

# Great Sankey Primary School

Liverpool Road, Great Sankey, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 1SB

**Inspection dates** 29–30 January 2013

<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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- This is a happy school where pupils enjoy their learning and are well prepared for the next stage in their education and future lives.
- Achievement is good and pupils make good progress through the school. As a result they reach above average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers prepare interesting materials and teaching assistants provide good support to pupils who need extra help with their work. Classrooms are managed well so that lessons run smoothly.
- Pupils' good behaviour in lessons helps them to make good progress. They are eager to learn and try their very best to succeed. Around the school pupils are considerate and polite. They feel safe and secure and take pride in their school.
- The drive and astute leadership of senior leaders, including a very hands-on governing body, has been central to the school's good improvement since the previous inspection. Both teaching and achievement have improved.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough outstanding teaching and learning across the school.
- In some lessons introductions are too long and there is too little time for pupils to participate fully and complete their work.
- Pupils do not consistently have the opportunity to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning.
- While the monitoring of teaching and learning is consistent across the school it can be improved further. This is by extending the limited involvement of subject leaders in checking the quality of teaching to identify the steps for improvement for individual teachers.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons. In addition, they observed the teaching of small groups of pupils receiving extra support for English and mathematics.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and to parents as they brought their children to school in the morning. They took account of 10 responses from parents to the online (Parent View) survey.
- Meetings were held with the Chair and two members of the governing body, staff and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including those relating to child protection and safety, the school’s monitoring of teaching and school improvement.
- Inspectors heard four groups of pupils read and checked the school’s assessments of pupils’ progress in reading. They also looked at the school’s tracking system showing pupils’ progress in mathematics and English.

## Inspection team

Andrew Morley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Patricia Cope

Additional Inspector

Kathleen Harris

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Great Sankey is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The school holds a number of awards, including Eco Silver Award and Healthy School status.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - ensuring that there is a better balance between the time pupils spend listening to their teachers and the time they spend working
  - providing more opportunities for pupils, particularly the more-able, to think things out for themselves and work independently of an adult so that they take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Ensuring subject leaders have more opportunities to regularly check the quality of teaching so that they can precisely identify how to help teachers improve their skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are generally those typically expected for their age. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are well supported and guided in their learning. They work and play well together, taking turns and sharing fairly. Children grow in confidence, are eager to explore the exciting activities available and enjoy learning.
- At Key Stage 1 pupils continue to show very positive attitudes in lessons. They are eager to learn and keen to cooperate and make good progress in reading and writing by the end of Year 2. The school has worked hard to ensure all pupils are achieving well in reading. This determined approach has paid off with pupils making better progress and demonstrating good comprehension skills.
- Achievement by the end of Key Stage 2 has improved in all areas since the previous inspection and is now good. Most pupils make good progress across Key Stage 2 because the quality of English and mathematics teaching is good. The school has improved strategies for teaching mathematics and there is evidence of improved attainment in all Key Stage 2 classes. Although more pupils attain above the expected level a few of the more-able pupils do not make as much progress as possible.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the well targeted extra support they receive. Their individual needs are identified early and a variety of extra activities put into place to help them to catch up.
- A small number of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium also receive additional support if it is needed. Test results and pupil progress data show that this effective support helps these pupils to do as well as others in the school. Consequently, their good progress means that the attainment gap with other groups nationally is narrowing.
- Most pupils have a good knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics) and know how to 'break words down' when they are unsure about new vocabulary. Teachers work well in partnership with parents to improve further the quality of pupils' reading. The best readers are fluent and read with expression.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good across the school.
- Adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage work effectively as a team to ensure the individual needs of children are met. There is a good balance between adult-directed activities and those chosen by children for themselves. As a result their development as independent learners is fostered well.
- In Years 1 to 6, lessons are helping pupils to make good progress. Marking is used well to show pupils how improvements could be made. However, while pupils are skilled in checking aspects of their progress, teachers place insufficient emphasis on pupils' understanding of their role to take charge and be responsible for their own progress
- The teaching of mathematics has improved because pupils are getting the opportunity and are successfully solving problems. In a Year 5/6 mathematical lesson, for example, pupils were learning about positive and negative numbers, and had the opportunity to solve problems in relation to measuring temperature.
- A strong feature in many lessons is the opportunity pupils have to write in different subjects. In a Year 2 geography lesson, for example, pupils were exploring their local environment. At the same time as developing key skills about locations they were concentrating on improving the quality of their writing.
- Relationships are good and pupils work well with each other. When they were given the opportunity to work in groups they were excited and worked hard. However, they do not get

enough opportunity to explore learning for themselves, independent of adult support or direction.

