

Sandilands Primary School

Wendover Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester, M23 9JX

Inspection dates 16–17 July 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 achieve well. They make at least good progress from low and often very low starting points and by the end of Year 6 reach broadly average standards in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is typically good and some is outstanding. Adults skilfully question pupils to help them retain facts and deepen their understanding.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are extremely well provided for and achieve well in this school, where everyone is included in everything.
- The school provides a wide range of interesting subjects and experiences that develop pupils' talents and interests and broaden their horizons.
- Behaviour is excellent. Warm, supportive relationships and a 'family' atmosphere mean that pupils feel very safe and enjoy school. Parents have a high regard for the way the school cares for their children.
- The school is well led by the headteacher. She has a very clear view of how the school can continue to improve and is supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. Effective attention has been given to teaching and achievement and these aspects are improving.
- The governing body is highly committed to supporting leaders. They have an accurate picture overall of the school's strengths which continues to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is yet outstanding.
- Teachers' marking does not always provide enough advice to help pupils' improve their work.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to check how well they are doing against their individual targets.
- Standards in writing, although improving, are not yet as good as those in reading and mathematics. Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills by writing at length.
- Governors do not yet receive information about the achievement of groups of pupils, including those who are eligible for pupil premium funding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 22 lessons or parts of lessons. The inspectors also looked at examples of pupils' work, listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of reading skills.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils and inspectors spoke to pupils about their work. Inspectors held meetings with three members of the governing body. They spoke to an external consultant who regularly works with the school and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also met with members of the school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the school's own questionnaires to parents and of the views staff expressed in the questionnaire they completed during the inspection. There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to generate a summary of parents' view.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including a summary of the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness, the school improvement plan and analysis of current data of pupils' attainment and progress. Minutes from governing body meetings were also considered.
- The inspectors visited the after-school club and the breakfast club.

Inspection team

Lyn Pender, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pamela Davenport	Additional Inspector
Rosemary Batty	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average sized primary school.
- A very large majority of pupils are White British. Other pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost all pupils speak English as their home language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. A well above average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs. The additional provision described in the previous inspection report is no longer in place.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been a number of staffing changes since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new Early Years Foundation Stage leader in January 2013. There have also been several long-term staff absences.
- The governors provide an after-school club and a breakfast club.
- The school has Healthy Schools status and holds the Stonewall Award for promotion of equal opportunities for all pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - making sure that teachers provide regular and helpful guidance in marking so that pupils know the steps to take to make their work even better
 - providing time in lessons for pupils to check how well they are doing and to improve their work.
- Raise attainment in writing by providing more regular opportunities for pupils to write at length so that they can develop their skills in planning and structuring their work.
- Ensure that senior leaders share their information about the progress of all groups of learners each term with the governing body in order to add more detail to governors' understanding of how well each group of pupils is performing across the year.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start the Nursery Year with skills well below those expected for their age; especially communication and language and a few have exceptionally low skill levels. Children make good or even better progress; by the end of the Reception Year most are working at levels close to those expected for their age. In reading, a few children are working above the expected levels.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 have risen and are currently broadly average. Pupils are reaching the national average in reading and mathematics, but standards are a little lower in writing. Nonetheless, pupils' overall progress in Key Stage 1 is good in all three subjects.
- Standards have also risen in Key Stage 2, a continuation of a three year upward trend. Most pupils in the current Year 6 have reached the nationally expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's records, supported by inspection evidence, show that pupils in this year group have made good or sometimes outstanding progress from their individual starting points in both English and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in writing is improving but remains uneven as they move up the school. As a result, standards, especially at the higher levels, are lower than those in reading and mathematics. Pupils are improving their basic skills in writing but lack sufficient opportunities to put them in practice in a longer piece of writing.
- Standards in mathematics have risen since the previous inspection because of concerted action by the school and this trend is set to continue. Pupils across the school are making good progress in mathematics and now apply their skills well in a range of activities.
- Standards in reading have risen since the previous inspection. For example, most of the pupils in the current Year 1 reached the expected standard in the national check on phonic skills, which investigates their ability to identify letter and sounds. Pupils across the school show a genuine interest and enjoyment in reading and by Year 6 their reading standards are at the expected level for their age.
- The gap between boys' and girls' achievement, identified at the last inspection, has been addressed successfully. Where a gap in attainment can be detected, it is associated with a high proportion of boys with disabilities and special educational needs in some year groups. There are no gaps in progress.
- The achievement of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for pupil premium funding is similar to that of other pupils in school. By the end of Key Stage 2, their progress compares favourably with the national picture. Their attainment in English and mathematics is average.
- As a result of the effective teaching and support they receive, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve well and make good and better progress in relation to their abilities and starting points. All of this reflects the school's work and commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for every pupil.

