

Kirkdale St Lawrence CofE Primary School

Fonthill Road, Liverpool, Merseyside, L4 1QD

Inspection dates 18–19 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- All groups of pupils achieve well because teaching is consistently at least good. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Standards have continued to improve from being below national averages to broadly in line.
- Pupils feel safe and secure. They enjoy being at school.
- Pupils behave well, are polite and considerate. Good quality spiritual, moral, social and cultural development provides pupils with a wide range of learning experiences.
- Teaching is well planned. Lessons are interesting with a good variety of learning activities.
- The school has improved considerably since the previous inspection due to the headteacher's strong leadership.
- There are very detailed systems in place to check how pupils are doing, and those who are falling behind receive effective extra support.
- The focus on training and developing staff's skills has led to improvements in teaching.
- The governing body provides good support and knows the school well. Its members are ambitious for the school and provide good challenge.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attendance, while improving, is still only broadly average.
- Not enough teaching is yet outstanding.
- Not enough demands are made on the more-able pupils and work can be too easy.
- Teachers do not always encourage pupils to follow up the clear advice they give on how pupils can improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by 10 staff. Of these, two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to register. Inspectors held informal discussions with parents during the inspection. They considered the responses to 13 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including hearing pupils read, records of pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation and development plans, documentation on safeguarding and pupils' work.

Inspection team

Davinder Dosanjh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kathleen Harris

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for children in local authority care and those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average, and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve attendance by:
 - using attendance records to identify accurately those groups of pupils with low levels of attendance
 - taking specific actions with the groups identified.
- Make more teaching and learning outstanding by:
 - making work for the more-able pupils more demanding in every lesson
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to improve their work in response to teachers' comments in books
 - getting the best teachers to share their skills across the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with knowledge and skills that are below those expected for their age. English language and social skills are well below. They make good progress from this point and leave Year 6 with standards that are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attainment in English and mathematics has steadily risen over the last three years. Gaps between groups have closed. While the majority of pupils reach standards expected of pupils at their age, not enough pupils who are more-able reach the higher levels.
- Work in pupils' books and lesson observations indicate that pupils achieve well. There are many opportunities for writing in other subjects and thus standards of writing as pupils get older are good. Teachers place an important focus on correcting spellings and punctuation.
- Pupil-premium funding is used well to provide additional staffing to focus on small-group work in reading and writing. In addition, it is used to support visits and trips and give pupils a broad educational experience. As a result these pupils make good progress and in line with other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. The support of learning assistants ensures that work is adapted to their needs. Their progress is checked carefully and thus, they make good progress.
- Pupils make a good start to their reading in the younger classes because sounds and letters are taught well. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have effective guided reading sessions. They are encouraged to use dictionaries to look up new words and the new reading areas in classrooms are encouraging pupils to enjoy reading. Older pupils read widely and fluently. Pupils read at the level typically expected for their age.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Good relationships and the way teachers organise their classrooms help promote pupils' engagement and they concentrate well on tasks given to them.
- Teachers expect the best from pupils and they respond well to the challenge. This is due to well-planned lessons. Pupils are making sustained progress through the year groups.
- In the outstanding lessons, teachers really capture pupils' interest and thus they make exceptional progress. The work is demanding and well matched to pupils abilities.
- For example, in a mathematics lesson, Year 1 pupils made exceptional progress when they solved problems using their own mathematical ideas. Pupils had to tell a story using addition and subtraction, making use of mental mathematics. The pupils created some lovely stories and demonstrated excellent understanding and skills of using numbers.
- In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils showed a detailed understanding of forces and were excited by the challenge in undertaking practical work to investigate 'Why do objects float?' They made excellent progress and by the end of the lesson shared their well-thought-out ideas relating to mass, weight and shape.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, children's play in the outdoor environment is purposeful and they are provided with a wide range of interesting equipment and resources. Therefore, children have a good deal of choice and enjoy learning outdoors with effective adult support.
- Teachers use questioning well to get pupils to think, and explain their answers. There are many opportunities for pupils to work in pairs, groups and independently. Sometimes the more-able pupils are not given demanding work, they complete the work quickly or it is too easy.
- Marking is regular and consistent throughout the school. Pupils are given clear advice on how to improve their work but teachers do not always encourage pupils to follow this up. The effective use of the purple pens to review and edit work by pupils is not seen frequently enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and are ready to learn. They are polite and considerate and aware of the need to be safe and keep others safe. The good behaviour around the school contributes to a calm and purposeful atmosphere where pupils get on well.
- Behaviour is managed consistently across the school and pupils have a clear understanding of how they should behave. Pupils and parents confirm that behaviour is good at the school.
- Different groups of pupils have a good understanding about the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and prejudice-based bullying and what to do if it happens. They say bullying is rare and if it does happen it is dealt with effectively.
- There have been no fixed-term exclusions for the past two years and there are very few racist incidents.
- Older pupils take on extra responsibilities and act as good role models to younger children. These include being prefects and house captains.
- Attendance has improved progressively and is now broadly average. The school's actions have been successful in rewarding both pupils and parents for high levels of attendance. Pupils are proud to wear their 100% attendance badges. There remains a small number of pupils who have poor levels of attendance. Although the school monitors the attendance of individual pupils, it does not have an overview of which groups of pupils do not attend as well, in order to target its actions more specifically.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership team provides a strong direction for the school. Staff are proud of their school. There is good understanding of the school's strengths and areas which need further improvements. Senior leaders have an accurate view of its performance. Plans have been very successful with year-on-year improvements in standards, attendance and teaching.
- There is good support and help available to enable teachers to make improvements in their teaching, such as in the teaching of letters and sounds and writing. The expertise of the best teachers, however, is not fully used across the school.
- The arrangements to check and improve the performance of staff are thorough and closely linked to the priorities in the school improvement plan. The governing body ensures that those teachers who successfully meet their targets are suitably rewarded.
- Leaders at all levels track pupils' progress regularly and measure the success of any extra support given to pupils. Pupils who are falling behind are quickly identified and helped.
- Regular meetings with teachers on the progress made by pupils in their classes ensure all staff are clear about what is expected of them and what they must do.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through strong links with the church, support for charities, art projects looking at different cultures and photography visits.
- Staff do their best to make sure all pupils have the same chance to enjoy everything that the school offers and no one is discriminated against. The school works hard to develop good relationships with parents, for example, by running reading events such as 'Lads' and Dads' Night In' and 'Girls' Night In'.
- The local authority has supported the school well since its previous inspection. It recognises the school is very capable in making improvements and recently has taken a more 'light touch' approach to the school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body knows the school well. This comes through visits and detailed reports. Its members bring a wide range of expertise to the school and training enables them to help the school to improve and keep up to date. They are supportive and they provide challenge. Finances and resources are well managed and pupil-premium funding is allocated carefully. This has helped to bring additional staffing to support small group work. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities, including those for safeguarding. They keep an overview of arrangements to improve the performance of staff and set challenging targets for the headteacher. Governors understand how pupils are achieving. They are particularly pleased with the improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils who receive pupil-premium funding.
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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	132176
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	402545

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev M Griffin
Headteacher	Jennifer Forshaw
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2010
Telephone number	0151 9222775
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