

Lyme Community Primary School

Lyme Street, Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside, WA12 9HD

Inspection dates 19–20 March 2013

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.

- From starting points that are well below average when they begin school, pupils make good progress in all key stages.
- Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average and improving, especially in writing.
- Teaching is usually good and there are some examples of outstanding teaching.
- All groups of pupils learn well, including those who are eligible for the pupil premium and those who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Pupils behave well and are polite to each other. They feel happy and safe in school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for improvement. This is impacting positively on the quality of teaching, with pupils' achievement also improving.
- Governors are very supportive. They challenge the school well, know about school performance and make wise decisions about how funding is spent and the management of staff performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is yet outstanding and pupils do not have enough opportunity to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Although there are examples of good-quality marking, pupils are not given enough opportunity to respond to this.
- Teachers do not always plan activities which match the needs of all pupils, especially those who are more able.
- Although subject leaders are involved in checking on their subject, their roles need to be further developed so their actions improve pupils' outcomes further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, including one joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, they also made a number of short visits to lessons and small group sessions.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from four different year groups read, and talked with them and other groups of pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils’ progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 24 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, questionnaires completed by staff and outcomes from the school's own consultations with parents.

Inspection team

Vanessa MacDonald, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jean Tarry	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lyme Community Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and a small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs at the school action stage is above average. The proportion with statements of special educational needs, and those at the school action plus stage, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is above the national average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed. There have also been more recent additions to the leadership and management structure.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club for its pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve the rate of progress further by:
 - increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching
 - ensuring that teachers always plan activities to challenge all pupils, particularly those who are more able
 - giving pupils more opportunity and time to reflect on and respond to the feedback they are given
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to apply mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Further develop the roles of subject leaders so that they can support senior leaders in regularly checking on the progress of pupils in order to identify precisely how to move pupils' achievement on.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below those typical for their age. From their starting points pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national averages and has shown an improvement over time.
- In Key Stage 2 in 2012 pupils reached average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in writing improved on previous years, particularly in the proportion of pupils attaining above-expected levels. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress and standards are rising as a result of good teaching.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is a strong emphasis on children making their own decisions, which helps their development in being able to work and learn on their own. One example of this was when some children wanted to be at the seaside so they collected the sand tray, chairs, bucket and spade, culminating in bare feet feeling the sand.
- Younger pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds to attempt unfamiliar words and older pupils are also benefiting from sessions which are further developing these, helping them become more confident readers. Year 4 pupils talked enthusiastically about Roald Dahl, obviously enjoying the novel they read as a class.
- The attainment of pupils currently in school is improving. This is as a result of the school's success in creating more interesting opportunities for reading and writing with, for example, reading challenges and good cross-curricular opportunities for extended writing in topics.
- There is no significant difference in the rates of progress made by pupils in receipt of the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, and others at the school. It is at least as good as, and sometimes better than, that of other pupils. They reach similar standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. As a result, the gaps in attainment in English and mathematics with other groups are closing.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and those who are at the early stages of learning English are all supported well through a range of support programmes and extra support in class. As a result, these pupils also make good progress from their starting points.
- As a result, all pupils have equal opportunities and any potential discrimination is tackled well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching overall is good and some outstanding practice was observed. Teachers use questioning to find out what pupils know and can do, getting them to explain their understanding. This enables pupils to make good progress.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage adults provide interesting and practical activities that enthuse children so that they are eager to learn. There is a good balance between activities which adults direct and those that pupils choose for themselves. In one outstanding session the children were thoroughly enjoying activities, matched very well to their needs, to develop their numeracy skills.
- The best lessons ensure that pupils are actively learning throughout all parts of the lesson and are set challenging and increasingly difficult work. In an outstanding example in Year 6 pupils were able to accurately describe a range of features, including complex sentences. They could explain where they would be used, successfully identifying them in their own and others' writing.
- In some lessons, however, work is not always matched as well to pupils' needs and not all pupils are challenged to reach their potential, especially those who are more able.
- Teaching assistants and other additional adults are used effectively to support and further develop learning. They have good subject knowledge and an understanding of how to encourage pupils, particularly for those who are disabled or who have special educational needs and those

who are eligible for the pupil premium.

- The teaching of mathematics is good in many respects, but there too few opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Information and communication technology is used well to support and promote literacy and numeracy skills. The youngest children confidently selected their own programmes on tablets, developing their letter recognition; older pupils used them well to record interviews.
- There are good examples of marking which shows pupils what to do to improve their work. These are related to the clear objectives set at the beginning of the lesson, which are consistently used across subjects and classes. Pupils do not, though, always have time to reflect on and respond to this feedback; therefore, opportunities to improve their learning further are missed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good, both in lessons and around school. In the best lessons there are occasions when behaviour is outstanding because pupils are highly motivated. They listen carefully to their teacher and most show high levels of interest in their work.
- When asked to discuss ideas with a partner or work cooperatively as part of a group they do so maturely. Pupils show care and consideration to one another and on more than one occasion pupils were observed helping each other in their learning without being directed to do so.
- Pupils say they feel safe and can give some examples of how to keep themselves safe as a result of teaching and visitors to school. Younger pupils are taught about road safety and the pupils spoken to talked enthusiastically about the large lorry which visited, helping them understand about how invisible they can be to drivers.
- They have a good awareness of different types of bullying and say that it seldom occurs. They are confident that staff will deal with any such instances. Pupils have a very good understanding of the behaviour systems and records are very well kept.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast and after-school club are well looked after and enjoy their time talking to and playing with other pupils.
- Attendance is at least average and improving. Pupils are generally punctual to school and attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored.
- Pupils make a strong contribution to decisions in school through the school council and eco-council. They gave examples of where they have raised funds for their link school in Kenya, buying a water pump not only for use by the school but also the village.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the continued improvement of the school and has an accurate view of the areas which the school needs to develop further. Staff morale is high and there is a shared determination for continued improvement.
- Regular checks are made on the quality of teaching. Lesson observations by the headteacher are regular and accurately focused on the impact of the quality of teaching on pupils' progress. Although other leaders are involved in checking on how well pupils are doing in their areas of responsibility, their skills are not yet fully developed in identifying precisely what will improve pupils' outcomes.
- There is a good link between the performance of teachers and their salary progression. Where additional training or support is needed to ensure improvement, this occurs, including with different local clusters of schools. These links provide additional opportunities for teachers to share and develop good practice.
- The curriculum is good and pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including educational visits, visitors and residential visits. Links with other schools, including

abroad, opportunities to learn Spanish and visits from opera, ballet and sporting groups contribute well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Partnership with parents is good. They are kept well informed and there are a number of opportunities for parents to support their children. During the inspection inspectors observed pupils working with their parents during a family learning session and also in a 'Stay and Play' session in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Since the previous inspection the local authority has provided appropriate and effective support to the school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are strongly committed to their work in improving the school. They have a clear understanding of the areas for development in the school, including in developing their own skills. They are appropriately trained and understand data on pupils' progress and their implications for the quality of teaching, effectively holding leaders to account. The governing body ensures that specific funding allocations are spent efficiently, including that of the pupil premium. This has been spent on additional staffing to support small-group provision in order to help raise standards further and also to support pupils' access to enrichment activities. Governors have been fully involved in agreeing performance management procedures, ensuring these take place and link to teachers' pay progression. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
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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	104776
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	400738

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carl Bretherton
Headteacher	Marie Cribb
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2009
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