

Inspection of Northbrook Primary School

Bannister Drive, Leyland, Lancashire PR25 2GB

Inspection dates: 8–9 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils behave well in school. However, some pupils' poor behaviour prevents others from learning. These pupils mess about in lessons. They do not listen to teachers' instructions and they unsettle their classmates.

Pupils told us that they usually feel safe in school. There are reports of bullying, including racist name-calling. Pupils say that staff do not always sort this name-calling out. This causes some pupils to be unhappy.

Pupils have little opportunity to experience activities outside of their lessons. They do not go on many trips and there are few after-school clubs. Pupils are not well-prepared for life in modern Britain. They are not taught about tolerance and respect for people who may be different.

Teachers do not expect the best from pupils. Weak curriculum planning means that some pupils complete work that is too easy. Pupils do not learn to read well enough. Pupils' achievement by the end of key stage 2 is poor. They are ill-prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils like their teachers. Older children enjoy helping younger pupils. Children in the Reception class have settled in quickly. Parents and carers told us that the school feels 'warm and welcoming'.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils do not achieve well in this school. Their poor performance in a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics, does them a disservice when they move onto secondary school.

The curriculum plans for most subject areas are not fit for purpose. They prevent pupils from building on their learning as they move throughout the school. This also means that teachers do not know what pupils need to learn and when this should happen. Pupils do not learn and remember as much as they should. For example, in history, older pupils do not know who invaded Britain first, the Vikings or the Romans. Leaders have not made sure that staff have the subject knowledge that they need to teach well.

Many staff do not have the expertise to teach pupils to read fluently. Phonics is not taught well. Teaching staff do not spot pupils who are falling behind or take action to help them to catch up. Too many older pupils are not confident readers.

The curriculum for mathematics does not allow pupils to embed their knowledge or to use their arithmetic skills to solve problems.

In many lessons, teachers allow the poor behaviour of a small number of pupils to disrupt the learning of others. Younger pupils do not behave as well for teaching assistants as they do for their teachers. Some older pupils are rude to teachers. They use bad language and refuse to follow instructions. A lack of training means that staff struggle to manage this challenging behaviour.

Too many pupils are absent from school. This is allowed to happen because leaders have not helped parents to understand the importance of good attendance. Leaders are too accepting of the reasons parents offer to explain absences.

Children in the Reception class settle in quickly. They know the school routines. Early reading, writing and mathematics teaching helps them to gain some basic knowledge. Even so, they are not as well prepared for Year 1 as they should be. Some early years staff are not sure what children need to know by the end of Reception.

There are few opportunities to promote pupils' personal development. Leaders do not make sure that pupils and staff understand that bullying of any kind is wrong. Some older pupils think it is acceptable to call other pupils racist names. Pupils told us that some staff do not stamp this out. Pupils do not have enough chances to learn about other cultures and traditions beyond the local area.

Leaders do not make sure that the school's most vulnerable pupils achieve well. The systems in place to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are ineffective. Leaders do not check carefully on how well disadvantaged pupils are doing. Where these pupils do receive extra support, no one makes sure that this help makes a difference. Some older pupils are taken out of lessons to do extra work on reading, writing and mathematics. This narrows their experience and stops them from achieving as they should in other subjects.

Governors and senior leaders have not done enough to improve pupils' learning, personal development or experience at school. We found little convincing evidence that these leaders are able to move the school forward with the urgency that is required. Some parents are concerned about how well their children achieve, the lack of information they receive and poor communication. Over half the parents responding to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, would not recommend the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

While some pupils have to put up with the poor behaviour of others, they are kept safe while in school. Leaders have strict procedures in place to make certain that staff are suitable to work with pupils. All staff have had training in knowing how to protect pupils from harm. Still, there is more to do to make sure that staff do not allow pupils to call each other names, including the use of unacceptable racist language. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns. Staff involve other agencies to support pupils and their families when necessary.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' achievement across a range of subjects is low. Leaders have not designed and implemented a curriculum that is fit for purpose. It does not help all pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, to learn well. As a matter of urgency, leaders should ensure that a suitable curriculum is put into place, so that staff know what should be taught and when this should happen. They should also make sure that staff are suitably trained so that they can deliver the planned curriculum effectively. Leaders need to check that their actions to improve the curriculum are checked rigorously to ensure that pupils are learning more.
- The teaching of reading, including the teaching of phonics, is weak. Leaders should ensure that reading has a high priority in the school from the minute pupils enter Reception to the end of Year 6. To do this, they must ensure that staff are well trained. Leaders should ensure that staff know how to spot when children fall behind and that they take steps to help everyone to keep pace and become competent readers.
- The systems in place to meet the needs of pupils with SEND do not work. Leaders need to put in effective procedures to identify and assess pupils' needs at the earliest possible stage. Then, the right support should be provided to ensure that these pupils are successful learners.
- Poor behaviour, bullying and name-calling are not dealt with effectively. This disrupts learning and unsettles some pupils. Leaders must take immediate action to ensure that poor behaviour stops, and pupils understand the impact of their actions when they use name-calling. Leaders must also make sure that they provide effective training to all staff so that they have the skills and confidence to tackle unacceptable behaviour.
- Attendance is below average. Little has been done to improve this. Leaders need to make sure that they work with parents to ensure that more pupils attend school each day.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to broaden their experiences. This limits their personal development. Leaders should provide opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities, visits and wider opportunities.
- Some staff in the early years do not know well enough what these children need to learn and how they learn best. This means that too many children do not reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. Leaders should ensure that these staff receive training to improve their practice.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	131674
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10110951
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michael Titherington
Headteacher	Valerie Brookes
Website	www.northbrookschoo.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 June 2015

Information about this school

- The school has seen considerable staffing turbulence since the last inspection. Five teachers are new to the school since the beginning of September 2019.
- The headteacher is currently absent from school. In the interim, the local authority has seconded an experienced headteacher from another local school. He took up his appointment as acting headteacher in the week prior to this inspection.
- The local authority seconded an experienced deputy headteacher from another local school from the beginning of the autumn term. This post is in addition to the substantive deputy headteacher.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

- We met with senior leaders, including the acting headteacher, two deputy headteachers and a range of subject leaders. We also met with five members of the governing body and two representatives of the local authority.
- We checked the school's documentation in relation to safeguarding, including training records.
- We met with a group of parents at the beginning of the school day. We took account of 28 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey as well as written comments submitted by parents.
- We spoke with groups of pupils about what it is like to attend the school.
- We looked in depth at reading, mathematics, history and science. To do this, we visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and held discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils.

Inspection team

Jan Corlett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ann Dimeck

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