

Summerhill Primary School

Poverty Lane, Maghull, Liverpool, Merseyside, L31 3DT

Inspection dates 4–5 February 2014

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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The achievement of pupils and the progress they make from their starting points is good. They make an excellent start in the Reception class. Many pupils make more than expected progress.
- The school welcomes pupils with a range of disabilities and special educational needs, which are sometimes quite severe, and helps them to do very well, socially as well as in their learning.
- Teaching is good. Teachers are very committed to their pupils, whom they get to know really well and meet their individual needs..
- Behaviour throughout the school is excellent and helps to create a very positive learning atmosphere. Pupils want to do their best and they enjoy their learning.
- Pupils report they feel very safe, which is equally true of those who could be quite vulnerable, such as those with physical disabilities.
- Leaders have a clear vision for continuous improvement and strong support from the staff in driving the school forward.
- Leaders provide effective support for staff to develop their expertise. In turn, this has led to the school improving, rising standards and pupils making better progress since the last inspection.
- Governors play a prominent and constructive role in the school. They carry out their role in a highly effective way and play a key role in supporting school improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough of the teaching is outstanding. Not all the teachers are fully confident in implementing the assessment policy, using technology in their lessons and addressing pupils' different learning needs.
- The role of key subject leaders has not yet developed fully in terms of checking their subject, observing teaching, modelling best practice and supporting training.

Information about this inspection

- A total of 14 lessons taught by the school's seven teachers were observed, four of them jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other school leaders, such as the leaders of key subjects. They met with the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and two representatives of the local authority.
- The views of parents were gathered from conversations. Responses to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, were too few to trigger an analysis of their views.
- The views of pupils were gained from meetings with two groups and from talking to as many as possible throughout the inspection.
- Discussions were held with staff during the inspection in order to gather their views.
- The inspectors looked at the work of pupils in their books and undertook a detailed review of the books of a sample of pupils from across the school. They listened to some pupils read.
- A range of written evidence was scrutinised, including detailed information on the 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 safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Buckley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Summerhill is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding for specific groups, such as those known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority. The proportion of pupils supported through school action is a little below average, while the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British background.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which represent the minimum expectation for progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- There is provision for before- and after-school activities on the school site but they are not managed by the governing body and are inspected separately.
- At the time of the last inspection the headteacher was away from school, taking a period of sabbatical leave. She returned in September 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teachers become as proficient as the best in implementing the school's assessment policy, using technology in lessons and addressing pupils' different learning needs in order to raise standards further.

- Develop the role of key subject leaders to enable them to support the process of school improvement by checking performance in their subject, observing lessons, modelling best practice and leading training opportunities.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When the headteacher returned from a period of extended leave in September 2011 she found that standards in key areas, particularly in reading, had slipped and that elements of weak teaching were contributing to this.
- This process was reversed quickly and achievement is once again good in all subjects. Very high numbers of pupils are now making expected progress and a large percentage better than expected progress in both English and mathematics. The hard work put into raising standards in reading have paid off. In the current Year 6, almost all pupils are making at least expected progress in reading and three quarters make more than expected progress. A similar picture is seen for writing and mathematics.
- Sometimes it looks as if a class has not made enough progress over time. For example, last year's Year 6 seemed to have been performing much better when they were in Key Stage 1. However, what the data do not show is that a quarter of that original class had left and that of those left behind over a quarter had significant special educational needs which had an impact on overall attainment.
- A majority of children enter the Reception Year with levels of skills below those generally expected. Excellent teaching and support mean they make very good progress so that they enter Year 1 with skills broadly in line with those found nationally.
- Pupils continue to make good progress as they go through the school. In some years there have been small classes in which there have been a high proportion of pupils who have disabilities or special educational needs. This has an impact when comparing the overall attainment of these classes with national expectations. However, pupils are making good progress from their initial starting points.
- The school shows a strong commitment to supporting pupils with a wide variety of sometimes complex disabilities and special educational needs. For some this limits their attainment but care is always taken to maximise progress, which is sometimes rapid and sustained. Additional support is provided either by the specialist intervention teacher or by the effective teaching assistants (known in school as learning partners). This allows these pupils to narrow the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils.
- The most able pupils are being challenged effectively and as a consequence they continue to make good progress from their higher starting points, better than that generally expected for pupils of their age. There are, for example, opportunities to work with specialist teachers in a local high school and special clubs are set up in school, such as those for literacy and mathematics. Special clubs have also been set up for pupils identified as gifted and talented, such as those for art and dance.
- Opportunities to promote reading are seen throughout the school. For the younger ones this includes the effective teaching of phonics (understanding letters and the sounds they make) and in the phonics screening at the end of Year 1 the school's results are now above the national expectation.
- The pupil premium is targeted effectively to meet specific needs that have been identified. Much of the funding has been allocated to the appointment of a teacher to teach intervention programmes and the impact of these is measured very carefully. It shows these pupils, including those eligible for free school meals, make good progress. Currently by Year 6 the gap in the attainment of pupils who have been supported by the pupil premium and others has disappeared. This reflects the school's strong commitment to providing equality of opportunity.
- For two years the government is providing funding to support improvements in the provision of sport. At Summerhill, this is being used extremely effectively, mainly in buying in specialist teachers from a local high school to work alongside and support the school's teachers. This has improved their skills and confidence, reflected in the fact that the two physical education lessons observed were both outstanding. More pupils are also participating in sporting opportunities.

