

# Grove Street Primary School

Grove Street, New Ferry, Wirral, Merseyside, CH62 5BA

**Inspection dates** 11–12 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 achieve well, often from very low starting points. They make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in every year group and standards are rising rapidly.
- Teaching is consistently good and some teaching is outstanding.
- Children become enthusiastic learners in the Early Years Foundation Stage; they take these positive attitudes with them as they move up through the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported very well, enabling them to make good progress.
- Pupils behave well; they are proud of their school and are keen to do well. They feel safe, happy and secure and so they are ready and able to learn and progress.
- The headteacher is an inspirational leader, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior staff. There is a relentless drive for continuous improvement in all aspects of the school's work.
- Middle leaders' confidence has grown and they now contribute well to the improvement drive.
- Governors are well-informed and are actively involved in helping the school to keep on improving.
- Leaders make regular checks on teaching and staff work together well to share the best practice.
- Pupils' progress is checked regularly to ensure that everyone is given the levels of support or challenge they need.
- A small but growing number of pupils across the school are working at standards above those usually expected for their age.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching is good, it is not yet leading to outstanding overall achievement by pupils.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels of achievement by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is still below average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 parts of lessons; five lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. They listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6 and discussed with them the books they have enjoyed and those they are currently reading.
- Inspectors met with five members of the governing body, with senior and middle leaders, with pastoral staff, with a group of pupils and with a representative of the local authority.
- There were too few responses to Parent View, the Ofsted on-line questionnaire, for an analysis to be made. However, inspectors spoke with several parents at the start of the school day and an inspector also met with a group of parents during the inspection to hear their views about the school. Inspectors also took into account the outcomes of the school's most recent survey of parents' views.
- They also took into account the views that staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at the work in pupils' books and also reviewed a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding documents, the school development plan, records of pupils' attainment and progress and documents related to pupils' behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Diane Auton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Elaine Maloney	Additional Inspector
David Woodhouse	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than most other primary schools.
- Most pupils are White British and the vast majority of pupils speak English at home. A small proportion of pupils are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds and cultural traditions, including a small number who are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is considerably above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is well above average. This additional government funding is provided for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals 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' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been several changes in staffing since the school's last inspection, including eight new appointments to the teaching staff during the past two years.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than the usual times is above average.

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

- Improve teaching further by:
  - continuing to keep thorough checks on the quality and impact of teaching
  - continuing to provide effective and ongoing guidance and training for all staff
  - ensuring that teachers' explanations in lessons are always clear so that they are fully understood by pupils.
- Keep regular checks on the progress of the school's most able pupils to make sure that they are given the support and challenge they need to enable them to fulfil their potential and to reach the higher levels by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children's skills and knowledge are well below those that are typical of their age group when they start school in the Nursery. Their speech and language skills, in particular, are often very immature.
- Children thrive in the Early Years Foundation Stage, making good progress from their starting points. By the time they leave the Reception class, although their skills in literacy and numeracy are a little below expectations for their age, they are ready and eager to keep on making progress in Year 1. The few children who speak English as an additional language do well in developing their communication skills.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics were below average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in 2013. This was the legacy of the shortcomings in the quality of teaching in the school in past years that were described in the previous inspection report. In the current year, however, pupils' achievement has improved rapidly in response to consistently good teaching across the school.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in both key stages are now average in every year group and pupils in Year 6 and in Year 2 are on track to meet national attainment expectations at the end of the key stages this year.
- Issues identified at the last inspection around low attainment in mathematics have been addressed successfully across the school and there is no longer a gap between pupils' achievement in English and their achievement in mathematics.
- The school's records show that pupils in both key stages have made good and sometimes outstanding progress in all three subjects during the current year. This is confirmed by inspection evidence, including the work in pupils' books and the good progress seen in lessons.
- The school provides very effective support for pupils with special educational needs; these pupils learn well and make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make the same good progress as all of the other pupils in school and achieve well.
- The most able pupils are doing increasingly well. This is the result of improved teaching, but the school knows there is more to do to ensure that all of its most able pupils do as well as they possibly can and to increase the proportions of pupils who reach the higher levels by the end of both key stages.
- Letters and sounds are taught successfully in the younger classes and the proportion of pupils who reach the required standard in the Year 1 check of their reading skills is increasing, year-on-year. Most of those who did not meet the standard in 2013 are securely on track to do so in the Year 2 retakes this summer. Pupils of all ages show a genuine interest in books and enjoy reading. By the end of Year 6 most can read at the expected standard for their age, and there are an increasing number of mature and capable readers.
- In Year 6 in 2013, the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals was about a term below that of the others in their year group in writing and in mathematics; there was no gap in reading, however. The majority of the pupils in this group had made nationally expected rates of progress from their starting points in all three subjects. Across the classes in the current year, gaps between the attainment of the pupil premium group and the other pupils in school are closing rapidly or are non-existent. This reflects the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for every pupil.
- Pupils who join the school at random points during the key stages are helped to settle in quickly. The new arrivals often have additional learning needs, sometimes resulting from disruption in their education, but the school ensures that they make good progress from their starting points.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teaching has improved and is now good, with some outstanding practice. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well; this is a consistent picture across the school and, because of this, pupils' learning in all subjects is now much more successful.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with a curriculum that engages the children's interests. They become deeply absorbed in their learning activities and are keen to talk and write about the things they are doing, such as recording the names and drawing pictures of the different mini-beasts they have observed in the 'bug hotel'. Adults are very skilled in helping them practise and develop their basic skills through fun activities like this.
- Staff give effective support to children who are new to learning English, ensuring that they become involved in all of the activities and that their communication skills develop speedily.
- Teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is consistently good; sometimes it is outstanding, leading to excellent progress by pupils. This was seen, for example, in literacy in Year 6, in which activities were linked to the class's current history topic. Challenging questions and the well-planned opportunities they were given to share and explore their thoughts with a partner helped pupils to develop their ideas about whether or not children from the towns should have been evacuated to the countryside during the Second World War. As a result, pupils quickly became ready and able to produce a clear and convincing piece of persuasive writing on the subject.
- Where teaching is good, rather than outstanding, explanations are sometimes not sufficiently clear and so some pupils' understanding of their work is not quite as secure as it might otherwise be.
- Positive relationships between pupils and adults in the classroom contribute very well to pupils' good learning and progress.
- Teaching assistants support the quality of teaching well and help pupils of all abilities to make good progress. The school uses a wide range of effective additional strategies when needed, including teaching pupils in small groups and providing individual support, for those pupils who require extra help. Indeed, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported very well.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- They behave well in lessons, around the school and at playtimes. They say how much they enjoy coming to school and they show care and consideration for others.
- Pupils' positive attitudes in lessons contribute well to their good learning and progress. They know and understand the routines and they respond to their teachers' high expectations of their behaviour. They are becoming increasingly adept at organising themselves in class, with older pupils, in particular, needing only minimal direction from their teachers. They listen well to instructions and work productively with a partner or in a group.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils describe trusting relationships with the adults in school and parents express confidence in the care the school provides for their children.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying. They say that bullying incidents are rare and that when pupils fall out with each other staff help them to sort matters out quickly.
- There are a number of opportunities for pupils to play their part in making the school a happy place, including acting as play leaders or organising selling fruit at playtime. The school council and the eco-council give them an influential voice in decision making.
- Pupils with additional learning, language, health, social, emotional or medical needs are included in everything on offer and are supported well. The school provides sensitive and caring support for pupils and families whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. The nurture group provides effective additional support for a small number of pupils who, from time to time and for

