

# Sherdley Primary School

Mill Lane, Sutton, St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 4HA

**Inspection dates** 4–5 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Pupils' achievement is good. Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills in line overall with those generally expected for their age. They make good progress in their learning.
- As a result of good and better teaching, standards in mathematics and English have improved rapidly and are now above the national average by the end of Year 6. This shows good improvement since the previous inspection.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported by staff in lessons and make good progress.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school; they are polite and courteous to each other and to adults and they feel safe.
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. It offers a range of local, national and international experiences for pupils to stimulate their learning.
- All leaders, including governors, continually improve the quality of teaching and learning and they share a strong desire to provide the best for every pupil.
- The governing body supports and challenges the school to continually improve by rigorously managing the performance of all staff.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is an insufficient proportion of outstanding teaching and of Key Stage 1 pupils reaching higher levels in writing.
- The policy and information about how the school manages the challenging behaviour of a few pupils is not clearly understood by all parents.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes and saw 17 lessons. In addition, the inspectors observed teaching assistants working with pupils.
- Discussions were held with pupils in lessons about their work.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, teaching and classroom support staff, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and checked reading progress records including home-school diaries.
- A wide range of documentation was reviewed including national assessment data, the school's own data, monitoring records of the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils, the school's view of its own performance and the school development plan. In addition, the minutes of the governing body meetings, safeguarding documentation and external reports from the local authority were reviewed.
- There were 62 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) taken into account, as well as individual letters and interviews with parents and the comments of parents from parents who attended a meeting with inspectors.

## Inspection team

Gillian Hunter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sarah Quinn	Additional Inspector
Frank Carruthers	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is higher than the average.
- Pupils who are supported by school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.
- The number of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is almost the same as the national average. The pupil premium is funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with a low proportion from other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low compared to the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, the school has admitted a small number of pupils with specific learning and behavioural difficulties who require additional support to overcome barriers to learning.

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

- Sustain the recent and rapid improvement in pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school and build on this further by:
  - securing more outstanding teaching
  - increasing the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Help some parents understand more clearly how the school deals with any challenging behaviour by:
  - consulting with parents to get a clear understanding of their views and perceptions about managing behaviour
  - producing an updated behaviour policy with guidelines that are clear for parents to understand.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Almost all children enter the Nursery class at age three with skills in line with those expected for their age. In reading, writing and mathematics though they are slightly lower. Because the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) and numeracy is good and children make rapid progress in the development of their skills. By the end of the Reception Year most children achieve at least the expected levels for their age and some exceed these.
- Solidly good progress continues in Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics so that pupils' achievement is now just above the average. This has improved steadily over the last three years and looks set to continue. In writing, the number of pupils achieving above age-related expectations is lower than the average. The school has prioritised this as an area to improve.
- Pupils' attainment is firmly above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2 and is continuing to rise, so that almost all pupils are now on course to reach the expected level and a good proportion to reach the higher Level 5 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from where they start. The school provides many opportunities and additional support that is well focused and matched to their varied and sometimes complex behavioural needs. Their progress is regularly checked to make sure that the support can be adapted and changed accordingly. Teachers and additional support staff have high expectations for these pupils.
- The school's assessment records and pupils' work in class show that those pupils receiving additional support through the pupil premium funding make good progress. Those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress and attain above the national average by the end of Year 6.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and examples of outstanding teaching were observed during the inspection. This has had a direct, positive impact on the good and improving attainment and progress of pupils since the last inspection.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, staff are experienced at providing well-focused and imaginative activities that are adapted well for this age range including the use of tablet computers and computers to support learning. As a result children get off to a good start.
- Good and some outstanding teaching secures good achievement for pupils. Teachers meet the individual learning needs of all pupils well. In outstanding lessons, teachers plan carefully to improve pupils' understanding rapidly, matching the learning task precisely to the pupils' ability levels. Teachers use questioning well in order to gain a clear understanding of how effectively their teaching is helping pupils to increase their learning.
- Teachers skilfully and rapidly increase the rate of learning when they recognise that pupils have understood the work set. This was seen in Year 4 where all pupils were challenged to work out the ratios of numbers. Pupils of all abilities responded exceptionally well and moved forward in their skills and understanding, including those with identified behavioural and learning needs.
- Teaching and learning are enhanced by the use of hand held technology and other equipment which allows access to further research and information. For example, pupils in Year 6 made good progress in writing through researching and questioning about Ancient Egypt. They used tablet computers competently whilst the teacher moved around questioning and challenging them to consider how to improve their work still further. The use of information and communication technology has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Teaching assistants work successfully with teachers to support and improve the learning of all pupils.
- Although now improved, the teaching of writing in Key Stage 1 has been less strong than in

reading and mathematics.