The quality of teaching is good

- Throughout the school teachers and learning partners work and plan together very effectively to enable pupils to make good progress. Pupils enjoy their learning and work well in lessons because they are interested in what they are being taught.
- Since the return of the headteacher from her sabbatical leave the quality of teaching has been improving, although less experienced teachers do not always get opportunities to see best practice being modelled by experienced colleagues. Not all are yet equally comfortable in getting the most from the school's effective marking policy, maximising opportunities for using technology as a teaching aid, or addressing pupils' different learning needs.
- There is a focus on learning right through from the Reception Year, where children were observed enthusiastically developing their skills in phonics and mathematics as a result of high-quality teaching and support. Teachers throughout the school are committed to the success of their pupils and in every class there is a positive learning atmosphere supported by excellent relationships and effective visual displays.
- All staff expect the best of pupils and they respond positively. When teachers ask challenging questions they are answered well and pupils listen to each other's ideas sensibly. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils reflected on why there might be differences between a book written a long time ago and a book written now about a time in the past. In all lessons there is a variety of tasks around the common lesson theme, targeted to allow pupils to be challenged at the right level and to learn well.
- Specific skills in the range of subjects taught, including English, communication and mathematics, are taught effectively in well-planned lessons. The quality of teaching is good, with some being outstanding. For example, in the Reception class, the teacher asked lots of good questions that got the children thinking for themselves about numbers and simple addition.
- Marking is done regularly and the school's clear marking policy not only shows pupils what they have done well but also how work might have been even better, but it is not used well enough by all teachers.
- Most teachers use information on their pupils' progress effectively. Progress is recorded termly and leads to a pupil-progress discussion that involves parents. When assessments show that progress is not as good as expected, additional help is provided, the impact of which is checked carefully.
- This shows that additional help is effective and pupils, including those with special educational needs or in receipt of support from the pupil premium, make accelerated progress and so narrow the gap in their attainment and that of others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good and their positive attitudes to learning, including their ability to work on their own, in pairs or in small groups, has a positive effect on their ability to make good progress.
- Little time is lost during lessons and low-level disruption is rare. Normally pupils are eager to learn and demonstrate constructive attitudes.
- Throughout the school there is a positive ethos, pupils getting on well with each other and with staff in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Those pupils who have physical disabilities, including the significant number who use wheelchairs, are popular members of the school community and say they are very happy at school.
- Such extremely positive attitudes by pupils reflect the positive support that staff give to the promotion of spiritual, social, moral and cultural development throughout the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good and is appreciated by parents. Pupils say they feel safe and links with groups such as the local community police service helps

reinforce key safety messages.

- Pupils understand that bullying can take different forms, including cyber-bullying, or that based on prejudice against others on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity or gender. However, they insist that because pupils get on so well with each other it is not an issue in school.
- Although the attendance of some pupils who have physical disabilities is sometimes affected by their wider health issues and the need for medical interventions, generally the attendance of pupils is above average. This reflects their enjoyment of, and pride in, their school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a vision and quiet determination to make this an excellent school and has shown herself able to take determined action to address any impediments to this. She is strongly supported by her very effective deputy. They have clear roles within the senior leadership and combine to make a strong team.
- They have the strong support of staff at all levels and this creates a powerful and effective team throughout the school.
- Senior teachers are keen to play their full role in leading key subjects. This is work in progress and their roles are not fully developed yet. They are enthusiastic to play the fullest possible role as leaders, such as observing in classrooms, modelling best practice and leading professional development in their subjects.
- Effective monitoring of teaching, planning and marking supports the arrangements to improve the performance of teachers and learning partners. Teachers are aware that more is expected of those with greater experience and the published pay policy makes clear the link between pay and performance.
- Careful self-evaluation leads to the identification of priorities for school improvement. Annual targets for teachers balance these needs with those of their own professional development, taking their needs and those of the school into full account.
- The curriculum promotes good learning for all pupils, whatever their starting points or academic ability. There are good opportunities to extend learning through a range of clubs and trips, including residential visits. Plans are in place for informing staff of the new requirements of the revised National Curriculum to be introduced in September 2014.
- Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and staff receive effective training in child protection, updated regularly. There are also very positive links with a wide range of other professionals, particularly those who work well with the school so that pupils with a wide range of disabilities can be full members of the school community. Parents are supportive and appreciate the work done by the school. A high proportion do not live in the immediate area around the school and make the positive choice to seek a place for their children.
- The local authority is seen as a valuable partner in school improvement by the school, which feels that it receives very positive help and support, particularly in addressing the weaknesses found in the period after the last inspection when the headteacher returned to school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is highly effective and all legal responsibilities are carried out, including those for safeguarding. A good level of relevant expertise enables them to challenge senior leaders successfully and they are fully committed to its success. They undertake effective financial monitoring, including a detailed analysis of how the pupil premium and sport funding is allocated and their impact on achievement. Governors have a detailed understanding of the quality of teaching and areas of responsibility of different staff because they visit school regularly to observe lessons and meet staff. Challenging targets are set annually for the headteacher, her performance being checked carefully. There is a good understanding of the link between teachers' pay and their effectiveness, together with knowledge of the procedures for dealing with any inadequate teaching that might occur. Governors have a good understanding of how the performance of their school compares with that of others. Where needed they have benefited from good training provided by the local authority.

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	104882
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	440706

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Stamper
Headteacher	Laura Nelson
Date of previous school inspection	20 April 2011
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