encouraged to find things out for themselves, for example, when they complete a fair test on absorbency. In Years 3 and 4, pupils benefit from working in groups and from challenging questions at the end of sessions, designed to check their skills in doubling and

halving up to four-digit numbers.

- On occasions, teachers talk for too long in the lessons and opportunities to promote pupils' literacy skills are sometimes missed. In addition, boys do not always have enough opportunities to talk about their ideas before they begin their writing assignments.
- Marking is good and pupils receive detailed and accurate advice on how they can improve their work. Pupils value the opportunities they have to gauge their own progress and also that of their classmates.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are very proud of Little Bollington and speak highly of the teachers and teaching assistants who, they say, 'Look after us and keep us safe.' They also enjoy looking after younger pupils and 'reading buddies' from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 help children in the Reception Year and pupils in Year 1 to develop their reading skills. Parents are of the view that their children are happy in school and that the school makes sure they are safe. Parents spoken to at the beginning of the school day made particular mention of the help the school provides for pupils and their families.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is outstanding and pupils display good manners to all around them. They treat visitors with the utmost courtesy and are delighted to show them round school, pointing out their work on display as they do. They are very eager to learn and lessons are often a buzz of activity, with pupils discussing ideas with each other and sharing their findings with the adults.
- Pupils have a strong awareness of different kinds of bullying and say that visitors to school, local police officers, for example, teach them about the dangers of bullying and also how they can keep themselves safe. They say that bullying does sometimes happen, but that it is rare and dealt with very effectively if it occurs.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development outstandingly well. There are strong links with a school in Kenya and pupils exchange letters and work with pupils from Ndege School. Pupils support a wide range of charities and a personal school charity helps to fund research projects on genetics in a local hospital. Pupils sing carols and perform 'The Christmas Story' in a nursing home and the violin group performs at functions in a nearby high school. There are residential visits for all years, including those in the Reception Year, and pupils also benefit from visits from artists and authors. Pupils have a keen understanding of cultures and religions different to their own.
- Attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection. It is now above average.

The leadership and management are good

- Good leadership and management from the committed headteacher and senior team ensure that the school continues to provide a good education for its pupils. Academic and support staff share the same view as to how the school can develop and comment, 'We are a team here and we are always concerned to share good classroom practice across the school for the benefit of our pupils.' Staff believe that performance management procedures are fair and they take full advantage of the in-service courses on offer.
- The school's view of its own performance is accurate and honest and it recognises that links with parents could be more effective. It is also correct in its view that improvements in the writing skills of boys are needed to ensure that pupils' achievement continues to accelerate.
- The curriculum meets the needs and interests of pupils well and both planning and content are always under review to ensure that pupils can see the links between the different subjects they study. There is not a wide-enough range of books for boys to motivate them to want to read more and then to write about their learning.
- Child protection and safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements and parents believe that their

children are safe in school. The school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. Equality of opportunity for all is a key strength of the school.

- The local authority regards Little Bollington as 'light touch' school. Nonetheless, they deliver a range of training designed to accelerate pupils' achievement. For example, staff have attended courses to promote the progress of able writers in Key Stage 1.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is good. Members of the governing body have an accurate understanding of the data on the school's performance and they hold the leadership to account with increasing rigour. They are actively involved in improving the quality of teaching and take part in regular 'learning walks' and lesson observations. They ensure that performance management arrangements are secure and that teachers are rewarded for meeting their classroom targets. They monitor the use of pupil premium funding closely and are aware of the impact of this spending on the academic and personal progress of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
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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	111251
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	403141

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jennie Gibson
Headteacher	Caroline Johnstone
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2007
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