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

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons and around the school are good. Overall pupils are courteous and friendly. They show respect for each other and for adults; they work hard and cooperate well with each other. They enjoy lessons and listen carefully having high levels of interest and motivation, especially when the tasks provided are exciting and creative.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and their friends safe. When moving around the school, they behave well. At break times and lunch times, pupils play happily and safely with their friends. Pupils are able to explain what bullying is but report that this is very rare. They recognise concerns regarding internet safety and the issues connected with social networking. They are confident that there are numerous adults to talk to if they have any worries.
- Most parents spoken with during the inspection and through the responses to the online questionnaire expressed the view that behaviour in school is good. They think their children are kept safe and several speak positively about how their children's individual and additional needs are well supported.
- Some parents are unclear about the systems and process that the school uses for dealing with the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils in Key Stage 2. Although this challenging behaviour was not observed by inspectors, there are records kept of all behaviour incidents, including appropriate rewards and sanctions used to resolve them. The current behaviour policy has not been updated to include clear guidance of how the school currently deals with pupils who on occasion do not behave appropriately.
- Pupils are good ambassadors for the school when attending other venues. During a recent visit to the local high school, the cheerleading team received a special trophy for encouraging and cheering the efforts of all the other teams.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and has continued to improve since the last inspection. Persistent absence is followed up. Good attendance is promoted well and there is an expectation that pupils and parents know about the importance of attendance and the impact on pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. They are tolerant and supportive of each other. They understand other faiths and cultures and use their personal qualities to explore the experiences and feelings of others within the local and wider communities.

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

- The headteacher and senior leaders share a determination that the school will continue to improve. Since the last inspection, the school has worked closely with external agencies and the local authority in its successful effort to raise pupils' achievement and to improve the quality of teaching.
- The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher, the inclusion manager and a team of subject and phase leaders. This team has worked together with a relentless focus on ensuring that every pupil makes at least good progress. Pupils' reading skills have improved significantly. Home-school diaries are shared daily between parents, pupils and teachers to ensure that pupils have got every chance to read daily. The few pupils who do not read daily to an adult at home have an opportunity to read to a staff member.
- A new pastoral manager has been appointed from September 2013 to support further the work between home and school and to provide more opportunities for parents and pupils to be partners in the future development of the school.
- The analysis of attainment and progress data has been used well and has resulted in rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in reading, writing and

mathematics. Leaders acknowledge the need to help some parents understand more clearly the school's behaviour policy, particularly the way in which it manages any pupil's challenging behaviour.

- Robust performance management of teachers has focused on improving the quality of teaching. Staff are set clear targets and have training and development opportunities to help them to improve their practice. For example, staff have received specialist reading and phonics training and support which has impacted on improvements in the teaching of reading throughout the school.
- The checks made on the quality of teaching and learning are thorough and have led to improvements. Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection, leading to the much more precise setting of tasks for individual pupils and groups in lessons.
- Teachers understand the Teachers' Standards and are clear of their accountability for improved attainment and progress of pupils. Salary progression is related to classroom performance.
- An accurate view of the school's performance has enabled senior leaders to pinpoint the priorities for further improvement, especially in improving pupils' attainment and progress across the school. The school development plan has clear priorities that are understood and acted upon by all leaders and staff.
- The local authority supports the view that leadership is good. The level of support by the local authority has reduced since the last inspection, acknowledging that the school has good capacity to improve still further.
- The quality of the curriculum is good and offers rich and diverse opportunities for pupils to learn through good quality and stimulating learning experiences. This leads to good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through strong links with the community. Pupils go on visits and have residential opportunities that provide them with experiences that help them to learn and make good progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - There has been good improvement of the work of governors since the last inspection. They have worked hard to improve their knowledge and skills and every governor is linked to a class that they follow throughout the school. Pupils know their class governor and value their involvement and support, for example, by cheering them on and supporting their class during sports day.
  - The governing body is clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors know how well the school is doing when compared with other schools nationally. The headteacher provides clear guidance and documentation which governors can readily access and this helps them to ask questions and hold the school to account. The key priorities for improvement are understood and governors are clear of the areas that need to improve still further. The governing body ensures that the pupil premium funding is used wisely and that it is targeted appropriately. Governors have reviewed their individual skills and identified their development needs, which has led to a well-targeted training programme. All essential policies are in place and the governing body ensures that safeguarding meets statutory 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>	104769
<b>Local authority</b>	St Helens
<b>Inspection number</b>	400045

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	429
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sarah Bowles
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Thompson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01744 678683
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