

Blackmoor Park Junior School

Leyfield Road, Liverpool, Merseyside, L12 9HB

Inspection dates 24–25 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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' achievement requires improvement because teaching over time has not been good enough to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Information on pupils' progress and attainment is not always used as well as it could be by teachers to plan and adapt tasks so learning moves on at a good rate. Therefore, teaching requires improvement.
- Marking in mathematics does not always give pupils opportunities to develop their mathematical understanding.
- Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to check their own work for grammar, punctuation and spelling errors so they can learn from their mistakes.
- Presentation in mathematics is not always accurate enough. This sometimes leads to errors which slows pupils' development of their numerical skills.
- Improvements introduced by leaders have not yet had sufficient time to ensure that all pupils make good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Leadership and management are good. Since the last inspection senior leaders have changed the culture of the school. Expectations have risen, and a strong staff team has developed which has improved the quality of teaching and achievement.
- Middle and subject leaders are involved in regular checking on the quality of teaching and pupil performance and hold staff to account well, which is resulting in better teaching and in increased rates of progress.
- Pupils feel safe in school and they know how to keep themselves safe. Behaviour is good and they show good attitudes to learning and are polite and courteous.
- Partnerships with other schools are good. Staff from the infant and junior schools are sharing good practice to ensure that pupils' skills are successfully built on.
- Governors have taken decisive action to improve their understanding of the school. They have an accurate and well-informed view of school performance, enabling them to support and challenge leaders well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or parts of lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. They also looked at pupils' work, some of which was done with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from three 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 school management, including the arrangements to ensure safeguarding.
- The inspectors spoke to parents, took account of the 20 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own consultations with parents.
- Inspectors also took account of the 15 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Vanessa MacDonald, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Christine Addison	Additional Inspector
David Fann	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Blackmoor Park Junior School is larger than the average-sized school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above 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 known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below 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.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been significant and on-going changes to staffing in the last two years. Some leaders are new to role, including the literacy and mathematics subject leaders.
- There is an after-school club on site run by a private provider. This is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further so that all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can by:
 - ensuring that teachers always use assessment information to plan and adapt activities to ensure that pupils move forward at a good rate
 - ensuring the quality of marking in mathematics consistently enables pupils to develop and apply their mathematical understanding
 - ensuring that the presentation in mathematics books is of a consistently high standard so that it supports pupils consolidation of their numerical skills
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to check their work for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Ensure that leaders continue to build on the improvements they have made so that all pupils continue to make the progress expected of them and more make better than expected progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress across school. The proportions of pupils making expected and better than expected progress has not been good enough.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 in reading and writing and mathematics have been average for the past three years although there was a drift downward in 2013. The proportion of pupils who made the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was below average and too few pupils made more than expected progress. The standards reached in English grammar, punctuation and spelling were well below those found nationally.
- From the information gathered by observing lessons, talking with pupils and staff, analysing school data and reviewing pupils' work, it is evident that progress is currently accelerating and standards improving. Teachers and pupils are rising to the challenge of raising achievement.
- Leaders have introduced new initiatives which pupils are responding well to. The decision to put pupils in to ability groups for literacy and numeracy has improved their rates of progress as activities and support are usually well matched to their needs.
- The most able pupils are being given work which is more challenging, especially in mathematics. In mathematics the most able pupils in Year 6 have received additional sessions from the local high school. As a result, a higher number of pupils are predicted to reach the higher levels at the end of Year 6 this year. Pupils say that they enjoy the new challenges they are presented with.
- Standards and rates of progress in reading are improving. Leaders have identified that younger pupils' phonic skills (letters and the sounds they make) need to be built on. Well trained teaching assistants work with groups of pupils to support this. Older pupils are developing their comprehension skills further, especially those of inference and deduction.
- The pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium funding, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, achieve as well as their classmates. The standards they reached in 2013 were approximately a year behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that the focused support these pupils are receiving is closing the gap between their standards and those of their classmates and that their rate of progress is similar to and sometimes better than their peers. This shows that the school is committed to equality of opportunity.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants in class and in small groups so that they make progress which is similar to and sometimes better than their peers.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress from their starting points because they are well supported.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving it is still judged to require improvement because it has not yet resulted in pupils consistently showing good levels of progress from their starting points. The changes made have improved the quality of teaching and school records show that more teaching is now good and any inadequate teaching has been eradicated. However, the strengths that are apparent in some teachers' work are not yet fully established across the school.
- Assessment information is not always used as well as it could be to precisely plan and adapt tasks so pupils move forward at a good rate.
- Although the quality of marking has improved since the last inspection some inconsistencies remain. In mathematics marking is not consistently well used to promote learning. There are some excellent examples in Year 6 where pupils are given guidance which enables them to clearly develop their mathematical understanding further and show how well they can apply this. However, this is not the case across the school.

