

# Black Horse Hill Junior School

Saughall Massie Road, West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside, CH48 6DR

**Inspection dates** 5–6 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 make good progress, particularly in reading, and achieve well from the time they enter the school. Writing across subjects is good and mathematics has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are above average. There is a continuing rising trend.
- Teaching is consistently good with some that is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan lessons well to cater for all abilities.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding. They are always polite and well mannered. They feel entirely safe in school. Pupils' attendance is above average.
- School leaders, including the governing body, have brought about good improvement since the previous inspection. Robust management of teaching has improved its quality and raised standards in this improving school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough excellent teaching to make the quality outstanding overall. Sometimes the pace of learning in lessons slows.
- The quality of marking is variable and the best practice is not shared widely enough throughout the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, two of which were dual observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff members, groups of pupils, and members of the governing body. A group of parents and a representative from the local authority also shared their views about the school with inspectors.
- Also taken into account were 36 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a wide range of documentation that included: national assessment data and the school's own assessments; minutes from governing body meetings; the school's evaluation of its work; local authority reports; samples of pupils' work and safeguarding documentation.

## Inspection team

Kevin Johnson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Marilyn Massey

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Almost all pupils are White British in this smaller than average sized junior school.
- A broadly average proportion of pupils are supported by school action.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- An average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The provision of before and after-school care is shared with a nearby infants school. This is not managed by the governing body and is inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- The school recently received a letter of commendation from the Deputy Prime Minister in recognition of its success in promoting the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by:
  - ensuring that teachers' marking is of consistently high quality across all subjects and in all classes
  - making sure that the best pace of learning for all pupils is maintained and that those who are able to progress independently do not spend time unnecessarily listening to the teacher
  - using outstanding practice in the school more effectively as a model for all teaching.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- When pupils enter the school in Year 3, their attainment generally, is typical for their age with some at more advanced levels. The school builds well on the knowledge and skills that pupils bring with them. They make good progress year-on-year. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above the national average.
- There is evidence of a rising trend in standards overall since the previous inspection. During the past year, the school's focus has been on mathematics, following a slight dip in standards in 2012. This has been effectively reversed. Pupils' current work in mathematics and school assessments indicate that all are on track to reach at least expected standards for their age and a significant proportion to achieve better than expected.
- Progress in reading has been consistently good over time and pupils achieve a good standard by the end of Year 6. All pupils read fluently and know how to tackle unfamiliar words. They enjoy books and can talk about characters in the stories they have read. They are familiar with different styles that favourite authors use and are regular visitors to the well stocked school library. Pupils read widely across different subjects because of the way the curriculum is planned. This underpins their good quality writing.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, make very good progress. There are no noticeable gaps between their attainment and that of others in the school. The school has been commended for its effective use of pupil premium funding.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are provided for well. They have clear learning targets well matched to their particular needs. They receive good teaching in classes and groups and some benefit very well from additional support provided by outreach teachers from a local authority special school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and at times it is outstanding.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan exciting lessons for pupils such as researching sea life, learning about caves and coastal erosion or the story of a banana.
- A wide range of teaching methods and resources keeps pupils' interest and learning activity at a good level. Expectations are consistently high. This results in good handwriting and presentation of work from pupils.
- In the best lessons, the pace of pupils' learning and teachers' expectations never falter. Teachers' questioning draws on pupils' previous learning exceptionally well so that pupils are constantly applying what they know to new ideas. Relationships in the lesson are excellent and pupils are more than willing to 'have a go'. This pace and level of work, however, is not yet used fully as a model for all teaching so it does not have the impact on the overall quality of teaching that it could.
- Pupils' use of technology, such as laptops and calculators, feature strongly in their learning.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. Recent staff training in mathematics has enhanced teachers' subject knowledge and teaching skills, especially in the way they teach pupils to use their mathematical understanding in problem-solving activities. A good example of this is how Year 6 pupils formed the hypothesis that 'girls' memories are better than boys' memories'. They carried out research, recorded data and used laptops to show findings in a power point presentation that included use of pie charts.
- There is a similar approach to developing writing skills with topics chosen purposefully across the range of subjects so that pupils develop and use a good range of technical vocabulary as well as

their imaginations.

