

St Philip's Church of England Primary School

Hampton Road, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 6SS

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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' outstanding behaviour and attitudes underpin their good learning. Relationships are excellent so pupils feel entirely safe in school. Their attendance is consistently above average and they contribute greatly to the everyday life and friendliness of the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well from their starting points. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average.
- The quality of teaching is good and some teaching is outstanding. Teachers motivate pupils well and pupils say that their lessons are fun.
- The school is led well by the headteacher and there is strong teamwork from staff members. Senior leaders have a positive impact on raising the quality of teaching and achievement and have improved the school's performance since the previous inspection.
- Governance is good. Governors know the school well and provide strong challenge and support.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is consistently outstanding. There are aspects of teachers' marking and the way in which teaching assistants are required to work that are not strong enough.
- Best practice is not always shared sufficiently between teachers to raise the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons and parts of lessons.
- Meetings took place with staff, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 28 responses from parents via Ofsted's online survey Parent View.
- The school's work was observed and a wide range of documentation was examined, including: national assessment data and the school's own assessments; the school's view of its work; minutes from governing body meetings; local authority reports; safeguarding documentation and samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Kevin Johnson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Vanessa MacDonald

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Philip's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all of the pupils are White British.
- A below average proportion of pupils are supported through the pupil premium funding. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children that are looked after.)
- An average proportion of pupils are supported through school action.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- The school meets current floor standards, which are the minimum government expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- The school has recently achieved Artsmark to add to its several other awards in recognition of its good work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding and thereby raise further pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring that all of teachers' marking in all subjects is of the same quality and has the same impact as that seen in literacy books
 - using teaching assistants' skills more effectively so that groups of pupils start activities earlier in the lesson rather than spend time unnecessarily listening to the teacher
 - making sure that the very best practice is used as a model for all teaching throughout the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's abilities are generally below typical expectations when they start in Reception. Progress is good because of good, and at times outstanding, teaching. Exciting activities lead to children quickly acquiring good levels of independence in the classroom and the outdoor area. When children leave Reception, they are mostly in line with expectations for their age and some are more advanced.
- Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. The rising trend of the past two years has continued in the current year with more pupils on track to make better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The picture is similar in Years 3 to 6. High proportions of pupils make at least expected progress and significant proportions do better than expected in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in Year 5 have made particularly good progress from unusually low starting points at the beginning of Year 3. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has typically been above average over time. Current school assessments and pupils' work show that the above-average trend is on track to continue.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. In Year 2, pupils read accurately. They pay attention to punctuation and use their good knowledge of letters and sounds to tackle unfamiliar words confidently. By the end of Year 6, pupils select their reading from a wide range, including comics and newspapers. They are knowledgeable about authors and generally show good enthusiasm for books, which they read fluently and with good understanding.
- Achievement in mathematics is good. Ambitious targets are set and some pupils are expected to achieve the highest Level 6. Achievement in writing in Years 3 to 6 has not kept pace with English and mathematics. The school is already addressing this with extra training for staff. As a result, more pupils now make better than expected progress.
- The coordinator for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has detailed records showing that all make at least expected progress. For many, progress is good and some make exceptional progress from their individual starting points. There is good support for these pupils including individual learning targets, staff training from a consultant and regular reviews with parents.
- The small number of pupils supported through the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress, like other pupils. Attainment in English and mathematics is in line with that of others and is above average. The school has responded decisively to these pupils' needs by using funding to provide additional teaching to ensure equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching is good

- Relationships in lessons are excellent. Pupils know that the teacher values what they contribute to the lesson. Their resulting confidence and willingness to learn are major factors in their good progress and achievement.
- Pupils' personal skills are very strongly encouraged in lessons. Teachers expect pupils to be ready to learn and pupils invariably are. They have opportunities to solve problems together and test their ideas on one another.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge allows them to plan challenging lessons and choose interesting ways to introduce new topics. In one lesson, the teacher's personal interest and knowledge of drama instigated very probing questions that generated good ideas about stage directions and led to good-quality writing.
- Pupils use technology well to support their learning in lessons. New computers are having a good impact on this aspect of teaching. Electronic whiteboards give good visual support and are used successfully to create an atmosphere for descriptive writing. Teachers promote the use of

computers to support learning, as seen in Year 3 when pupils developed skills to create PowerPoint presentations.

