

# Northway Primary School

Dodds Lane, Maghull, Liverpool, Merseyside, L31 9AA

**Inspection dates** 26–27 November 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		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Most pupils make good progress and achieve well as they go through the school. This is especially true of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those who attract the pupil premium.
- The quality of teaching is good and continues to improve. Teachers have high expectations, and effective lessons fully engage pupils in learning.
- Behaviour is of the highest standard and pupils love coming to school, where they get on together extremely well, develop a positive view of the world and feel extremely safe.
- The school's outstanding leadership has a clear vision for the school based on a strong drive to reach the highest possible standards and levels of achievement. This has seen standards rise since the last inspection.
- The developments in leadership have had a strong impact on the effectiveness of teaching and learning and this underlies the rising achievement that can now be seen throughout the school.
- Governors bring a range of relevant expertise and they are very effective in the ways in which they challenge and support the school to become even better.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Over time, although many pupils make good progress, some of the more-able pupils have not been fully challenged. Some pupils have therefore not reached their full potential.
- Although provision in the resourced base is extremely effective, pupils are often not placed there for long enough to gain the maximum benefit.

## Information about this inspection

- A total of 16 lessons were observed, including two joint observations undertaken with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other members of the school leadership team, the leaders of the resourced provision and of the nursery, the Chair of the Governing Body and other representative governors, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- Written work contained in representative books from pupils in every class was looked at in detail and groups of pupils read to inspectors.
- The views of pupils were gathered not only from two formal meetings with their representatives but also through discussions in lessons and throughout the inspection. The views of staff were gathered from the 29 responses to the staff questionnaire and also from informal discussions.
- The views of parents expressed through the 57 returns to the online Parent View questionnaire were taken into full account, as were the views of a parent who came into school to meet the lead inspector.
- Inspectors looked at a range of written evidence, including information on the achievement and progress of pupils, teachers' planning and assessment, the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning, and a range of policies and procedures, including those for keeping pupils safe.

## Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Latham	Additional Inspector
Mark Hilton	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school and also contains nursery provision for pre-school children run by the school's governing body.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average, but has shown a sharp increase in recent times. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average. However, the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average, reflecting the presence of The Base where all pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The specially resourced provision, The Base, is run by the school's governing body for pupils, all of whom are in Key Stage 2, admitted by the local authority and who come from across the whole of its area. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs for dyslexia, usually with associated learning difficulties such as autistic spectrum disorders, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. It has 12 places, of which eight are currently allocated, with one more pupil joining at the start of next term.
- Virtually all pupils throughout the school are from White British backgrounds.
- A pre-school club is run by the governing body and an after-school provision is provided by an external organisation, so did not form part of this inspection. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which represent the minimum expectations for progress and attainment in English and mathematics.

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

- Further improve the rate of progress of the most-able pupils by:
  - ensuring that there is always enough challenge for the most-able pupils in lessons
  - the impact of the learning partnerships that have been created is sustained, making the most of the expertise that they are bringing to support higher-attaining pupils.
- Work with the local authority to ensure that pupils who join The Base are admitted at the earliest opportunity in order to maximise the impact of the specialist help and provision they receive.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Historically, while a majority of pupils have made expected progress, not enough were reaching the higher grades in English or mathematics. This was particularly true in Key Stage 2. The school has improved its capacity to monitor the progress of individual pupils and to use this information to increase the level of challenge. As a result, there is very clear evidence from the latest data on pupil progress and from a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work that the numbers now on track to reach the higher levels has increased markedly.
- The improvement has been most marked in the quality of writing, which has historically been much weaker than the quality of work in reading and mathematics. The improvement is because there are now many more opportunities for writing across all topics and subjects being studied.
- Children enter Nursery or Reception at a level of development that is typically below that expected for their age. As a consequence of the very good provision, they make good progress so that when they start Year 1 they are performing at the level expected nationally.
- Good progress continues through Key Stage 1 and this is reflected in the national screening for phonics (the knowledge of letters and the sounds they make) at the end of Year 1, when standards are above those expected nationally. The latest evidence from the school's detailed tracking of individual progress and from work in pupils' books shows that, as they move through the school to Year 6, pupils are now on track to reach the levels expected and increasing numbers are reaching higher levels.
- The latest nationally published information shows that the proportions reaching the higher levels are broadly in line with the national figure in mathematics, reading and writing. In grammar, punctuation and spelling the national figure is exceeded by 17%, which represents strong progress over the last three years and reflects improvements in teaching since the last inspection. However, there remains a need to ensure that the more able are fully challenged and can match this performance across all the areas that are tested.
- All of the pupils in The Base were performing well below the standards normally expected for their age when they joined. They make outstanding progress from their starting points, although this does not always come early enough to maximise achievement before they move to secondary school.
- The school looks very carefully at the progress of identified groups, including the very small numbers from minority ethnic communities. All make good progress because individual needs are addressed. For example, when boys' reading was identified as an issue the school purchased materials that would appeal to them, while also ensuring that this did not lead to girls slipping back. This reflects the strong commitment to providing equality of opportunity.
- The strong performance of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is enhanced by early identification of needs and very effective programmes being implemented to support them. This sees this group of pupils making accelerated progress and closing the gap with other pupils.
- The very detailed tracking of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium shows rapid progress in English and mathematics, narrowing or even eliminating the gap in their attainment compared to others. This is because the specifically targeted additional help, such as one-to-one support to address identified weaknesses, has been very successful.
- Reading is supported strongly from the start through the high-quality teaching of phonics and standards are above those expected nationally. This helps many pupils go on to become fluent and confident readers.
- The additional funding provided for sport and physical education has been used effectively. A partnership with a local high school sees sports teachers working directly with pupils and observing teachers to enhance their expertise. This has already led to rising standards in physical education.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teaching is good overall, and there is now clear evidence of rising standards, effectively supported by improved leadership. The historic failure to fully challenge the most able is being addressed effectively, and much teaching is now outstanding.
- Teachers now have information on the performance and progress of every pupil in English and mathematics, updated termly. This allows teachers to set challenging individual targets. Marking is detailed and effective in helping pupils reach these and to know what they have to do to make their work even better.
- Teaching assistants work effectively alongside teachers, supporting individuals. Pupils from The Base spend most of their time in mainstream classes, working with their peers while also being well supported and making rapid progress.
- From the very start in Nursery and Reception, children enjoy learning, becoming active participants. Their achievements are monitored and recorded effectively. When they start National Curriculum work in Year 1 pupils have been well-prepared and throughout the school remain fully engaged in learning.
- Teachers have high expectations and, through the use of effective questioning, challenge their pupils to develop thinking skills. Pupils love to discuss their work and chances to assess their own achievement and that of classmates. This reflects a very mature attitude to learning.
- There has been a big improvement in the level of support for the most able, supported by partnerships with a local high school. For example, the most-able mathematicians in Year 6 are able to attend the high school, work with specialist teachers and develop a love of the subject.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very effective support and their individual education plans are reviewed termly to ensure continuing relevance. Good teaching enables them to make good progress.
- Such individualised help and support underpin rising standards that are now apparent for all groups and individuals, including those who receive the pupil premium.

