

Churchtown Primary School

St Cuthbert's Road, Churchtown, Southport, Merseyside, PR9 7NN

Inspection dates 9–10 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
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 a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress overall and some do much better than this in reading and mathematics. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress owing to effective teaching and the special arrangements the school makes for them.
- The quality of teaching is good in its impact on pupils' achievement over time. Teachers ensure that lessons run smoothly and this enables pupils to learn well.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are unfailingly courteous and considerate of others. They settle quickly to their work and are eager to show what they have learnt.
- Older pupils look after younger ones in the playground and during lunch times. Pupils say they feel safe in school and know that adults can always be relied upon for support.
- The headteacher has maintained an aspirational vision for the school and has successfully led improvements to the school premises and the use of modern technology.
- The curriculum provides pupils with many interesting activities that have an extremely positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The governing body contributes well to the management of the school. Its members are well-informed about the quality of teaching and hold the headteacher to account for his actions.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet consistently outstanding in its impact on pupils' overall achievement, especially in writing.
- In a small number of writing lessons, teachers do not always introduce new vocabulary that would enhance the pupils' work even further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 lessons. In addition, the inspection team made a number of shorter visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, seven member of the governing body, a representative from the local education authority and members of the senior and teaching staff.
- The 164 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account when planning and conducting the inspection. This is a higher response than in many schools.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read, spoke to them about their learning and looked at work in their books. They looked at a number of documents, including the school's own tracking data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and those documents relating to attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Robert Pye, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Louise Murphy

Additional Inspector

Dave Blackburne

Additional Inspector

Pamela Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Churchtown Primary School is an extremely large primary school, (one of the largest in the country). The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding allocated for pupils in the care of the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals or whose family is in the armed forces) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils whose learning needs are supported at a level known as school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has a before-school care club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching to be outstanding overall in order to raise pupils' achievement further, especially in writing, by:
 - ensuring that teachers introduce a wide range of vocabulary that will add greater interest, meaning and fluency to pupils' writing
 - checking that teachers' marking in writing identifies the next level of challenge and that pupils have the opportunity to respond to teachers' feedback to produce better work in the future.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils make good progress and achieve well from their different starting points.
- Children join school with skills and abilities that are typically below those expected for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, they quickly gain confidence because they are encouraged to explore and try out their own ideas. One child for example attempted to make an elephant in the construction area even though he recognised that placing the trunk would be difficult. Children enjoy learning and make good progress by the time they start Year 1.
- By the end of Year 6 standards for reading and mathematics are consistently above the national average. Writing standards are at least broadly average and rising rapidly. Standards by the end of Year 2 are similar to those found nationally. The high importance given to reading ensures that it is a particular strength of the school. Pupils read with fluency and expression and can readily discuss any reading material they are using.
- Mathematics has improved rapidly as a result of decisive action by the school's senior leaders. Pupils are confident in carrying out mental calculations and problem-solving. A significant proportion of pupils in Year 6 are currently working at the highest available standards for their age.
- Progress in writing, whilst good, is not as evident as that found in reading and mathematics. This is because some writing lacks imaginative vocabulary that would make it more interesting for the reader.
- Pupils entitled to the pupil premium funding including those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals do as well as other pupils and there is no difference in their attainment from that of others in the school. This is evidence of the school's success in giving all its pupils equality of opportunity to succeed.
- The school provides effective additional support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and also those in danger of falling behind. This additional support is led by skilled teaching assistants. School data show that these pupils make the same good progress as others in the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding in its impact on pupils' progress and achievement over time.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage all the teachers and adults have good subject knowledge. They base all learning on the individual needs of each child.
- Teachers prepare lessons that captivate the interests of the pupils. In response, pupils wave their hands in eagerness to contribute. Their books are well-kept and they take great pride in all they do.
- Teachers expect pupils to make the utmost effort across a full range of subjects and activities. They set pupils of different abilities tasks at just the right level, organise collaborative investigations and allow pupils to work autonomously so that work is completed to a good level. An example of such a lesson was seen in Year 5. Pupils learnt about mode, median and mean averages. There were clear expectations, represented by the different tasks pupils had to complete. This ensured that all the pupils made excellent progress.
- Reading is taught effectively throughout the school. The teaching of the use of phonics (the letters and the sounds they make) to help pupils read unfamiliar words is given high importance and reinforced throughout the whole school. Teachers actively encourage pupils to read at home for pleasure as well as for purpose.
- The teaching of writing is good overall. However, in a small number of lessons, teachers do not always take the opportunity to introduce new vocabulary to enable pupils to write at a higher