- When teaching is less effective pupils spend too long listening to teachers and not enough time actively involved in learning. Sometimes this means that pupils do not spend enough time on the main purpose of the lesson, do not complete their work and so do not learn as much as they could.

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

- Pupils are well behaved, courteous and polite at all times. In lessons, they show positive attitudes to the teacher, their learning and each other. This makes a strong contribution to the friendly and welcoming atmosphere that pervades the school.
- The life of the school is enhanced by this willingness of pupils to take on responsibility, such as by being a member of the school council, the sports council and Eco warriors. In so doing they learn about the democratic process and it also gives all pupils a voice in how the school develops.
- The older children are actively engaged in working with the school leaders to ensure behaviour is of the highest standard. They understand their responsibility to model good behaviour and safe practice. The 'prefects' show great maturity in their role to ensure that younger children are looked after on the playground and around school. Pupils enjoy playtimes, which are very happy and secure for all.
- They know about different kinds of bullying, such as physical bullying and name calling, and say such instances are rare. Pupils with behavioural difficulties find it hard to act responsibly at times. However, they respond very positively to the school's consistently applied behaviour management strategies and their behaviour has shown marked improvement over time.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. This is promoted effectively through the curriculum, through which they learn about how to react if approached by a stranger and the dangers associated with roads, railways and water. They are confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly and effectively by the school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in a very happy and friendly environment. As one pupil said, 'I love coming to school and being with my friends.' Their attendance is high and pupils are consistently punctual.
- Parents are supportive of the school. The majority of parents who responded to Parent View indicated that the school makes sure children are well behaved and deals with bullying effectively.

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

- Staff at Great Sankey work as a well motivated team. They have been led effectively by senior leaders to move the school from satisfactory to good. Expectations are high and the clear vision shown by the headteacher is shared by all.
- There is a strong sense of purpose within the school which is driving sustained improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement. These school priorities are underpinned by an accurate view of what is happening in school.
- The leadership of teaching, including professional development and management of teachers' performance, has successfully improved the quality of teaching and raised pupils' achievement, particularly in reading and most recently in mathematics.
- Pupils' progress is reviewed systematically and teachers have to account for the achievement of the pupils in their class. Teachers are accountable for the progress that pupils make and regular meetings are held to check pupils are on track to meet the challenging targets set for them. Any pupil identified as falling behind is quickly given extra support to boost their performance

- The headteacher and senior leaders are systematic in their monitoring of teaching and learning. However, subject leaders are not always involved in checking the quality of teaching so that they can support the continued improvement of teachers' skills and ensure that they are set targets that are more precisely matched to their individual needs.
  - The curriculum is good. The leadership team has rightly focused on raising achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Also, the school provides a broad range of experiences, ensuring that there are more opportunities for pupils to apply their skills, including information and communication technology, in other subjects. The enrichment of the curriculum is outstanding. Residential visits, for example Year 4's visit to Foxhowl, visits to museums and galleries and frequent visitors to the school are greatly appreciated by the pupils.
  - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. International links through their relationship with Thembelihle Primary School in South Africa extend pupils' horizons and their appreciation of other cultures. All staff promote equal opportunity well as can be seen in equal access to the rich extra-curricular activities.
  - The school works successfully in partnership with others, including Penketh high School and a local cluster of primary schools.
  - The local authority has had a close relationship with the school and in recognition of the progress made since the previous inspection offers 'light touch' support through visits to check particular aspects for development.
  - Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body has played a significant role in the improvement of the school since the previous inspection. They are regular visitors to the school and take part in any additional training that will help them carry out their duties. Governors have been effective in supporting the school and asking important questions. They look at and understand school assessment data and use them to make comparisons against similar schools locally and nationally. They hold leaders to account and ensure that performance management takes place and links to salary progression. Governors make sure that money, including the pupil premium funding, is used effectively to benefit pupils. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.
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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>	111181
<b>Local authority</b>	Warrington
<b>Inspection number</b>	405319

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	298
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Neil Pearson
<b>Headteacher</b>	James Courtney
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01925 723445
<b>Fax number</b>	01925 729210
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