a variety of reasons, find it difficult to concentrate and settle in class, enabling them to develop the confidence and resilience they need to learn and progress successfully.

- Attendance is average and has improved rapidly, reflecting the school's partnership with parents and its effective work to support families at risk of poor attendance.

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

- The headteacher has set out a very clear agenda for on-going improvement; everyone understands and shares her high ambitions for the school and its pupils.
- Parents demonstrate real confidence in the school and pupil numbers, which had dipped slightly, are rising rapidly.
- The deputy headteacher, key stage leaders, the inclusion manager and the middle leaders all make strong contributions to the school's development and lead by example.
- Leaders have taken decisive actions to improve teaching and reinforce leadership. Newly appointed teachers and support staff have settled in quickly and have brought a good range of skills to the school. The senior leadership team has been restructured and strengthened. The school is now well placed to continue to improve.
- The school has an accurate view of its performance, based on detailed and regular examination of its work. Leaders' strategic plans for continuing to improve the school are of high quality.
- Systems for tracking and recording pupils' progress have been overhauled and improved so that they now give a clear picture of how everyone is doing, enabling the school to identify and support anyone who may be underachieving. So far, this has had the strongest impact on helping pupils of below average or average ability to make improved progress. Work is under way to ensure that all of the most able pupils are identified at an early stage and given the support they need to reach the higher attainment levels.
- Senior and middle leaders regularly check the quality and impact of teaching and learning. The school now aims, through continuing to develop this good leadership practice, to bring about further improvements in teaching in order to continue the upward trend in pupils' achievement.
- An effective programme of ongoing training for all staff, including teaching assistants, is keeping everyone's skills sharp and up to date. This is helping to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met increasingly effectively.
- The subjects taught support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Subjects are brought together into topics that capture pupils' interests very well. Visiting experts and visits to places of interest, including residential trips, all enrich their development.
- The school uses its primary school sports funding effectively to provide specialist coaching in a range of additional sporting activities; this also provides ongoing training for staff. Pupils of all ages enjoy good quality sport and physical education activities in lessons and after school.
- The school values the regular advisory and consultant support provided by the local authority, which has helped it to continue to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have helped to ensure effective leadership and good quality teaching through astute selection of new staff at all levels in the school.
  - Governors have good, regular information about how the school is doing because they receive accurate and comprehensive reports from senior and middle leaders. They are able to hold the school rigorously to account.
  - Governors make sure that the checks of staff performance are thorough and that leaders and staff are set challenging targets linked to pupils' progress and school priorities.
  - Governors make sure that safeguarding policy and procedures are fully in place. They are fully informed on how the pupil premium funding is spent and the difference it is making to this group of pupils.

## 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>	105011
<b>Local authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	431664

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>	352
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Vobe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Meg Marshall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 September 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 6452170
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