

Bollington St John's CE Primary School

Grimshaw Lane, Bollington, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 5LY

Inspection dates 7 December 2012

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.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well at all stages as they move up through the school.
- When they leave at the end of Year 6 pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They have good relationships with pupils.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and give good, clear guidance about what pupils need to do to make their work better.
- Support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium is very well organised and effective in enabling them to make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave respectfully in lessons and around school. They feel very safe and enjoy school.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have a clear picture of how well the school is doing. They use the outcomes of how well the school is doing to plan effectively for improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is yet outstanding to drive pupils' progress at a fast enough rate and take achievement to outstanding.
- Targets set by leaders and managers for the achievement of individual pupils are not yet as high as they could be.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning on seven occasions. In addition, short observations of the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) were conducted.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, a group of pupils, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of a wide range of documentation including: data relating to pupils' attainment, progress and achievement; policies and school records relating to behaviour and safety; attendance data; the school's self-evaluation summary and development plan; and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Stephen Wall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Lawrence

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bollington is much smaller than the average sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average, as is the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age, mixed-ability classes.
- Bollington has been federated with another small primary school for the last three years. The two schools are led and managed by an executive headteacher and a shared governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding and thus raise achievement further by:
 - making sure that teaching is always challenging enough for all groups of pupils according to age, need and ability
 - involving pupils more actively in finding things out for themselves, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - making sure that the pace and variety of the best teaching is mirrored in all teaching across the school
 - making sure that the targets set by leaders and managers for individual pupils are as high as they should be.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage children's skills vary from one year to the next because of the very small numbers of pupils involved and variability in the number of children with special educational needs in different years. Overall, however, children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typically below those expected for their age.
- By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 standards of attainment also vary somewhat from year to year. Nevertheless, over the last three years pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has been broadly average and above average in national tests in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. This represents good progress overall, given pupils' starting points on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because teaching is good and there is a good range of resources both indoors and outside. However, teaching too often directs children's learning rather than encouraging children to choose activities. This sometimes acts as a barrier to children finding things out for themselves and slows progress.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is checked on meticulously. Their individual needs are assessed accurately and support is provided for them effectively and with a sharp focus. As a result, these pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Support for the few pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well thought out and targeted effectively. Consequently, these pupils also make good progress and frequently their attainment is above that of all pupils nationally.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Pupils enjoy learning to read and take pride in showing how well they can read. By the end of Year 2 most pupils read fluently and with confidence; their attainment in reading is average and rising steadily. Pupils of all ages say how much they enjoy reading.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching makes good use of information on pupils' abilities and progress to match activities to their needs and ages in mixed-age and mixed-ability classes. For example, in one Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, activities planned at different levels of difficulty presented good challenge for all pupils. They worked happily in groups and enjoyed solving problems relating to multiplication and decimals. The teacher and teaching assistant checked pupils' progress and understanding regularly and were quick to help pupils who were struggling. As a result, pupils made rapid progress.
- Occasionally pupils find the activities that they are given too hard or too easy and this slows progress for some pupils. This is one of the reasons why teaching is not yet outstanding.
- Where teaching is most successful, it provides pupils with a good variety of activities that capture pupils' interest and keep them fully engaged in their learning. It is conducted at a good pace that keeps pupils on their toes. In a few lessons the pace of teaching drops and too long is spent on one activity, with the result that pupils' interest sometimes wanes and progress slows.
- Teachers use questioning well. They encourage pupils to give extended answers and justify their reasoning and opinions. As a result, most pupils have good speaking skills. They are confident in expressing themselves and talk confidently to other pupils and the adults working with them.
- Teaching assistants provide good support in class and in small groups outside the classroom for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They are fully aware of these pupils' needs and work closely with the class teacher to make sure that the support they provide is closely focused and effective in enabling this group of pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers mark pupils' written work regularly. Their comments are of consistently high quality in relating pupils' work to their targets and in showing pupils clearly the next steps that they need

to take in order to make their work even better.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are very proud of their school. They welcome visitors warmly and with courtesy. They are respectful to each other and the adults who work with them. 'We are really like a big family', is a typical pupil comment.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is consistently good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy coming to school, as seen in their above-average attendance levels. Their regular attendance and positive attitudes support their learning and progress well. However, when teaching occasionally fails to capture pupils' interest fully, their interest wanes and some inattention sets in.
- Pupils say that there is very little disruption to lessons caused by bad behaviour and that teachers deal with it quickly and fairly on the few occasions that it happens. School records relating to behaviour confirm pupils' views and show few incidents in recent years.
- Procedures and policies for safeguarding pupils are fully in place and give no cause for concern. As a result, pupils feel very safe in school. They say that there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes potentially unsafe situations and how to avoid or deal with them. They are fully aware of the dangers posed by using the internet inappropriately and are fully aware of 'stranger danger', for example.
- A few parents feel that the school does not deal effectively with bullying. Inspectors looked closely at this. School records show that incidents of bullying in recent years have been few and that appropriate and prompt action has been taken to deal with the isolated incidents that have occurred. Pupils say that bullying in any form is never a problem and that they would be only too ready to report it if it ever happened. Observations in lessons and around the school showed pupils getting on well together without a hint of trouble and without any hint of discrimination for pupils who may be different.
- Pupils enjoy taking on a variety of responsibilities in school and in the local community. Initiatives such as 'Forest School' are extremely popular and broaden pupils' awareness of the environment and the wider world around them.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is underpinned by the deep Christian values that underpin the school's work and is seen in pupils' good behaviour, respect for others and their awareness of the diversity of the world in which they live.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders are clear about how successful the school can be. Leadership, including the governing body, drives the school purposefully forward. There is strong teamwork in the pursuit of further improvement.
- The federation with another school is managed well. It allows the sharing of good practice between the two schools. It also extends the curriculum by, for example, giving children from the partner school regular use of St John's good-quality resources in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Leaders and managers have an accurate view of how well the school is doing and where it could do better. They use the outcomes of accurate and regular checking of the school's performance to astutely set sharply focused targets in the school development plan that are designed to make the school better.
- Leaders make regular and accurate checks on the quality of teaching. This process leads to staff training and development that are linked to identified needs. As a result, the quality of teaching is good and improving.

- Procedures for checking on pupils' progress are good. Pupils who are not achieving as well as they should be identified quickly; as a result, effective support is provided to bring them back to where they should be. Targets for pupils' progress and achievement are used effectively in the management of staff performance, although leadership is aware that pupils' individual targets could be more aspirational in order to drive progress and achievement at a faster pace.
- The curriculum is well managed to make sure that the wide range of abilities and ages in each class is provided for appropriately and that pupils are made aware of and prepared for life in a diverse society. For such a small school the range of enrichment activities is good. This adds significantly to pupils' personal development and well-being.
- All pupils regardless of background or ability are fully included in all aspects of school life. The good achievement of all groups testifies to strong equality of opportunity.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body makes sure that its members are trained fully and that they know how well the school is doing and where it could do better. Governors provide effective support and challenge for school leaders. The governing body has an accurate view of the quality of teaching and how performance management is used to improve its quality. Regular reports from the executive headteacher keep the governing body up-to-date on how well the school is doing in comparison to other schools locally and nationally. The governing body has a firm grip on the school's finances and how the pupil premium funding is used to make sure that the few pupils known to be eligible to receive it have the same opportunities as others.

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	111324
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	403147

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alex Douglas-Kane
Headteacher	Andrew Hodgkinson
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2008
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