- Good questioning and checks to make sure that pupils are learning well are features of all lessons. The teacher's very accurate assessment of pupils' needs and precise challenge for different pupils led to excellent learning in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, where pupils learnt to calculate angles in regular polygons.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, and adults are particularly successful at encouraging improvement in language and communication skills by the way they question children, join in their play, and encourage them to make their own decisions.
- Teachers' marking is not consistently helpful to pupils. Clear guidance on improvement is usually seen in literacy books but less so in other subjects. In some instances, there is no marking so pupils cannot measure their progress or judge the value of their work.
- Literacy and numeracy are taught well. Literacy skills get a good early boost because of effective teaching of letters and sounds. Pupils have good opportunities to use their writing skills in different subjects. Teachers also ensure problem-solving skills in mathematics are encouraged across the curriculum.
- Teaching assistants are trained well and provide good support for pupils when they move to their main tasks. They are not always used effectively throughout the lesson, for example when groups of pupils stay with the class although work is not at the correct level for them. This leads to some pupils not being able to complete the tasks. Although such good practice is seen in Reception class, it is not shared sufficiently across the whole school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are always polite and well mannered. Pupils feel very safe in school. Describing what a good thing about school was, one pupil said, 'We make friends with children from other classes and not just our own.'
- Pupils are very aware of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that bullying never happens and that there is no offensive name-calling. They are equally aware of the risks they might face outside of school and know how to deal with them.
- Pupils enjoy school immensely and thrive on the opportunities they have to express themselves through music, art and sports. The recent achievement of Artsmark is a justifiable reward for their enthusiasm. Pupils' attendance is consistently above average.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effective. Pupils' positive attitudes contribute enormously to the life of the school. Pupils have excellent awareness of other cultures, gained through visits to different places of worship and links with a multicultural school.
- Pupils' willingness to take on responsibilities shows their pride for their school. Apart from the roles of the active school council that designed all the playground improvements, the jobs of peer mediators and infant buddies are keenly sought after.
- The 'smile' project undertaken by Year 6, which is designed to bring some happiness to people in the community, has enabled pupils to raise the profile of their school. They have shown excellent initiative in the way they have planted bulbs, organised musical performances and visited community groups.
- Given their outstanding personal qualities and good academic achievement, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stages of their education.

The leadership and management are good

- Under the determined leadership of the headteacher, the senior leadership team has strengthened. There is better delegation of responsibilities and more accountability for quality in the school's work. Leaders monitor the school's work robustly and have an accurate view of its

overall performance. The school is improving and is well placed to move forward.

- The school has an accurate view of strengths and aspects to develop. Actions to tackle priorities are precise and effective and the areas to improve raised at the previous inspection have been resolved.
- The curriculum is better and has a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and achievement. It is a rich curriculum which provides exciting opportunities for pupils to nurture their many interests and develop their skills. Subject leaders have a clear overview of curriculum strengths. They monitor standards and listen to pupils' ideas to ensure the curriculum continues to meet their needs.
- Systems to track pupils' progress have improved, making it much simpler to check pupils' progress and reset targets. Any signs of underachievement are dealt with swiftly through additional support. Success can be seen in the improved progress in writing.
- The overall quality of teaching has been raised as a result of rigorous management of teachers' performance. Leaders have not been slow to challenge underperformance in the past. Well-planned training and targeted support bring the necessary improvements. Teachers' work in the classroom is measured against the Teachers' Standards and all are aware that salary increases are linked to success in the classroom. Only a few weaker aspects of teaching remain; managers do not always ensure the best teaching is shared between staff.
- The school has responded well to opportunities to work with the local authority. This work has been in the form of 'light-touch' support and training.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is committed to the school's success. It fully recognises the important role that the school has within the community. Extensive training, combined with their personal expertise, leaves governors very well equipped to challenge any decisions. They review data on progress, are quick to focus on different groups and measure the school's success in relation to national expectations. They know how effectively the pupil premium is used and how it benefits eligible pupils. Governors are very clear about teachers' performance and responsibilities and how these drive salary costs. Finances are managed efficiently as are all other statutory requirements, including the management of the headteacher's performance. Safeguarding arrangements meet current 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	104902
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	413068

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Hall
Headteacher	Brian Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2009
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