

# Kirkby CofE Primary School

Hall Lane, Kirkby, Liverpool, Merseyside, L32 1TZ

**Inspection dates** 6–7 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 good school.

- Pupils achieve well. From below typical starting points when children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, attainment rises at a good rate across the school. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from very good support and make good and on occasions, outstanding progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This contributes to their outstanding behaviour and safety. Pupils have a strong desire to learn and their attitudes to all aspects of school life are exemplary.
- Pupils thrive because lessons are generally well planned and exciting. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to explore a host of activities that broaden their understanding of the wider world.
- Strong leadership by the headteacher has led to higher standards, better teaching and the sharper use of information about pupils' abilities. There has been a significant improvement in attendance. Staff embrace the benefits of training to develop new skills and improve their effectiveness.
- All parents who expressed an opinion rate the school highly and would recommend it to others.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Boys' standards in writing fall below those of girls. There is room for improvement in pupils' ability to apply their mathematical skills to investigate and solve problems.
- Teachers, at times, over direct pupils and limit their independence and creativity. Targets for improving pupils' work are too often general rather than specific.
- Subject leaders and senior staff are not involved enough in checking on pupils' standards and the quality of teaching and learning in subjects other than mathematics and English.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons or part lessons.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, four governors, the staff team and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 10 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) that were submitted during the course of the inspection. Account was also taken of feedback from 27 staff questionnaires.
- The school's work was observed and a range of documentation examined, including the school's own records of pupils' learning and progress, monitoring and evaluation documents, records relating to the performance management of staff and those relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

David Byrne , Lead inspector  
Maureen Hints

Additional Inspector  
Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Before and after school provision is provided by the school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the current improvements in the school and raise pupils' achievement further by:
  - reviewing the provision for boys in writing in order to narrow the gap between their attainment and that of girls
  - rectifying the weaknesses in spelling and grammar of some pupils in Key Stage 2
  - giving pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 more scope to work out things for themselves, especially in mathematics
  - ensuring that the differences in the quality of marking are removed and that pupils are always given precise targets for improvement
  - helping staff to be better at checking on pupils' achievement and on the quality of teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Standards have risen steeply since the previous inspection and by the end of Year 6 are above average.
- From starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage that are below those typical for their age, children learn at good rate. They do very well in overcoming difficulties with their speech and language due to good teaching. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress. Standards have risen since the last inspection to being in line with the national average.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils make better than expected progress. Standards in reading and writing in Year 6 are above average. The percentage exceeding what is expected for their age by the end of Year 6 is above average. While pupils' handwriting is generally of a good standard and what they write is of a good quality, some pupils struggle with basic spelling and grammar. There is scope for boys to do better in writing; a gap exists between their performance and that of girls.
- In mathematics, an above average proportion of pupils exceed the expectations for their age by Year 6. They develop a good understanding of basic numeracy but are less confident in independently solving problems and investigating in mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs benefit from well managed and carefully tailored support. Consequently, they make good progress towards their individual targets. Their attainment is better than similar pupils nationally and the gap with the national average for all pupils is narrowing.
- Effective support within the classroom by teachers and teaching assistants for those pupils receiving the pupil premium ensures that any gaps are narrowing between the performance of those who do and do not receive the funding.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Expectations have been raised for pupils' achievement. Steps have been taken to make much better use of what teachers know about pupils' progress, to identify those pupils who are at risk of falling behind so that support can be given. Teachers and their assistants are a strong team who work well together; this secures pupils' good learning.
- Staff are enthusiastic and enjoy interacting with pupils in lessons and around school. Lessons help pupils to greatly enjoy their learning. Teachers' good subject knowledge leads to lively discussions with pupils and incisive questions to develop pupils' skills and knowledge. A good example of this was seen in a lesson in which older pupils sensitively explored the features of the Second World War related to the treatment of Jews. Often, pupils are encouraged to reflect on how they can improve their work. In most lessons, all pupils are challenged to do their best work.
- Strong teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to follow their own ideas and interests. An excellent balance between adult-led tasks and exciting learning activities selected by the children themselves creates a vibrant atmosphere for children to learn.
- In the very best lessons, pupils are inspired to work on their own and sustain their concentration. This was noted in an excellent Year 2 lesson in which pupils were totally involved in writing 'dark stories'. The teacher made it crystal clear what and how pupils would learn.
- Where teaching is at its best homework is an integral part of pupils' learning. The recently introduced 'Learning Logs' encourage pupils to find out for themselves and present information in a variety of ways. Because pupils are given scope to check each other's homework, their learning accelerates. Where learning is at its best this initiative has been very successful in encouraging pupils to work independently.