level. Likewise on some occasions, when teachers mark work they do not always point out what pupils can do to improve their work even further, or allow them time to respond to their comments.

- Teaching assistants are skilled. They liaise closely with the teachers, know the pupils well and provide effective support. Support for those who find it hard to learn, or who may be at risk of falling behind, is matched to the pupils' needs and is guided by the school's records on the progress of individuals.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils relish the opportunities provided during lessons, rising commendably to the challenges put before them.
- The school's own 'Reach for the stars' award system reflects the ambitious expectations for behaviour and attitudes to learning. Pupils thrive in the nurturing and enabling environment where there are multiple opportunities to share learning with friends and support each other in and around the school. Consequently by the time they leave school they are well-prepared to meet many of life's challenges.
- Teachers and other adults display excellent classroom management skills. This is complemented by many other initiatives within school that support exemplary behaviour; one boy in the peer mentoring team explained how he had used negotiation to help a younger girl 'make up' with her friend.
- Pupils develop excellent social skills. They settle quickly in lessons and work well together in pairs or in groups. Older pupils help look after younger ones in the playground. As one pupil said 'Everyone knows what they are doing and work well together.' Parents strongly support this view.
- Pupils understand the forms that bullying can take and are aware of safety issues with the use of modern technology. They say they have no concerns about such things and have complete confidence that staff would sort out any problems that any pupil might have about experiences in school or beyond.
- The breakfast-club provides a warm welcoming start to the school day with older pupils playing happily alongside younger ones.

The leadership and management are good

- Resolute leadership of the school is untiring in striving for the best. With a clear vision and well-formulated plans for development, improvements have been put in hand successfully for the premises, for the use of technology and for the way in which subjects are led and taught. The aspirations of the headteacher are supported by two very able deputies and the whole staff. The school enjoys very strong support from parents.
- The quality of teaching is monitored closely. The headteacher and senior leaders accurately assess all teachers' performance and provide appropriate training to ensure that they continue to develop their skills. Teachers have targets based on performance and increases in salaries are based on the achievements of these targets.
- The headteacher and senior leaders monitor standards rigorously. They identified mathematics as an area for school development and took decisive action which led to a significant improvement in this area throughout Key Stage 2. The school has rightly identified writing as the next focus for further development, and have produced well-thought-out plans to tackle this.
- The school keeps an accurate track of the progress that individual pupils are making. The progress of different groups, for example, those entitled to the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is checked regularly. Where there is a suggestion that a pupil is at risk of falling behind, appropriate help is arranged. This has been most effective in ensuring that all pupils make good progress.

- Leadership of the curriculum is good overall, and has many strengths including the provision for the use of information technology and a comprehensive approach to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In addition to pupils gaining a reflective appreciation of life and other cultures through learning about faiths and countries across the world, pupils learn how to care for each other, develop leadership skills and become aspirational in their approach to life.
- Leaders ensure that child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet all requirements.
- The local education authority provides effective support for the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body contributes well to the management of the school. By reviewing data about pupils' progress, governors have a clear view about how well the school is performing. Governors are informed about the quality of teaching and rigorously hold the headteacher to account for actions taken to improve the quality of teaching through the professional training of staff. They seek assurance that salary levels are closely linked to performance and seek advice from outside when setting the headteacher's targets. Governors keep a very close check on the school's budget and ensure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively for the purposes intended.

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	104861
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	411790

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	880
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Nelson
Headteacher	David Walker
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2010
Telephone number	01704 508500
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