

Hilton Lane Primary School

Madam's Wood Road, Little Hulton, Worsley, Manchester, Lancashire, M28 0JY

Inspection dates 24–25 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- Standards across the school are rising rapidly. From very low starting points pupils make good progress in their school work and achieve well.
- Differences in achievement between groups of pupils are being eliminated. The school is particularly effective for pupils who have a disability or special educational needs.
- Teaching is mainly of good quality. Some teaching is outstanding and very little is less than good.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 benefit from a good quality of education provided by highly skilled staff.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are happy and have a positive attitude towards learning and towards one another. Attendance is above average.
- Leaders and managers are effective. The headteacher has built a strong staff team with a shared vision and high expectations for all pupils.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use data about the school's performance to hold leaders to account effectively.
- Pupils are safe in school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More pupils could reach higher standards in all subjects and particularly in writing.
- In a small proportion of lessons, some pupils are set tasks which are either too easy or too hard and as a consequence, pupils do not always make the progress they are fully capable of.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed nine parts of lessons taught by eight teachers and visited various classrooms for shorter periods of time.
- Inspectors observed playtimes and lunchtimes and the arrival and departure of pupils at the beginning and end of the school day.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' exercise books along with samples of their work displayed on walls around the school.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, senior leaders, middle leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of information and documentation provided by the school including: progress data; information about behaviour and safety; the school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness; the school action plan; external reports of the school's progress; governing body minutes; records of pre-employment checks made by the school, in order to help gain an accurate view of the school's performance.
- In the absence of sufficient responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) inspectors took account of a recent survey of 113 parents, conducted by the school, along with the views of parents spoken to at the end of the school day.
- 12 staff questionnaires were returned for inspectors to analyse.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Drew Crawshaw, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Terry Bond

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average size primary school with similar proportions of girls and boys.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium 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 and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils either leaves or joins the school throughout the school year.
- In 2013 the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has a Nursery which is on a different site from the main school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that the proportion of pupils reaching the levels they are capable of in all subjects is high compared to other schools nationally by:
 - ensuring that pupils have opportunities to write often in all subjects and that their writing is to the same high standard and subjected to the same level of scrutiny by teachers as is expected in English lessons
 - using teachers' marking consistently well in all subjects to stretch all pupils to achieve their very best
 - making even better use of data about pupils' progress to identify minor differences in the skill levels of pupils in order to increase the level and frequency of challenge for all pupils in all subjects, so that work is not too easy or too hard.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress regardless of their starting points. Accurate data provided by the school confirm that since the last inspection, in April 2013, the rate of progress across the school has increased rapidly. While standards are not yet high enough, actions taken by leaders to boost the rate of progress of all pupils have resulted in almost twice as many pupils in Year 6 reaching expected levels, compared to the number anticipated for the same pupils at the time of the last inspection.
- The proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining Level 5 in reading and mathematics has risen, following a period of decline over recent years, and is now in line with other pupils nationally. However, the proportion of pupils who reached Level 5 in their writing, although improving, has remained stubbornly lower than that of other pupils nationally. Leaders are already taking action to improve the quality of writing throughout the school and examples of good quality writing, often related to topic work, can be seen on display throughout the school.
- Children enter the school, in the Nursery and Reception classes, with levels of development well below those usually attained by children of this age. This is particularly noticeable in their communication and language skills and in their personal, social and emotional development. Children gain ground rapidly in all areas of their learning as a result of high-quality teaching and care. By the time these children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, an increasing proportion has achieved a good level of development and is ready to begin formal education.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. Pupils' knowledge of the sounds letters make improves due to the structured approach to the teaching of phonics. There is a clear focus on learning to read at an early age and this is beginning to permeate throughout the school. Pupils who inspectors listened to reading were able to read at a level appropriate for their age, but more importantly were able to give their opinion on the subject of their books. Other pupils spoken with said that the new school library was encouraging them to read more often because they had more variety of books to choose from.
- The solving of problems in mathematics was seen as an area for improvement at the last inspection. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' mathematics books, along with observations during lessons, confirmed that pupils of all ages have frequent opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in order to solve problems in a range of contexts. This approach is building pupils' confidence in mathematics and is raising standards in the subject.
- Pupils identified as having special educational needs, including those pupils who join the school at times other than the beginning of the year, or those with disabilities are supported effectively and as a result make good progress. These pupils are particularly well supported by staff who are well trained in how to deliver intervention strategies suited to the needs of individual pupils. One teaching assistant was observed listening to a pupil read during an intervention session. The teaching assistant skilfully questioned the pupil about the text. As a result, the pupil was developing her comprehension skills successfully.
- The school's own data for 2014 show that pupils in Year 6 who are eligible for the pupil premium attained standards below those of other pupils in the school and were typically around one year behind. However, in all other year groups, such pupils are making progress similar to that of other pupils and where gaps in standards have been identified, they are showing signs of reducing. On the whole, pupil premium pupils have made rapid progress since the last inspection.
- The school is effective in ensuring that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching in all areas of the school is typically good, with some that is outstanding. There is very little teaching which is not at least consistently good and none which is inadequate.
- The improvement of teaching as a means of improving the rate of progress has been the