- Teachers question pupils well during lessons to check their understanding and give pupils opportunities to think about the progress they have made by the end of the lesson. Pupils know what is expected of them because it is made clear at the beginning. Marking quality varies, however. While it is generally well focused and helpful in literacy books, it is not always the case in other subjects and there are variations in the quality between classes.
- Teaching assistants are active partners in pupils' learning during activity times and monitor progress well alongside teachers. However, at times, such as at the start of lessons, their skills are not fully utilised to help some pupils to begin practical work as quickly as they might. This hinders the progress of those pupils who may sit listening unnecessarily on the carpet for a long time.

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

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Relationships are invariably positive and pupils recognise and greatly value each other's achievements. They enjoy school. Lessons, they say, are fun and they relish the opportunities they have to work in creative ways, whether in lessons, sporting events or in the school garden.
- Attitudes to learning are excellent. Attendance is above average and pupils are extremely keen to succeed. They know what they must do to improve. They enjoy working in groups and to share ideas in order to find different ways to solve problems.
- Pupils make an excellent contribution to the everyday life of the school. The school council is very active and its members recently had a role in the appointment of a new member of staff. They have also successfully been part of a campaign to challenge speeding motorists outside their school. Pupils very willingly fulfil the roles of house captains, play leaders or librarians and show excellent initiative in the way they plan and organise charity fund-raising events. Their unfailing friendliness and confidence enables them to be good ambassadors for the school.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They speak very highly of the pastoral care and level of safety that the school staff provide.
- Pupils endorse that view. They say that they feel entirely safe in school and know that a staff member will always be there to help when needed. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying or name calling. They understand the ways that bullying can occur, including cyber-bullying and know how to deal with it should it arise.
- Given their excellent personal qualities and all-round achievement, pupils are exceptionally well prepared to face the challenges of their next school by the time they leave Year 6.

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

- Under the headteacher's effective and determined leadership the school has continued to build on the improvements seen in the previous inspection to secure higher standards, better teaching, and pupils' good achievement.
- He is ably supported by the assistant headteacher and a staff team that is strongly committed to driving the school forward. Since the previous inspection, management roles and responsibilities have been clarified and relevant training has ensured that all know how they are accountable for pupils' learning and progress.
- Leaders successfully embrace local authority support when it is needed. Most recently to address the dip in standards in mathematics. This support is generally light touch. The local authority is confident of leaders' capacity to move the school forward. This is clearly seen in the improvements made since the previous inspection.
- Leaders' view of the school's work is accurate because of the rigour of their systems for

checking. Pupils' work is monitored regularly and their views are taken into account. The checking and management of teachers' performance is robust to ensure that quality is maintained and continues to improve. When priorities are identified, swift and effective support is provided to boost teachers' skills and to raise standards. Teachers know that expectations are guided by the Teachers' Standards and that salary increases are linked to individual classroom performance.

- The curriculum has also improved. New ways of planning make learning enjoyable for pupils because they can apply their different skills in different ways. A particular topic, for example, may call upon pupils' skills in writing, mathematics, information and communication technology, art and music in order to get the most from their learning. The rich selection of activities and clubs outside lesson time provides pupils with many opportunities to achieve well in different areas and to develop their excellent personal skills.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance of the school is good. The range of expertise and experience within the governing body, combined with relevant training ensures that it is well equipped to challenge the school and to hold senior leaders to account. Governors measure the school's progress against national data and are quick to challenge the school if there is a question about equality of opportunity for pupils. They manage finances, including the use of the pupil premium, effectively and have a clear overview of teaching quality throughout the school and how this links to the school's spending. Governors, overall, have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities. There are no concerns regarding safeguarding which meets all government 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105032
<b>Local authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	413168

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>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	151
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sandra Crowden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Harry Kennedy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 625 8446
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 625 2999
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:schooloffice@blackhorsehill-junior.wirral.sch.uk">schooloffice@blackhorsehill-junior.wirral.sch.uk</a>



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

