

Featherstone Purston Infant School

Nunns Lane, Featherstone, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF7 5HF

Inspection dates 9–10 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- Pupils achieve well. Most pupils make at least expected progress and many make even better progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is usually good and it is improving. All adults give pupils the confidence needed to tackle new work. Teachers endeavour to choose topics and activities that are fun and linked to pupils' interests, such as the recent farm visit.
- The school provides a very caring environment. Pupils say they feel safe and happy at school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, around school and on the playground. They have positive attitudes to learning.
- School leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve.
- During a period of significant changes in teaching staff, the new headteacher and deputy headteacher have successfully built on the strengths of the school. The staff team are very committed and are determined to see that teaching and pupils' achievement keep improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Whilst most teaching is good, there is some that still requires improvement and this slows the rate of progress in a few lessons.
- Independent learning activities are sometimes not challenging enough for more-able pupils.
- School leaders do not always focus sufficiently well enough on the progress pupils make in lessons and so this can hamper them in improving the quality of teaching further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 12 lessons and made several other short visits to classrooms to observe teaching and learning. They scrutinised pupils' work, observed break times and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, school staff, senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included the school's own self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspectors took account of the views of parents through analysis of the school's own questionnaires, as well as the 12 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Fiona Gowers, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jan Lomas

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Featherstone Purston Infant School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the additional pupil premium funding is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from armed service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in September 2012. There have also been several changes in teaching staff since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress and improve teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - providing a greater level of challenge in independent learning activities, particularly for more-able pupils
 - ensuring that no learning time is wasted in lessons
 - matching more precisely learning tasks to the needs of all pupils.
- Strengthen how well all leaders and managers improve the quality of teaching by focusing more precisely on how well teaching is helping pupils learn in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils start school with skills that are typically below, and sometimes well below, those expected for their age. They make a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and develop very positive attitudes to learning in the very caring, well-organised setting.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 1. Standards are currently broadly average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and this has been the case for most of the time since the previous inspection.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 dropped to below average in 2012. However, inspection findings confirm that most pupils made expected or better than expected progress relative to their individual starting points.
- Different groups of pupils generally make the same good progress because leaders and staff do their best to give all pupils, whatever their circumstances, equal opportunities to be successful and help to tackle discrimination and to prevent pupils from falling behind in their learning.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those supported at school action or school action plus often make better than expected progress. They receive very strong pastoral support, which helps them grow in confidence. The school works closely with other agencies to help ensure that support is well-targeted.
- Many pupils supported by additional pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school needs, are starting to make faster progress. The funding has been used to provide a wide variety of stimulating support programmes. The school regularly evaluates the impact of the support provided and they are successfully narrowing the gaps between these pupils' attainment in English and mathematics, compared to that of other pupils in school.
- National tests in 2012 indicated that pupils' knowledge of letters and the sounds they make was poor, particularly amongst boys. School leaders reorganised the teaching of reading skills and bought additional books; particularly books to interest and engage boys. As a result, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of both boys and girls reaching the expected level. Pupils say they enjoy reading and explain why they like different authors and types of books.
- The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels is rising because many teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, the work provided for more-able pupils is sometimes too easy and so they do not always do as well as they could.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is good, although a small proportion of teaching requires improvement.
- Adults in school get to know individual pupils very well. Teachers and teaching assistants work well in partnership to develop a great deal of empathy and understanding for each individual pupil's social and emotional needs. Such positive relationships help foster very positive attitudes to learning.
- The wide range of interesting activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage motivates children to learn from an early age. For example, many children were fully absorbed in their learning and were very proud to share their accomplishments as they carefully searched for insects with microscopes, made their own models of boats and worked independently on the computer.
- In the best lessons, teachers successfully engage and enthuse pupils by using a range of interesting teaching methods and activities. For example, in a writing lesson pupils were enthralled when a letter from a pony suddenly arrived! This really captured their imagination and motivated them to work hard when they had a go at writing their own letters. Lessons have a clear focus and adults skilfully encourage pupils to think hard and work at a fast pace.
- In the weaker lessons, progress is slower because teachers do not always plan lessons that make sure all pupils are given work that gets the best out of them. In such lessons, too many

pupils are given the same work to do, so it is too easy for some and not hard enough for others. Time is sometimes wasted while pupils sit and wait for others to finish their work or wait to talk to the teacher.