number one priority since the last inspection. There have been impressive gains in the quality of teaching throughout the school.

- Staff make effective use of display space in corridors, on classroom walls and just about any other nook or cranny available, as a means of promoting high standards. Consequently, the school is colourful and vibrant, it celebrates the successes of pupils, acts as a working gallery of pupils' work and promotes an enjoyment of learning.
- Teaching in the Early Years and Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 has become a strength of the school. Teaching is vivacious throughout and makes the most of any available space, particularly at the off-site Nursery and in Reception, to encourage children to explore and learn for themselves. Teachers and teaching assistants lead a range of activities which complement effectively the children's independent learning experiences. As a result, an increasing proportion of children are ready to learn in Year 1 and in turn make rapid progress in Key Stage 1.
- Teachers' planning for lessons is good. Teachers take account of the different levels of ability and learning needs, along with the use of on-going assessment of progress, to plan lessons which give a suitable level of challenge for the vast majority of pupils. Teachers and leaders have quite rightly identified that further refinement of teachers' planning for lessons would ensure that even less time is wasted on tasks which are either too hard or too easy for pupils.
- Teachers routinely share their assessments of progress made by pupils with the pupils themselves. Pupils spoken with were clear about their on-going targets and what they need to do in order to meet them. A new marking policy links well with pupils' individual targets and pupils are often given time to respond to additional challenges set by teachers or to correct their mistakes. Evidence in pupils' work books, where some pupils have not responded to comments by teachers, confirms that the marking policy is not applied consistently well enough to have maximum impact on learning.
- The provision for pupils who are identified as in need of additional support due to falling behind, or with gaps in their learning, is a strength of teaching. A well-orchestrated system of additional support is rigorously implemented by teaching assistants and monitored by leaders. The high quality of this teaching is one of the main reasons why pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- There are excellent relationships between teachers, staff and pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants praise pupils often, providing good guidance and support. Lunchtime supervisors and other adults play an active role in engaging pupils in purposeful activity at lunchtime. Pupils are encouraged to solve their problems amicably, safe in the knowledge that an adult will support if necessary. Teachers and all adults have high expectations of pupils and they respond by doing the best they can.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- As reported at the previous inspection, the behaviour of pupils remains good.
- Pupils enjoy school. Attendance by pupils has improved to good, as has their punctuality at the start of the school day.
- Pupils respond well to the instructions given by their teachers and teaching assistants, but are also willing and able to use their own initiative from an early age, for example when asked to guide visitors around the Reception classroom. The vast majority of teachers follow the school's behaviour policy meticulously. Consequently, classrooms are well ordered and calm and good behaviour contributes effectively to the good progress made by pupils.
- Behaviour outside the classroom, either on corridors or in the school playground is impeccable. Pupils are cooperative, take turns on equipment and are excellent role models during team sports or activities. Pupils spoken with said that they would like even more outdoor equipment to play with at lunchtime.
- Pastoral support for pupils is excellent. The recently appointed Learning Mentor/Family Support Officer provides effective support for those pupils identified with additional social, emotional and behavioural needs, along with any pupil in crisis and for families who may find it difficult to

engage with school. As a result, pupils feel safe in school and they know who to turn to on the rare occasions that acts of bullying occur. Parents are becoming increasingly engaged with the school and consequently the proportion of pupils with high levels of absence has reduced since the previous inspection.

