

Marshside Primary School

Elswick Road, Marshside, Southport, Merseyside, PR9 9XA

Inspection dates 6–7 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is not uniformly good in all year groups.
- Not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels in their work because activities in some lessons are too easy, particularly for more-able pupils.
- Pupils' attainment is improving but is low in all subjects at the end of Year 2.
- While teaching has improved significantly across the school with more examples of good and outstanding lessons, it is not yet leading to all pupils achieving well over time.
- Less attention is given to the development of pupils' independent and thinking skills because in some lessons teachers tightly control what pupils do.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils in all classes are happy. They feel safe, behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning.
- Parents and carers agree the school is improving well and these comments reflect their views: 'We have more confidence in the school now', and, 'the current leaders are making the necessary changes to turn the school around'.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start and make great strides in their learning.
- Current leaders are working effectively to drive the school forward. They keep a close eye on the school's performance and are very clear about the direction the school must take to improve further.
- There is a strong focus by senior staff to raise pupils' achievement and improve the quality of learning.
- No stone is left unturned to ensure that all pupils, including those most vulnerable are well cared for and supported.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and governors.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence including: the school improvement plan; the tracking of pupils' progress; monitoring reports; the work pupils were doing in their books and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in eight lessons and parts of five lessons and listened to pupils read. In addition, the headteacher took the HMI on a tour of the school to look at learning and some of the changes made to provision since the last inspection.
- The inspectors met some parents and carers informally at the start of the school day and took account of 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Steve Isherwood, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Emma Jackson

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than averaged-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress, particularly at Key Stage 1 and in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
 - using assessment information more precisely to plan lessons which are closely matched to pupils' needs, particularly for more-able pupils
 - ensuring that more pupils reach the higher levels in their work
 - ensuring lesson plans promote pupils' independent and thinking skills
 - making sure that the above improvements become consistent features of all lessons so that the proportion that are good and outstanding increases.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a range of knowledge and skills typically expected for their age. They get off to a good start, are well taught and settle quickly into school routines. By the time pupils leave in Year 6 their attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that the progress pupils make from their starting points is not yet good.
- The school's own data as well as the test results for 2012 show that while attainment is low in all subjects at the end of Year 2, increasing numbers of pupils, including those supported by the pupil premium are catching up and making better progress than previously. The gap between their performance and other pupils nationally is closing. This is because of improvements to provision at Key Stage 1 and increased expectations by teachers of the progress pupils should make.
- The progress of pupils in Years 1 to 6 while improving strongly is not consistent in all year groups. Pupils do better in some year groups than others. Not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels in their work. This is because assessment information is not always used effectively by teachers to plan work for pupils of different ability. This means that some pupils do not always achieve as well or as rapidly as they should.
- In reading, attainment is low at the end of Year 2 and broadly average at Year 6 but improving securely. This is because the school has done a great deal to raise the profile of reading across the school. As a result, increasing numbers of pupils read with expression and enjoy talking about the author and content of their books. They certainly see the value of reading and comment that the school does much to encourage them to read at home. Younger pupils are developing their skills well to read unfamiliar words by using their knowledge of letters and sounds to build words and blend sounds together.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is accelerating. The gap between their progress and similar pupils nationally is closing. This is because their needs are identified early and they are provided with effective support and intervention in small groups.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly over the last year but requires improvement because of its impact over time on pupils' low attainment at Key Stage 1 and because the progress of pupils in different year groups is uneven. There is still more work to do to ensure that learning is good or better in every lesson.
- The number of good and outstanding lessons is increasing but needs to go further to overcome past underachievement and to compensate for the gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The lessons seen during the inspection ranged from requiring improvement to outstanding. In the best lessons, expectations are high, teachers question pupils effectively, teaching assistants provide an effective layer of extra support, new skills build well on pupils' prior knowledge, links with other subjects are made clear, activities are challenging with ample scope for pupils to show independence and take responsibility. As a result, pupils are enthused by the tasks in hand and learning is fun.
- When the planning and teaching are at their very best, the impact on pupils' progress is clear to see. For example, pupils in Year 3 made excellent progress in knowing how to improve their non-fictional reports by discussing and sharing their ideas with each other and by checking their understanding against a checklist for success. This lesson confirmed how well the pupils can achieve when the expectations are high and the teaching is imaginative.
- In the lessons that require improvement, not enough is expected from pupils and tasks are not

sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more-able. On occasions, pupils are not always clear about the tasks in hand. In addition, in some lessons, teachers control what pupils do too tightly which limits pupils' ability to show independence, use their thinking skills and make decisions about how they learn.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Typically, pupils' behaviour is good around school and at playtime. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their positive attitudes and good attendance.
- Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong because relationships are highly effective, staff know the pupils very well and the school offers effective support to parents and families.
- Pupils are courteous, well mannered, sensible and helpful. They get on well with each other and with all the adults. They show respect and kindness to one another irrespective of age, race or disability. As one child commented, 'Everyone has a friend here'.
- Pupils show a good understanding of the various forms that bullying may take. They are confident that on the rare occasions bullying takes place, staff in school deal with it effectively and quickly. Incidents of poor behaviour are few and far between because teachers and support staff manage behaviour well by following the school systems for rewards and sanctions. In class, pupils consistently behave well and show positive attitudes to their work whatever the level of demand, stimulus and activity. A strong feature of the school is the inclusive ethos and how well pupils get on and support each other. They are keen to take on extra responsibilities such as being a play-leader or members of the active school council and eco committee. They enjoy the many clubs and activities on offer including a range of sporting activities, cheer-leading and gardening.
- Pupils report they feel safe in school because they have a good understanding of what constitutes a safe and unsafe situation. Older pupils know a great deal about staying safe on the internet. Parents and carers agree that their children feel safe in school.

The leadership and management are good

- Good leadership and management, spearheaded by the headteacher have been central to the school getting back on track and out of a category of concern. Much has been accomplished to turn things around and get the school to this point. Staff at all levels along with the governing body share the headteacher's ambitions for the school.
- Senior leaders have raised the expectations of staff and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that need to improve. As one member of staff commented, 'The new leadership team has a very open and sharing approach to progress, statistics and data which we've not experienced before'. Another wrote, 'We have come a long way since the previous inspection. Staff are more focused in the areas for improvement. Support and guidance have helped to improve teaching'.
- Teaching is observed regularly by senior leaders. Training and performance management are linked carefully to identified priorities and teachers' pay. Teachers are held to account by holding regular meetings to check on the progress pupils are making.
- Subject and middle leaders are very clear about what is expected of them. They have a good grasp of the areas where the school needs to improve and effective plans are in place to pinpoint priorities and bring about improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- The school has used its allocation of funding for pupil premium wisely by investing in additional teachers and support staff to work with specific groups of pupils on improving their basic skills. Already this work is leading to these pupils catching up and making better progress than previously. The gap between their performance and other pupils in the school is narrowing.
- The tracking systems are used well to identify gaps in achievement and attendance. Senior

leaders are clearly focused on improving the life chances and in removing the barriers to learning for all pupils whatever their circumstances. All staff promote equality of opportunity well.

- The curriculum has strengths in the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a wide range of visits and visitors into school. Activities are carefully chosen to broaden pupils' interests with additional opportunities provided such as learning to speak French and Spanish. The curriculum is less strong in promoting pupils' independent and thinking skills and ensuring that all pupils, particularly the more able, make sufficient progress across all subjects.
- The local authority has provided extensive, good quality support in successfully helping the school to improve all areas of its work, especially the achievement of pupils, the quality of teaching and in strengthening leadership.
- Considering the school's recovery and along with its other strengths, including the rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and accurate self-evaluation, the school is well placed to improve further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has stepped up to the mark following the previous inspection. As a group, governors are more aware of what goes on in school and the standards pupils achieve. They understand what is being done to improve the school and as result are now more confident to ask challenging questions of the headteacher and senior staff. They have improved their understanding of how well the school is performing because they have increased their awareness of the links between pupils' progress and the quality of provision. Governors ensure that all staff have been vetted and trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm. They ensure that child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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	104866
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	399645

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Trail
Headteacher	Katharine Hall
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2012
Telephone number	01704 211177
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