- Pupils have opportunities to learn through a range of practical activities around a particular theme. This approach interests and engages pupils in their learning, but school leaders acknowledge that such activities are not always challenging enough for more-able pupils in particular.
- The teaching of literacy skills has improved. In particular, the school has adopted a more systematic approach to the teaching of the knowledge of letters and sounds to help pupils read unfamiliar words. The school regularly checks pupils' knowledge and understanding and reorganises groups to make sure pupils are placed in the right group for their ability.
- An emphasis on providing practical activities to reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding is helping improve pupils' achievement in mathematics.
- Imaginative activities using music and encouraging pupils to talk, are helping to develop pupils' communication and language skills and helping to meet the individual needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are happy in school, behave well and play harmoniously. They are polite to visitors and speak positively about their school.
- Pupils enjoy very positive relationships with staff. This helps them develop the confidence to share their own ideas and try hard with their work, even when it might be more difficult. One group of pupils explained: 'Everyone is friendly at our school. Teachers are kind and do not mind if we get things wrong.'
- Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is supported very well from the very start of school. As a result they learn to work well in groups together, regularly help each other, listen to the ideas of other children and confidently share their own ideas.
- Pupils work hard and are keen to please adults in school. However, very occasionally a few pupils become a little restless in lessons that are not quite as interesting or when their work is not pitched at just the right level.
- Attendance is broadly average and is improving and this reflects pupils' enjoyment of school life.
- The school succeeds in encouraging pupils to behave well. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about well-established routines such as, having the chance to eat lunch at the 'Golden Table' and being awarded stars and certificates for working hard and behaving well.
- Pupils enjoy carrying out roles of responsibility. 'Playground Buddies' look after other pupils with care and attention, helping to keep playtimes happy.
- All staff pay proper attention to procedures and routines which keep pupils safe. Pupils feel very well cared for and say they feel safe in school. They say that bullying is rare and that they would feel confident they would find someone to talk to if they had any worries or concerns.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire, considered that their children are happy, safe and well looked after in school and that the school makes sure its pupils are well-behaved.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong direction provided by the headteacher, senior leaders and governors, has ensured the very smooth day-to-day management and continued improvement of the school during a period of staffing changes.
- All staff are committed to providing the very best for pupils at school. The school is a very caring cohesive community. There is a strong team approach and staff at all levels feel their contributions and ideas are valued. New teachers say they feel very welcomed in school and

have been introduced to the school's procedures successfully.

- The effectiveness of leaders at all levels is improving because of the strong focus on providing training to help teachers develop their leadership and teaching skills.
- The leadership of what is provided for those pupils who are disabled, those who are more vulnerable or those with special educational needs, is good and helps any pupil who may be at risk of falling behind with their learning.
- School leaders show great determination in driving forward improvement and have a clear and view of the strengths of the school and how the school can be improved further. The school's procedures for checking pupils' progress are rigorous. As a result, many pupils are making better than expected progress and attainment is rising.
- The leadership of teaching is diligent. The quality of teaching is improving, particularly the teaching of reading, but is not yet all of good quality. When senior leaders observe lessons they clearly identify elements of stronger and weaker teaching, but they sometimes do not link the impact of how well the teaching is helping pupils learn either when they are working on their own or in a group. This means that, on occasion, some less effective aspects to some of the teaching are not tackled fully.
- The curriculum is well-planned. Pupils enjoy learning through special events and topics. A wide range of clubs, such as 'fun science' and 'boomwhackers percussion', contribute well to the curriculum as well as helping to develop pupils' personal and social skills.
- The local authority has a well-informed view about the school's work and is confident that the school is able to build on its strengths and maintain its trend of improvement without much external support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The school benefits from the wide-ranging experience and expertise on the governing body, Governors review their skills to ensure that they are put to best use. They have the knowledge both to support and also challenge school leaders. For example, they are fully involved in checking that those pupils eligible benefit from the pupil premium funding.
 - Governors are well-informed about how well pupils are achieving. They have a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses, through their regular involvement in school life. For example, governors frequently meet with school leaders, write letters to and visit their linked classes and governors recently led a school assembly where they answered pupils' questions about their role.
 - Governors are aware of the effectiveness of the leadership of teaching. They are closely involved in the evaluation of teachers' pay and performance.
 - 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	108200
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	412448

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	D Taylor
Headteacher	L Tesh
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2009
Telephone number	01977 723550
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Email address	headteacher@purston.wakefield.sch.uk

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