

St Cleopas' Church of England Primary School

Beresford Road, Liverpool, Merseyside, L8 4RP

Inspection dates 14–15 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- From their low starting points pupils make good progress and achieve well. They leave Year 6 with standards that are average.
- Since the previous inspection achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has risen.
- Teaching is usually good and there are some examples of outstanding teaching. Additional adults provide valuable support for pupils who have special educational needs or who are at risk of falling behind.
- Pupils enjoy weekly creative afternoons and learn a wide range of different skills such as cookery, dance, drama or gardening. They also benefit from the exciting visits and clubs that are provided.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe.
- The school provides a caring and nurturing environment for all pupils. This strongly promotes their personal, social and emotional development.
- The school is well led and managed. The headteacher, ably supported by her senior leadership team, provides a clear direction. Accurate priorities for development are identified and actions taken have led to improvements, for example in reading.
- The governing body knows the school well. It is strongly supportive and committed to the school's improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers do not always match work to pupils' different abilities. Sometimes pupils are given work that is too easy or too hard.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to explain how they reach their answers or discuss their ideas.
- Marking is variable across the school and does not always tell pupils how to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They saw 15 lessons, four of which were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, teachers, the headteacher, a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- There were not enough responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for inspectors to take account of, but they did consider survey information recently collected by the school. They also spoke informally to parents to gather their views as they brought their children to school.
- Questionnaires from 19 staff were received and their views taken into account.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read, spoke with them about their learning and looked at the work in their books.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports of lesson observations, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elaine Murray

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Cleopas' is an average sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British and speak English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding to schools for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and children whose parents are in the armed forces, is above average. At St Cleopas' those who qualify for this funding are pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A breakfast club operates for pupils before school and is managed by the governing body. This was visited during the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the consistency of teaching so that all lessons are good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers provide work that is matched closely to the needs of pupils with different abilities, especially the more able, so that they reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics
 - pupils are given more opportunities to discuss their work, for example with a partner, and explain their thinking
 - good-quality marking is consistent across the school and that teachers' comments tell pupils how to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are lower than those expected for their age, especially in reading and writing. They make good progress due to skilled teaching which caters for their different needs. By the time they enter Year 1 their skills are in line with others of their age, except in writing, which is still below.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress overall and rapid progress in writing. Consequently, by the end of Year 2 the gaps in writing have been reduced. Attainment is rising and pupils now reach standards which are average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has fluctuated. Standards dipped in 2012 and were below average. Pupils who left Year 6 in 2012 underachieved, especially in reading. However, swift and effective action taken by leaders has ensured that standards have improved and pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to reach standards which are again in line with national averages. School tracking records show that all year groups in Key Stage 2 are making good progress from their previous levels in Year 2. This was confirmed by lesson observations, hearing pupils read and scrutiny of their work.
- The numbers of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics has increased in Key Stage 1 but not enough pupils reach the higher levels in Key Stage 2.
- While reading has previously been an area for improvement, the increased emphasis and focus placed upon it have made sure that achievement is now good in all year groups. It is taught well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and children get off to a good start. As they move through Key Stage 1 pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds to break down tricky words and become confident readers. By Key Stage 2 most pupils have developed good reading habits and can discuss their favourite authors and read complex and lengthy books. Reading volunteers provide valuable support in ensuring that pupils do not fall behind. The new library is helping pupils to read widely and often.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are identified early and given good support to enable them to make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium also make good progress. As a result, the gap between their attainment at expected levels and that of others in the school is closing. The attainment gap is wider for pupils achieving the higher levels. In the 2012 tests Year 6 pupils were approximately one term behind their classmates in mathematics but broadly similar in their attainment in English.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is usually good and there are some examples of outstanding teaching. A small minority requires improvement.
- In the best lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils and high-quality questioning helps to ensure rapid progress. Teachers use clear introductions and explanations, and pupils are encouraged at the end of the lesson to summarise what they have learnt.
- When teaching is good or better, teachers plan work which meets the needs of different ability groups. For example, in an outstanding Year 5 literacy lesson pupils had to use a wide range of language features to create a character profile. Continual reminders about presentation were given and the lesson moved at a brisk pace. All pupils were engrossed and showed high levels of concentration. The written work produced was excellent.
- Relationships are very positive in all classes. The school has a welcoming and caring atmosphere. Pupils cooperate and work well together.
- Reading is taught well and there is a consistent approach to teaching early reading skills. Writing has, rightly, been a focus for the school as pupils enter school at lower levels than in other

