

# Parklands Community Primary School

Little Sutton, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH66 3RL

**Inspection dates** 25–26 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress is not consistently good across all classes and is not as good as it could be over time.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in writing and mathematics are well below average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in writing and mathematics are well below average.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good. Where teaching requires improvement pupils are not clear about what is expected of them, they lose concentration, become distracted and do not make as much progress as they could.
- Teachers' marking in mathematics does not consistently give pupils guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils are not always given time to respond to any guidance given and this slows their learning.
- Opportunities for pupils to practise their extended writing skills and mathematical skills in subjects other than English and mathematics and in real-life contexts are limited. This slows progress, particularly for those who are most able.
- Attendance remains below the national average and the proportion of pupils who are frequently absent is too high.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has, with senior and middle leaders and the governing body, been highly instrumental in ensuring improvements in teaching, the progress pupils are making and in punctuality.
- Procedures for managing the performance of staff are excellent and underpinned by detailed and rigorous tracking of pupils' progress.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress from starting points which are well below those expected for their age.
- Pupils are happy and feel safe in school. They are polite and behave sensibly around school and in the playground. Parents wholeheartedly agree and are very positive about the recent improvements.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons, one of which was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from two different year groups reading, and talked with them and other groups of pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils’ progress and to the school’s management, including the arrangements to ensure safeguarding.
- The inspectors spoke with a group of parents and took account of the 31 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took account of the 29 staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Vanessa MacDonald, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
John Shutt	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.*

### Information about this school

- Parklands Community Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and a small proportion is from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those from Traveller backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is well above the national average. 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 who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- An assistant headteacher has joined the school since the last inspection.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club for pupils, which was visited as part of the inspection.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to raise pupils' standards and achievement, especially for the most able, by:
  - ensuring that all pupils know what is expected of them in lessons so they make the best possible progress
  - ensuring the quality of marking in mathematics matches that in writing so that pupils know what to do to improve and that they have time to respond to the comments made to improve their work
  - increasing the opportunities for pupils to produce longer pieces of writing in subjects other than English so they can practise their skills
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in real-life contexts and in subjects other than mathematics.
- Work closely with parents to continue to improve pupils' attendance so that it is at least similar to the national average.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement. This is because pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school to ensure that they reach the levels of attainment of which they are capable, including those who are most able.
- Standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 remain below those expected nationally, especially in writing and mathematics. However, there has been some improvement in the standards reached by Year 6 in 2013 and the gap between the school's and national standards has narrowed.
- The small number of pupils who are most able make progress similar to their peers overall. The school recognises these pupils have not always made the progress of which they are capable and has introduced additional teaching sessions to help them make more rapid progress, particularly for older pupils.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from starting points which are typically well below those expected for their age in communication and language, and in mathematics. They enter Year 1 at the expected level in their physical development, communication and use of language and their personal, social and emotional development. However, their skills in literacy and mathematics, as well in as their understanding of science and the wider world are below those expected for their age. Well-planned and interesting sessions which enable children to build on their learning contribute to this good progress.
- The introduction of a systematic way to teach phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is having a positive impact on improving pupils' reading skills. The work in pupils' books and listening to pupils read show that they are increasingly using these skills to read and write words. Although the results of the Year 1 phonics check in 2013 remained below average, this was a marked improvement on the previous year.
- The proportion of pupils making the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics, improved significantly in 2013 on the previous year and an increasing proportion made better than expected progress from their starting points. The restructuring of the morning timetable to focus on developing basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics has contributed to these improvements.
- Pupils who are disabled, those with special educational needs and those who are from different ethnic backgrounds make the same progress as their classmates. Although this is variable over time, the most recent data show that an increasing proportion of these pupils are making good progress because of the additional support they are receiving.
- Gaps between the attainment of those pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are not eligible are closing over time. This is because of the well-focused use of the funding to support these pupils. By the end of Year 6 last year, eligible pupils were about half a term ahead of their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils make progress which is similar to their peers and which is sometimes good but is variable across the school.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving, it is still judged to require improvement because it has not been good enough over time. It is not yet consistently good enough to ensure that pupils always achieve as well as they could.
- Where teaching requires improvement and pupils do not learn as quickly as they should, teachers do not make it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and, therefore, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. They lose concentration and do not challenge themselves to do better.
- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and there are good examples of where pupils are given

clear guidance on how to improve their work, particularly in writing. However, in mathematics there are not enough examples of how pupils could improve their work across all classes. In both writing and mathematics, pupils are not always given sufficient time to respond to any comments to improve their work and this slows their progress. Some marking is good. Pupils review their work during 'Fix-it time' for example, and respond to comments made through marking of their previous work. Pupils' next steps in their learning are clear and this enables that pupils make good progress.