- School records show the number of serious incidents is low and reducing further, compared to previous years. However, records are not always detailed enough, nor organised in a logical way, and do not always include the actions taken by the school with the outcome. Leaders are aware of this minor issue and have begun to put a system in place which would allow them to analyse data about behaviour with more rigour.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Almost all of the parents surveyed by the school in March 2014 believed the school keeps their children safe. This was confirmed by parents with whom inspectors spoke during the inspection and by one parent who said, of possible issues, in a letter to the inspectors 'I can let a teacher know at the start of the day and I know that it will be dealt with immediately'.
- Each element of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Leaders and teachers actively seek out ways to support pupils as they develop into well rounded young people. A variety of experiences, including visits by the Mayor of Salford and by the Birmingham Royal Ballet, along with PHSE lessons which cover topics such as friendship and racism, encourage pupils to consider their values and contribute effectively the good behaviour of pupils.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision of what she wants for the school. Her drive and determination has been the cornerstone of rapid improvement since the last inspection. She has built a staff team which shares her desire to give only the best for any pupil who attends the school and which is ambitious to improve still further.
- The push to improve standards, by raising the quality of teaching, has proved effective. Staff with leadership responsibilities are positive role models to other staff and there is now effective leadership at all levels. The school has given careful consideration to the support it seeks and accepts in a conscious effort not to be overwhelmed by a plethora of advice. However, it is open to learning from other schools and has strong links with the local 'Family of Schools' for example, in verifying the accuracy of assessments of pupil progress made by teachers. Leaders have taken advice from consultants and from the local authority school improvement officer. Consequently leaders are accurate in their self-evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching which are now closely tied to performance management objectives and targets for teachers.
- Information about the progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics is used by leaders to inform meetings held with teachers to review pupils' progress. This information is used wisely to identify strategies to keep pupils on track, to monitor how well specific groups of pupils are improving and to inform governors about the progress of pupils.
- The school has good links with parents, due in no small part to the efforts of the Family Support Worker to engage families. The school communicates well with parents; they are involved in their children's learning through the setting of regular homework, almost daily contact with class teachers and through the easily accessible school website or the monthly newsletter. As a result, the vast majority of parents feel that communication between school and home is good.
- Leaders make good use of additional funding given by the government, principally the pupil premium grant and primary schools sport funding. The school's sport funding grant is used effectively to raise participation in sport amongst pupils and to develop the expertise of adults to provide additional sporting activities for pupils.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum which is well balanced in terms of variety and depth. Pupils of all ages have the opportunity to develop their core skills such as reading, writing and mathematics in a wide range of contexts. For instance, in the Year 3 classroom examples of pupils' high quality writing could be seen in a display of their topic work about Spain. Leaders have also recognised the benefits of the extended curriculum in promoting an enjoyment of

learning. Subsequently, they have increased the number of after-school clubs from 3 last year to 13 at the time of this inspection.

- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides effective support and challenge to leaders and the school. The education officer carries out regular and frequent in-depth checks on progress and provides effective guidance to leaders and governors. The local authority has an accurate understanding of the needs of the school and has used this knowledge effectively to ensure that the school benefits from opportunities to share good and outstanding practice in other schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective in holding leaders to account for the performance of the school and in promoting improvement. The governing body has undertaken a review of governance and an action plan is in place to further improve governance. Governors bring an appropriate range of skills and experience to the school. However, they are not complacent and are seeking to strengthen their knowledge of the use of data by recruiting additional governors. Governors have made good use of training offered by the local authority and as a result have a good understanding of key issues, such as the school's use of government grants, how performance management of teachers is linked to their pay and the quality of teaching. Minutes of governing body meetings show that governors are able to ask precise questions about groups of pupils in order to challenge the headteacher about any underperformance. Governors have rightly identified the need to reduce their reliance on data and reports given to them directly by leaders, when forming an opinion on the school's effectiveness. They plan to use their own observations of the school's work, along with frequent discussions with pupils and their parents, as a means of verifying evidence of progress provided by leaders.

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	105914
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	444442

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	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	L Wynn
Headteacher	Aileen Birrell
Date of previous school inspection	11 April 2013
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