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

- Pupils gain very great enjoyment from their learning throughout the school and from the extremely close relationships they develop with staff, based on mutual respect. No learning time is lost in lessons and behaviour in and around school is exemplary as pupils develop a love of learning which strongly supports their progress.
- Parents, staff and the pupils themselves are extremely positive about behaviour and pupils' safety. They appreciate the ways in which the school helps pupils to understand ways in which they can make themselves safer.
- Pupils get on extremely well together, helping and supporting each other. They respond very positively to opportunities to accept responsibilities. While bullying is very rare, pupils have a good understanding of the different kinds of bullying and of the dangers inherent in the misuse of the internet and social networking sites.
- Pupils are totally engaged in learning and they enjoy school a great deal. As a result, attendance is above average and punctuality is excellent. However, the school continues to emphasise the need for full attendance, working hard to try to prevent things such as family holidays being taken during term time.
- The pre-school club run by the governing body is popular and gets the day off to a good start. Some pupils benefit from the opportunity for a healthy breakfast before lessons get underway. The after-school provision is also popular, but as it is privately provided it was not part of this inspection.
- The spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils features strongly; the extremely positive social aspects being reflected in the ways in which pupils collaborate with and support each other, and develop a very positive view of the world reflected in their International School award.

## The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is an inspirational leader who is very well supported by her deputy. They both have the unqualified support of staff and parents. As a teacher put it 'We are led by a very strong and supportive leadership. We are valued as individuals and continuously supported with our professional development'.
- Recent developments in the roles and responsibilities of the wider leadership team have raised the quality of leadership even higher, supporting enhanced achievement and teaching. Each leads by example, modelling good practice or supporting teachers in their classrooms, for example. This underlies the rising effectiveness of the school now coming through from the Nursery and Reception up to Year 6.
- The leadership team ensures that the detailed data on pupils' progress are used effectively by all teachers. They lead by example and seek opportunities to model best practice and to promote opportunities for peer observations among teachers. This supplements the excellent systems that support school leaders' observations of standards in classrooms throughout the school.
- Monitoring of teaching, marking and planning is rigorous. It is part of the process that leads to staff being given challenging annual objectives that address identified priorities for school development while also promoting professional expertise. As the quality of leadership has improved, so have pupil outcomes. In particular, the percentage reaching the higher grades has risen to reach the national average, and in the case of grammar, punctuation and spelling to far exceed it.
- Teachers understand the links between pay and performance, and those on the higher pay scale willingly undertake additional responsibilities.
- The school reviews its own performance in detail and identifies priorities for sustaining progress. There is a relentless focus on improvement. The improved monitoring of individual progress supports the enhanced performance of pupils who benefit from the pupil premium, for example.
- The curriculum allows access to learning irrespective of starting points or ability, including pupils in The Base. It has recently been enhanced by the move to a more topic-based approach, which allows pupils to extend their writing and numeracy skills across the whole curriculum.
- Extremely close relationships with other professionals help ensure effective provision for the whole range of pupils' needs, including that for pupils who are potentially vulnerable or those with issues around safeguarding.
- Parents are successfully encouraged to play a full part in the education of their children, through a range of workshops, for example, such as the recent one to help them understand phonics to support their children's reading.
- Although the input from the local authority is 'light-touch' it is very much appreciated by the school, who appreciate the continuing strong links with their School Development Officer.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is very effective and all statutory duties, including those for safeguarding, are carried out rigorously. Governors bring relevant professional expertise that supports their ability to challenge the school, while at the same time being totally committed to its success. Financial monitoring, including that on spending and on checking the outcomes for those eligible for the pupil premium, is stringent. Governors understand the curriculum, know about the quality of teaching and learning, and the areas of responsibility of different staff. Challenging objectives are set annually for the headteacher, and governors understand the links between teachers' performance and rates of pay, and how to deal with unsatisfactory teaching. There is a good understanding of the effectiveness of the school and why this is improving, including pupils' progress. They make comparisons with other schools because of effective training in using educational data. They are fully supportive of The Base and work collaboratively with the local authority in maintaining the provision.

## 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>	104879
<b>Local authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	426296

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>	295
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	C Green
<b>Headteacher</b>	R Gill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 5262565
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 5266303
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin.northway@schools.sefton.gov.uk">admin.northway@schools.sefton.gov.uk</a>



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