The quality of teaching is good

- A sharp focus on raising the quality of teaching has brought about improvements in pupils' achievement. Almost all lessons observed during the inspection were good and in the Early Years Foundation Stage, there was some outstanding teaching. Inspection evidence, including the work in pupils' books, shows that the quality of teaching is typically good.
- Typical features of the good teaching in the school include:
 - well-planned, enjoyable lessons with activities matched carefully to pupils' learning needs and interests
 - learning which moves along at a brisk pace so that pupils are fully involved throughout the

lesson

- effective teamwork by teachers and skilled teaching assistants which ensures the right level of support for all pupils
- effective use of questioning skills to explore and correct pupils' misconceptions and to deepen their understanding, reflecting staff expertise.
- Classrooms are bright, welcoming and well-organised and expectations are high. As a result, pupils' attitudes towards learning throughout the school are highly positive and they are keen to do their best.
- Teachers' marking is sometimes of a high quality, enabling pupils to be very clear about their next steps in their learning. However, this is not yet consistent across the classes. Most pupils have their own targets in English and mathematics and some have opportunities in lessons to use these to improve their work, but again this is not yet seen consistently in all classes.
- Mathematics is taught well and teaching consistently challenges pupils to reason and solve problems methodically. In Year 6, pupils were developing the life skill of working within a budget to plan a family holiday to France. The well-planned and interesting resources challenged pupils to make the appropriate choices, based on their calculation of the total costs for travel, accommodation and food. Pupils made good progress in this interesting lesson.
- Reading is taught successfully with good opportunities to read to an adult and also for older pupils to use their skills for research.
- Improved opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics in their work in other subjects are helping to raise standards across the curriculum. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to produce longer pieces of writing to improve their writing skills, especially enhancing their skills to plan and structure their written work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- A strong feature of Sandilands is the way pupils with different needs and backgrounds work and play together. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. Their behaviour makes a strong contribution towards this happy, warm and welcoming school.
- Parents appreciate the individual care and attention shown to their children. Pupils with additional learning, health, social or emotional needs are supported extremely well and are always included in everything on offer.
- Pupils feel very safe. They have an exceptionally clear understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber and prejudice based bullying. They say that bullying happens very occasionally and that staff always deal with it straight away.
- Pupils join in lessons enthusiastically, enjoy working together and support one another well. They pay careful attention to their teachers and teaching assistants and try hard to present their work neatly. During the unusually hot weather during the inspection, behaviour in lessons and around school was never less than good and often exemplary.
- The few pupils who sometimes find it difficult to manage their own behaviour are helped to do so very effectively by adults. The behaviour policy meets the differing needs of pupils very well, is understood by all and is applied consistently.
- Pupils enjoy school and know how important it is to attend regularly and on time. Due to the concerted efforts of pupils, parents, staff and governors the attendance rate has risen since the last inspection and is now above average overall.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsible roles, for example, as prefects or as members of the influential school council. They feel listened to and able to contribute to the decision-making process in the school. As one pupil remarked, 'We get a say in what happens.'
- The after-school club provides high quality care and a good balance of learning and fun.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, who has a clear focus on continuing to improve the school, is very well supported by all senior leaders, staff and governors. The development areas identified at the previous inspection have been fully tackled. The school has good capacity to move forward in all areas of its work.
- Checks on how well the school is doing are extremely accurate because they are based on detailed, regular and rigorous analysis. The school improvement plan sets out the appropriate actions for continued improvement and describes very clearly how well their success can be measured through the year.
- Regular checks are made on the quality of teaching. Staff share good practice and work together well and all of this is supported by an effective programme of ongoing training for teachers and support staff. Only a few minor aspects of teaching remain to be resolved.
- Regular checks on pupils' progress give clear information about how well everyone is doing so that staff can quickly identify and support pupils who may be underachieving. The school checks the impact of its support for all the different groups of pupils and provides effective support ensuring they make good progress.
- Provision for pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable is very well led by the deputy headteacher.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It is enriched by a wide range of memorable experiences including visits and visitors which extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. Opportunities to learn through drama and play musical instruments, such as the popular drumming sessions taking place during the inspection, further enrich pupils' cultural development.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Knowledgeable governors support the school well and make frequent visits to find out first-hand about its work and life. Governors ask searching questions and hold school leaders to account assiduously. They take full account of the data and other regular and detailed information about the progress of year groups, which is provided by the headteacher and other leaders. While governors question any dips in the attainment of the different year groups they do not yet receive termly data to be able to question any dips in the attainment or progress of specific groups of pupils, such as those supported through the pupil premium funding. Governors are aware of the quality of teaching and recognise that leaders and staff are set challenging targets linked to pupils' progress and the school's priorities. They check on the link between the achievement of these targets and salary progression. Safeguarding is given a high priority and all statutory requirements are met. Governors ensure that equality of opportunity is promoted and that discrimination is not tolerated in school.

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	105469
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	413131

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	380
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Lyons
Headteacher	Joan Grant
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2010
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