subjects. Most pupils are keen to write, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Mathematics is also taught well and often in an interesting way; for example, Year 2 pupils used their measuring skills to make lighthouses. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills in a range of subjects.

- Where teaching requires improvement, the work set is often the same for all pupils and so is too easy for some pupils or too difficult for others. As a result, lessons lack challenge for some, while others are unable to complete their work without help. Consequently, their progress slows down. Additionally, not all teachers provide enough opportunities for pupils to discuss their work, for example with partners, or explain their thinking.
- The quality of teachers' marking varies considerably between classes and across subjects. Some literacy books provide clear guidance about what pupils have done well and what they need to do next. In other books work is merely ticked or not marked at all.
- Support staff make a good contribution to all pupils' learning, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in and around school and this has a positive impact on their learning. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare and only shows when tasks are not closely matched to pupils' abilities, with the result that some lose interest.
- Pupils show pride in their school. They talk with enthusiasm about their school council roles and any jobs or responsibilities they take on.
- Leaders closely monitor behaviour and action is taken to resolve any issues. Records kept by the school demonstrate improvements in behaviour over time.
- Pupils are taught about different forms of bullying, for example, in anti-bullying week. They have a good understanding of some types, including cyber- and verbal bullying, but say that bullying is rare.
- Pupils spoken to feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They have a strong sense of security in school. They also have a good awareness of the dangers involved in using the internet but are taught how to keep themselves safe.
- Attendance is steadily improving but is still below average. School leaders are taking positive steps to address any issues regarding persistent absence with the few families who still do not bring their children to school regularly.
- Parents, pupils and staff who contributed their views feel that pupils are safe and behave well.
- The on-site breakfast club provides a positive start to the day and pupils have the opportunity to socialise and mix with other pupils.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school effectively. Together with other leaders and the governing body she knows which aspects of the school are working well and which need further improvement. Standards in reading have improved as a result of actions taken and attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is now average.
- Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching regularly, enabling teachers to know what strengths they have and how they can improve. Targets are set which require all teachers to demonstrate that all pupils make good progress. Pay increases to staff are only agreed where these targets are met. Training has been effective in improving the quality of teaching.
- Pupils develop a wide range of other skills and interests through weekly creative afternoons. An excellent range of clubs and visits, including a residential visit to France, adds to pupils' learning and memorable experiences.

- There is a good balance of adult-led activities and those which children choose for themselves in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Collective worship and lessons provide time for reflection and pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. Opportunities for cultural development feature regularly, including pupils learning French in Nursery and throughout the school.
- Leaders make sure that all pupils are treated equally and there is no discrimination of any kind.
- The local authority has confidence in the leadership of the school and provides light-touch support as needed. Termly visits are made to check on the school's performance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good knowledge of the school and are actively involved in many activities, including meeting with leaders, visiting classrooms and working as reading volunteers. This involvement gives governors a good insight into how well pupils are doing. They challenge and support leaders and strive for 'only the best'. They know about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They have a good understanding of data and use information such as the data dashboard to check how well the school is doing compared to other schools nationally. Governors monitor their budget carefully, including the use of the pupil premium grant. They know what this funding is used for and the impact it has on the progress of eligible pupils. Governors set targets for the headteacher and check on the quality of teaching. Salary increases for staff are only awarded where there is clear evidence that pupils are making good progress. Training is regularly undertaken to help governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively, for example in relation to safeguarding and finance. As a result, these aspects are fully met.

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	104613
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	411890

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	June Sharkey
Headteacher	Ruth Frain
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2007
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