- Although there are many strengths in teaching, it is not yet outstanding because:
  - at times teachers over direct pupils rather than allowing them to be independent and creative
  - marking varies in quality and at times the pupils' targets for improvement are not precise enough to give them a clear enough picture of their next steps in learning
  - opportunities are missed to celebrate pupils' good work in and around some classrooms.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Behaviour is exemplary at all times and the pupils' attitudes to learning are outstanding. Pupils, and their parents who expressed an opinion, are adamant that safety is of the highest quality. This is confirmed by inspection findings. Incidents of bullying are rare and very efficiently managed if it occurs. The care and guidance for pupils is of a high quality. All staff, but particularly the learning mentor, keep a close eye on pupils who have any worries. Skilled support is offered to help pupils to overcome personal or emotional difficulties.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They willingly take on responsibilities for others, for example, when older pupils help younger pupils with reading and when working with classmates to get the correct answer in mathematics. A strong sense of citizenship is developed in pupils through their involvement in the school council and in the way in which they help others in many aspects of school life.
- Attendance has risen very quickly in recent years from below to above average. The actions of the learning mentor in supporting families and promoting good attendance has been a significant factor in this turn around. Pupils are determined to come to school in their endeavour to win the class prize for having the lowest absence.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher has created strong sense of care which helps pupils to feel safe and secure. Since the last inspection, good improvements have been made to the quality of teaching, an effective system to check on pupils' attainment and progress has been introduced and pupils enjoy a wider range of activities.
- In English and mathematics, academic standards and the quality of teaching and learning are carefully checked. This process leads to identifying where improvements are required, for instance, to improve speech and language in Early Years Foundation Stage, strengthening grammar and spelling in Key Stage 2 and raising the profile of reading across the school.
- Leaders keep a close watch on how well English and mathematics are taught. In other subjects, however, there is room for being more rigorous checking on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. Staff are included in regular reviews of their own performance to identify their strengths and the areas that need to improve. This leads to effective training, often alongside staff from local schools.
- The learning of pupils with special educational needs is very well managed. Resources are carefully spent to ensure they get good quality support.
- The curriculum is suitably focused on developing the basic skills of literacy and numeracy but also enables pupils to explore a wide range of experiences beyond the classroom. Initiatives, such as 'Activity Aces', give pupils access to many after-school events. Links with other schools, including one in Namibia, deepen pupils' understanding of the diversity within modern society. Residential outings promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world and ambitious plans are in place to visit France in 2013.
- Partnerships with parents are good. The school keeps them informed of events and pupils' progress and also of how to help their children with work at home. The partnership with other schools in the locality has considerably helped the school to be more successful.

■ The local authority has supported the school effectively in the recent past. When standards dipped three years ago, support was given to the school and in particular to senior leaders. Less support is now provided because of the school's rapid improvement. However, local authority staff evaluate the school's performance regularly and are available to provide support if required.

■ **Governance of the school:**

– The governing body is closely involved in working with staff to plan for the school's future development. Governors are frequent visitors to the school. They know pupils well and through links with classes and subject leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Finances are efficiently managed. The use of the funding allocated to support pupils with special educational needs and those in receipt of the pupil premium is checked to make sure that there is value for money. All arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. A close eye is kept on the priorities of the school development plan to ensure that improvements are made.

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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104448
<b>Local authority</b>	Knowsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	404945

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	264
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Collins (Acting Chair)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mair Hindmarsh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 4778510
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