- As a result of the introduction of a new marking scheme, pupils in English are given clear guidance on how to improve and have opportunities to respond to this so their learning moves on well.
- The introduction of marking which is focused on grammatical errors lets pupils know where they have made mistakes. They talk positively about the 'green for grammar' marking which is consistently used across school. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to check their work for themselves to identify errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation, so they do not learn from their mistakes.
- The standard of presentation is not consistent in all subjects. In mathematics pupils do not always present their work accurately, especially with number calculations. This leads to errors, in some instances, and this does not support pupils in consolidating and developing their mathematical skills as well as they could. The presentation of work in English books is of a consistently good standard with pupils showing a pride in their handwriting.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are good and pupils are eager to learn and to try their hardest. They work well by themselves, in pairs and in small groups and there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Pupils say they find activities interesting and fun.
- Teachers use questioning well and pupils are often asked open-ended questions which encourages them to explain their answers. In a Year 3 literacy lesson pupils' writing developed well because of focused questioning by the teacher and teaching assistant. This supported pupils in exploring their ideas and use of vocabulary, so improvements were made.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support groups of pupils, particularly those with additional needs. As a result, these pupils are now making more rapid progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are consistently well mannered, polite and courteous. They hold doors open for their friends, teachers and visitors to the school and are often heard to say, 'thank you', and, 'you're welcome', as people pass through.
- Behaviour is good both in lessons and at other times of the day, including lunchtime. Pupils move along the corridors and out on to the playground with the minimum of fuss and follow the well-established routines closely adhering to 'walking on the left'. Behaviour in the assemblies observed was very good with pupils being attentive and interested in the topics discussed.
- In lessons pupils respond well to the activities set and to adult direction. They show an enthusiasm for learning, working with one another as well as on their own. On occasion pupils can become a little restless because they are not as fully engaged in their learning because activities are sometimes too hard or too easy.
- The small number of pupils who can find settling to work and the routines of school more challenging are well managed and there are systems in place to support them with this.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and that they are well cared for by the different adults. A group of Year 3 pupils said that they had settled in well to their new school even though they had been a 'bit worried' at first. Of those parents who responded to Parent View or spoke to inspectors the majority agree that their children are safe and well looked after.
- Bullying at the school is uncommon and pupils and parents are confident that any issues are quickly dealt with by their teachers. They understand about bullying and some of the different forms it can take. The assemblies on e-safety, led by the community policeman, were informative and parents spoken to said that their children had talked about it at home, showing a good understanding of how to keep safe on the internet.
- The school, working with the attendance officer, has improved pupils' attendance notably over the past year and it is now above average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has also reduced.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide a clear and determined vision that is driving improvements across the school. Leaders at all levels including year group leaders and subject leaders, some of whom are new to role, are contributing well because they hold all staff to account for improving performance.
- Staff expectations are high, there is a positive culture demonstrating a shared ambition and commitment to do their best for the pupils. This has resulted in improvements to the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and attendance. Leaders recognise that this needs to continue to be built on to continue to increase the proportion of pupils who make expected and better than expected progress.
- Regular and rigorous checks on teaching and learning which are carried out by leaders at all levels including the middle leaders, are providing staff with specific guidance about how to improve their work. The identification of where pupils have specific gaps in knowledge has been addressed through training for staff and is resulting in improvements in the quality of teaching and achievement.
- The close tracking of different groups of pupils and a shared understanding of this by all staff has ensured that expectations of what pupils can achieve have risen and as a result, pupils' progress is improving. The targets set for staff as part of their performance management ensure that staff are fully accountable for pupils' performance. Underperformance has been tackled and more teaching is good though leaders recognise that there is still some inconsistency in its effectiveness.
- The local authority has been closely involved with the school and there have been regular meetings, with senior and middle leaders and governors, to look at and discuss the school's performance. The local authority also provides training and guidance for staff in developing their practice further. It has a good understanding of the school's performance and has confidence in its ability to improve further.
- The links with the local infant school have developed well. The joint working of literacy and mathematics subject leaders has led to learning being enhanced. This is because together leaders look closely at assessment information and the schools are taking similar approaches to the way subjects including mathematics and phonics are being taught. This is reflected in the improved achievement for pupils, particularly those who are currently in Year 3.
- The school works effectively in partnership with other school's through the local cluster of schools and with the local high schools, which support the school with sports and higher level mathematics teaching.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and the plans for incorporating the new curriculum requirements are well underway. Pupils have a good range of enrichment opportunities available to them which supports their interests, including in sport and music. This contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The primary school sports funding is used well. A specialist coach is employed to work alongside teachers to develop their skills as well as that of the pupils. The assessment of how well pupils are doing is carried out jointly by the coach and teacher. A lunchtime club is also provided and pupils were observed enjoying developing their football skills. There has been an increase in pupils' participation in competitive sports and a health week has contributed to the development of pupils' well being.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Following the last inspection governors took swift and decisive action to develop their understanding of the school and its performance. A 'Governor's Action Committee' was established which meets regularly and reports back to the main governing meeting. Governor's review, analyse and question year group leaders and subject leaders about pupil progress and the quality of teaching. As a result, they are able to hold the school more fully to account for its performance. They have tackled underperformance and are well aware of the links between teacher's performance and pay progression awards. Governors are involved in the checking on performance and the impact of new initiatives, such as the marking scheme through the

reports they receive and checking pupils' books. Governors monitor the school's finances carefully and have a good awareness of how pupil premium funding and sports funding is being used. They monitor how well pupil premium funding is being used to close any gaps in attainment. Governors access training to support them in developing their practice and that of the school. They ensure that safeguarding meets all statutory requirements.

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	104521
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	442319

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	337
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Moore
Headteacher	Martin Davies
Date of previous school inspection	13 December 2012
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