- Work in pupils' books shows that they have improved their writing skills. In Key Stage 1, pupils are showing greater awareness of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) when spelling words. In Key Stage 2, pupils are increasingly using a wider range of punctuation and vocabulary. In some classes, there is an increase in the range of opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes and in different subjects, which has improved their learning. However, in other classes, these opportunities have been limited and this slows pupils' progress.
- In mathematics, pupils are taught a range of strategies to work out different 'sums' and evidence in pupils' mathematics books shows that sometimes they use these to work out problems. There are limited opportunities, however, for pupils to practise their mathematical skills to solve problems using real-life contexts, or in subjects other than mathematics. This limits the development of their understanding, particularly for those who are most able.
- Some teaching is good. Teachers use questioning to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to explain their understanding, and learning moves on at a quick pace. Tasks are varied so pupils' interest and involvement in their learning are maintained. In a Key Stage 2 class, pupils used their partner to assess and support their learning of how a comma is used, demonstrating extremely well how it can be used in their writing.
- Teaching assistants are used well in lessons and in small group work. The school has taken action to help pupils who have fallen behind in their learning and additional teaching is helping them to catch up in their reading, writing and mathematics. This demonstrates the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, sessions are planned to ensure children have a range of opportunities to learn for themselves, as well as together. Timely intervention by staff means that children's learning moves forward at a good pace. In one session, a group of children were exploring how the water wheel worked. Purposeful questioning by the teaching assistant allowed children to develop their ideas and understanding.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement. Where teaching does not make it clear to pupils what they are intended to learn, or work lacks challenge, some pupils become distracted and are less positive in their attitudes. This slows the pace of their progress.
- Pupils' attendance is below average and the number of pupils who are frequently absent is higher than the national average. There has been some improvement in attendance because the school regularly checks on pupils who are absent and has worked with specific pupils and their families, particularly with pupils who regularly miss school, with some success. However, the school recognises the need to continue to work closely with parents to improve attendance further.
- In the majority of lessons, pupils are attentive and show interest and maturity. Pupils behave well around the school and in the playgrounds and are welcoming to visitors. On more than one occasion, doors were held open for adults and one another and pupils were polite and respectful. Relationships with adults are positive and pupils know and respond well to the behaviour management system used throughout the school.
- The use of the primary school sports funding to provide a sports coach at lunch time is having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and well-being. Play leaders also support playtime activities with younger pupils.
- Punctuality has improved considerably since the last inspection and the vast majority of pupils

now arrive at school on time. The introduction of a 'Walking Bus' has supported this well.

- The breakfast club and after-school club provide pupils with a safe and secure environment where there are good opportunities for them to play together and have a healthy snack.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils understand the different forms of bullying. As a result of a consultation with pupils by staff and governors, a Friendship Week was planned to raise pupils' awareness of different forms of bullying and the importance of respect for others. One pupil spoken with said they 'really enjoyed the week because the activities taught them to share things and to always be nice to each other'.
- Pupils say they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet, a topic that was addressed through a recent e-safety week. School records show that any incidents, of poor behaviour for example, are thoroughly logged and regularly checked by senior leaders. There has been a reduction in the number of exclusions and other incidents. Records also show that bullying and racial incidents are rare.
- Parents spoken with were highly positive of the work of the school, recognising the improvements that have been made. Of those that responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, all feel that their child is happy and safe at school.

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

- The headteacher has a resolute and determined drive to improve the performance of the school. Under her effective and skilled leadership, well supported by the senior and middle leaders and governors, the school is rapidly improving. All staff are supportive of the direction in which the school is moving and staff morale and ambition are high.
- Good quality and well-focused training has ensured that staff at all levels have improved their performance. There are high expectations of all staff. Middle leaders, for example, are involved in specific projects to both check on and improve different areas of the school's performance. This is resulting in ongoing and rapid improvements in the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and in punctuality, and demonstrates that the school has the ability to improve further.
- Arrangements to check on the performance of teachers are excellent. These are closely linked to national standards, the career stage of the teacher and to the progress made by pupils in their class. Regular meetings to discuss pupils' progress with senior leaders and the special educational needs coordinator ensure all staff are held to account for the progress of all pupils.
- Detailed tracking of pupils' progress and regular and rigorous checks on teaching ensure that areas for development are swiftly identified and teachers are given useful feedback on how they might improve. This system is also used to identify quickly any pupils who may be in danger of falling behind. A review of this information also confirms that the progress made by different groups of pupils is improving.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education well through enrichment activities and visits, including residential visits. The development of pupils' basic skills is a priority and revisions to the morning timetable are promoting this. Leaders recognise that opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills in other subjects need extending further.
- The primary school sports funding has been used to support training for teachers and increased opportunities for pupils to participate in competitive sports with other schools. In addition, it provides organised lunchtime activities which promote good behaviour and increase pupils' active participation in them. This is part of the school's wider healthy living strategy.
- The school has made good use of a wide range of training through the local authority to support teachers and leaders, including the governing body in developing their roles. Local authority consultants have worked with Early Years Foundation Stage staff as well as Literacy and Numeracy leaders in order to identify and share good practice.
- The school has forged good links with parents and courses and sessions for parents provide increased opportunities for parents to learn alongside their children. 'Busy Books' provide parents with resources to support their child's learning at home.

■ The school's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection meet statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are acutely aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and support and challenge the school well. Middle and senior leaders regularly meet with and report to the governing body. Governors receive a wide range of information on pupils' progress, including that of different groups of pupils. They know how the funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is being spent and how effective this is in closing any gaps in those pupils' performance. Records of governors' visits and governing body meetings show that governors are involved in regularly checking on the school's performance and have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. Governors also have a very good understanding of the system to check on teachers' performance and how it is linked to the career stage of the teacher and any increases in salary. Governors have benefited from a range of training, both from leaders within the school and through the support of a National Leader of Governance.

## 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>	111238
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	434355

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>	172
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Darby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rosalind Flanders
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 December 2012
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