

Park Primary School

Love Lane, Wallasey, Merseyside, CH44 5RN

Inspection dates 8–9 April 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.

- Pupils' attainment across Key Stage 1 and 2 has dramatically improved this year, particularly in reading and mathematics. Standards attained by pupils are on track to be closer to the national average than they have been for a number of years by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6.
- All pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those entitled to additional support through the pupil premium make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they make) is good and has improved significantly this year.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. An increasing proportion of children are entering Year 1 with the skills and abilities which are expected for their age.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and make learning interesting and exciting.
- Pupils' attendance is good. Pupils are well-behaved, enjoy learning and say that they feel very safe in their new school.
- The new senior leadership team is exceptionally strong and ambitious. Senior leaders have very high expectations as to what pupils and staff can achieve.
- The headteacher, with the full support of staff and governors, has put into place effective changes which have helped to ensure that teaching and pupils' achievement are both good.
- The vast majority of parents are happy with their children's education and say that they are kept well-informed of their progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Good practice in marking pupils' work is not always shared across the school, and teachers do not always indicate clearly enough to pupils how they can take the next steps in their learning.
- Tasks and activities do not always stretch all pupils to achieve to the very best of their ability, especially the most able.
- Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to apply and improve their writing skills across a wide range of subjects, such as science, history and art.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, including parts of lessons, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read using phonics.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 2, 3, 4, and 5, and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised during lessons and separately with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors considered 21 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as the school's own information on parents' views. Inspectors also took account of 39 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- A meeting took place with a representative from the local authority's school improvement service and a school improvement associate.
- A meeting was held with two governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Various school documents were examined. These included: the school's review of its own performance, reports to the governing body, data on pupils' progress, external evaluations of the school's work, records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching, records of pupils' attendance, behaviour records and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maureen Coleman

Additional Inspector

Pamela Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is much larger than the average- sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is more than double the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school receives additional funding through the pupil premium for a much higher than average proportion of its pupils. 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.
- Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a very small proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection the school has moved to a new building. A number of new staff have been appointed, including the headteacher and two newly qualified teachers. The senior leadership has been reorganised and there are two new members of staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There have been changes to the governing body, including the appointment of a new Chair of Governors.
- The school runs a breakfast club and offers a wide range of clubs after school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more learning is good or better by:
 - ensuring that the best practice in marking is shared across the school, and that when marking pupils' work teachers always indicate to them how they can take the next steps in their learning
 - making sure that tasks and activities always stretch all pupils to achieve to the very best of their ability, especially the most able.
- Raise levels of attainment across the school, particularly in writing by:
 - ensuring that pupils are given as many opportunities as possible to apply and improve their writing skills across a wide range of subjects, including science, history and art.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- In 2013 pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 was not good enough in relation to their starting points, nor was their progress in reading and mathematics. However, standards have improved rapidly over the last year. All groups of pupils now make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and their attainment has improved across all year groups. The school's tracking data indicate that by the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils' attainment will be close to average.
- Children enter Nursery with skills and abilities which are much lower than those typical for their age. They learn in a very stimulating environment and benefit from good planning in Nursery and Reception which ensures that they make good progress. Most enter Year 1 with good skills and abilities, and progress well through Key Stages 1 and 2.
- All pupils make at least good progress in reading. Whole-school phonics training has enabled teachers and teaching assistants to take a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics and helped to improve the quality of pupils' reading across the school.
- Pupils' progress in writing is good. However, it is not as strong as in reading and mathematics. Improving standards in writing is a school priority and teachers are increasingly identifying opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills across a wider range of subjects including science, history and art.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is good, as is their attainment, particularly in Years 5 and 6. This is because teachers make mathematics exciting, and increasingly challenging.
- Pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium make outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Effective support through small-group teaching helps to ensure that entitled pupils are on track to attain standards higher than those of similar groups of pupils nationally in all subjects. The current gap between eligible pupils and their class mates is one term.
- Inspection evidence and school data indicate that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least good progress across all subjects and most year groups from often very low starting points.
- The school's increasing number of more-able pupils achieves well, as they did in 2013. This is because activities in lessons are increasingly challenging and because of opportunities, for Year 6 for example, to participate in mathematics and science activities at local high schools.
- School data show that pupils from minority ethnic groups and the few who speak English as an additional language achieve at least as well as their class-mates.
- The school promotes equal opportunities well and is very careful to ensure that all pupils realise their potential.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. This is because teachers and teaching assistants are very keen to continually improve standards. In addition to this, their practice is rigorously checked by senior leaders and middle managers and their training has been very effective.
- Most teaching activities move along at a quick pace. Teachers ensure that pupils are very clear about what they are learning and that they are fully engaged in a range of different activities. However, occasionally the pace of learning slows when activities are not set at just the right level to ensure that all pupils are stretched to achieve to the very best of their ability, especially the most able.
- Good subject knowledge is used to deepen pupils' understanding, good questioning helps pupils to think deeply about their learning and discover things for themselves.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is exceptionally strong. Children enjoy learning

and exploring their well-resourced and well-thought-out classroom and outdoor learning areas.

- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to ensure that pupils make good progress and are inspired with a sense of excitement about their learning. This was evident in Reception where children met the Easter Bunny and were eager to ask about her family, and how she 'got the toys inside Easter eggs'. Teachers were then careful to allow children to explore the spiritual side of Easter through role play when pupils asked 'Jesus' what happened to him at Easter.
- English is taught well and used across a number of subjects, including topics. This was exemplified in a Year 5 class focusing on travel and tourism. Pupils were asked to consider arguments for and against increasing air travel to St. Lucia. They skilfully delivered their points of view, explaining how the pollution from aeroplanes could affect crops, but noted that tourists helped the St. Lucian economy.
- Learning in mathematics is good. Pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, are challenged and given activities which require them to work together and think hard to solve demanding problems. This was the case in a rapidly-moving Year 6 class where pupils were given 10 numbers and the task of finding 5 numbers which could be divided by 3 and 7. They were then given an additional more challenging task when asked to find 1-, 2- and 3-digit prime numbers.
- Pupils' books are consistently marked and up to date. However, they do not always indicate clearly enough to pupils how they can improve their work. As a result of this, and notwithstanding the fact that older pupils know the levels that they are working at in reading, writing and mathematics, too few pupils are able to say exactly what they need to do to improve their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that their teachers make learning exciting, that they look forward to their school visits and that they like learning and playing with their friends. Pupils' attendance is good. Pupils conduct themselves well around their new school. They wear their school uniforms with pride and behave very sensibly during lunch times and assemblies.
- The vast majority of parents think behaviour is good and this is supported by the school's behaviour records.
- Pupils are adamant that bullying is very rare and say that they are confident to talk to any adult about any concerns because they know that they will be dealt with immediately.
- The school's work to ensure that all pupils are safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe in school because the grounds are well protected. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe while using the Internet and say that their recent Internet safety day during e-safety week has given them a good understanding of cyber-bullying and how to avoid it. Pupils know that they should always talk to an adult if they are not sure of how safe a website may be, and that they should never 'click-on' a 'pop-up'.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and know that it is not fair to make jokes about people because of what they look like or because of where they are from.
- Visitors regularly come to school to talk to pupils about safety, and to help them to an understanding of dangers and risks. These include community police officers and fire-fighters who talk to pupils about the potential dangers of fireworks and keeping safe during Halloween.

The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher is highly ambitious. Supported by a very able senior leadership team, well-trained staff, and experienced governors, he has driven forward extensive changes in the last year. Key appointments and targeted training have helped to improve the quality of phonics teaching, teaching in the Early Years foundation Stage, overall achievement, attendance and engagement with parents and the community.
- The middle leadership team is strong and highly skilled. Members have benefited from, for

example, outstanding teacher, and subject leader training programmes, and regularly share their expertise with colleagues, monitor the quality of teaching, and check on pupils' progress.

- The school's system for managing the performance of staff is closely linked to improving standards for pupils. All teachers, for example, are accountable for ensuring that pupils make at least good progress. Their success in this area is due to the close tracking of pupils' performance and the good support available to help them to improve.
- The school's excellent work with parents has helped to improve pupils' attendance., which is the best that it has been in recent years, as has its focus on 'attendance week', attendance assemblies and inter-house competitions. The school's work with parents has also helped to improve achievement. During the inspection about 50 parents attended an information session about the school's 'Family Works' programme. Of this group about 20 parents signed up to take part in the programme.
- Reading and mathematics are promoted exceptionally well across curriculum range of subjects. The school offers pupils very memorable learning experiences such as visits to Jodrell Bank, and opportunities to engage in World Book Day. Pupils benefit from participating in various music activities, including Samba drumming workshops and various activities during Chinese New Year, and a wide range of after-school clubs, including fencing gymnastics and cricket.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are strong, as evidenced in the highly co-operative and respectful way in which they work together and communicate with adults. The school successfully broadens pupils' experiences through, for example, Years 5 and 6 residential opportunities, and visits to theatres.
- The school has a very effective association with the local authority, and a school improvement associate from a local outstanding school. Both have recently supported the school in reviewing the quality of teaching and learning and in advising the senior leadership team on the implementation of its school improvement plans.
- Safeguarding procedures are followed closely and meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very experienced and committed to helping the school continually to improve. They know how the school's performance compares to that of other schools, and what it needs to do to get better. Governors know that the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, and that recent training, in phonics for example, has been effective because standards are rapidly improving. Governors are very clear about the link between performance and pay, and never authorise pay increases or promotions unless teachers can demonstrate that they have met all of their targets. Governors know that the pupil premium is making a difference for entitled pupils, not only because of the effectiveness of targeted support, but also because of pupils' full participation in all school activities, including visits and after-school clubs. Governors have authorised the spending of the school's physical education and sports funding on specialist teaching, in hockey and gymnastics for example, and for before- and after-school clubs. They plan to link this funding more closely to specialist staff coaching next year.

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	104999
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	443917

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	432
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elaine Jones
Headteacher	Michael Mellin
Date of previous school inspection	15 April 2010
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