

Partington Primary School

Central Road, Partington, Urmston, Manchester, Lancashire, M31 4FL

Inspection dates 30 September 2014–1 October 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Leadership and management | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Early years provision | | Requires improvement | 3 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils' progress is not yet consistently good. Not enough pupils are making the expected or better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- Over time, the governing body did not hold the school to account well enough and there has been some decline in standards since the last inspection.
- Although standards in Year 2 and Year 6 have improved to average, too few pupils reach the higher levels. Standards in other year groups are also improving but are not yet high enough.
- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good enough to address underachievement brought about by previous weak teaching.
- Work set is sometimes too easy, particularly for the most able. At times, too little work is expected from pupils.
- In lessons, some pupils are not fully attentive because the work does not challenge them.
- Children in the early years have too few opportunities to develop their reading, writing and number skills. As a result, they do less well in these areas.
- Marking does not always show pupils how they can improve their work.
- Pupils are provided with too few opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve problems.
- Middle and subject leaders are not yet fully involved in tackling weaknesses in teaching.
- Although the school's plans identify the right priorities, targets and timescales are not yet sharp enough to enable all leaders, including governors, to quickly check if actions taken are having enough impact.
- Some pupils do not always attend school on time.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and deputy headteacher, have a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further. Decisive action has been taken and, as a result, standards are rising.
- Because of good provision disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well.
- Governors have reviewed the way they work. They are now having a greater impact on supporting the school's drive to improve.
- Pupils are happy and enjoy school, they are kept safe and are cared for well. Parents are highly supportive of the school.
- Pupils enjoy the school's focus on music in Key Stage 2.
- Effective teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) in Key Stage 1 ensures that young pupils begin to develop their basic reading skills well.
- Attendance has improved considerably.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons, three of which were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors also looked at examples of pupils' work and listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 6 read. They observed the teaching of reading skills and talked to pupils about the books they have enjoyed and those that they were currently reading.
- Inspectors talked with pupils as they played at break times and visited the dining hall at lunchtime.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils and inspectors spoke with pupils about their work. Inspectors held meetings with five governors. They spoke with a representative of the local authority and met with members of the school staff.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start and end of the school day and met with representative of the parents and community partnership. They took account of a phone call from a parent, 32 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own survey of parents' views. Inspectors also took account of 30 responses to staff questionnaires completed during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the local authority's external review of the school's work, safeguarding documents, records of current standards and progress, the school's strategic plan and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance. Minutes of governing body meetings and reports produced by the headteacher and other leaders were also considered.

Inspection team

Lyn Pender, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steve Rigby

Additional Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger in size than most other primary schools.
- Most pupils are White British. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well above average. A well above average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are, therefore, eligible for support through pupil premium funding is above average. This additional funding is provided 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 has experienced significant staff changes in recent times. Following the retirement of the then headteacher, the school was without a headteacher in the summer term of 2013; the staffing structure at that time did not include a deputy headteacher. A headteacher from a local academy school provided some support for the school at that time. The current headteacher took up post in September 2013 and governors appointed a deputy headteacher who joined the staff in January 2014. Phase leaders for Key Stages 1 and 2 have been appointed.
- The governing body was reconstituted at the end of the summer term in 2014. Eight members of the newly formed board of governors now provide the governance for the school. A parent and community partnership group was established at that time with parental representatives from all year groups.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils' progress speeds up and standards in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly for the most able, continue to rise by:
 - ensuring that teachers' checks on pupils' understanding are used well so that activities provide the right level of challenge and learning in lessons moves on quickly when pupils have grasped what is being taught
 - making sure that teachers have high expectations about the quantity of work pupils produce
 - ensuring that feedback from marking, including that in topic books, provides clear guidance so that pupils know what they need to do next to improve their work
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use reasoning and mathematical skills to solve problems
 - providing children in the early years with more opportunities to develop their writing and number skills when they are working independently indoors and in the outside areas.
- Further improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - providing sharp targets and short timescales in the school's development plan to enable all leaders, including governors, to quickly check if actions taken are having sufficient impact
 - promoting further the potential of middle and subject leaders in supporting school improvement by ensuring they have more opportunities to check on the quality of teaching, identify outstanding practice and share this with other staff to help develop teaching skills.
- Continue to improve the punctuality of pupils so that learning time is not lost at the beginning of the day.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although there is clear evidence that improvements have been made recently, leadership and management require improvement. This is because standards are not as high as they could be, particularly for the most able pupils and progress remains uneven across the school.
- The school development plan identifies the correct priorities. However, the targets and milestones are too broad at the moment to enable leaders to check if the actions taken are having the desired impact. The pace of change is rapid and some of the new systems are still at an early stage. It is essential that leaders know quickly that the actions they are taking are making a difference to pupils' achievement.
- The senior and middle leadership teams are relatively new. The skills of the phase and subject leaders have not yet been fully developed to enable them to carry out their roles and responsibilities to best effect. There are not yet enough opportunities for them to contribute fully to all aspects of improving the school including the sharing of good practice.
- Significant changes in senior leadership and governance have increased the pace of change. The new headteacher displays an unrelenting and passionate determination to steer the school in the right direction. Supported very effectively by the deputy headteacher, she has put into place well-considered actions which are improving the quality of teaching and raising standards and demonstrates that the school has the capacity to continue to improve.
- More rigorous analysis of assessment data and regular meetings to discuss pupils' achievement are in place. This means that all teachers have key information about where pupils are in their learning. Where teachers use this to plan work that closely matches pupils' abilities, including the most able, progress is good and pupils increasingly reach the standards expected for their age.
- Staff are clearly held to account for the achievement of the pupils in their care and there is sense of urgency that is beginning to move the school forward quickly. Performance management arrangements ensure that teachers' salary progression is linked to pupils' achievement.
- The school's view of itself is realistic. Senior leaders undertake regular, accurate checks on the quality of teaching which focus sharply on the progress made by pupils. The guidance and training provided for teachers and teaching assistants is bringing about improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils like the way the curriculum is brought together into interesting and engaging topics. It takes account of the skills and knowledge pupils need to learn. A wide variety of enrichment opportunities, including regular visits to places linked to topics, are provided. Music is a keystone of the curriculum and all pupils in Key Stage 2 learn to play an instrument. Staff have planned for and implemented the new national curriculum. Pupils develop respect for different people. They learn about right and wrong and about how their actions can affect others. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use the primary school sport funding well to enhance sports provision. It has been used to increase the range of sports activities available to pupils during and after school. These are well attended and contribute well to the pupils' health and well-being. Links created with the local community also promote an increasingly healthy lifestyle. For example, during the inspection Year 6 pupils attended coaching sessions led by staff from Manchester United football club.
- All who completed the staff questionnaire and those staff who spoke with inspectors were extremely supportive of the school's leadership. Staff morale is high and a strong sense of teamwork exists.
- Parents are highly positive about the work of the school. They feel well informed and say staff are approachable. A representative of each year group are members of the newly formed parent and community partnership.
- Following a review of the school's work with the headteacher, the local authority is providing an agreed programme of support. For example, local authority staff are working with the school's early years team to further enhance the quality of provision in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Supported by the headteacher and a national leader of governance, the governing body reviewed the knowledge and skills required to be successful in the role of governor. As a result, governance of the school now rests in the hands of the board of governors and members bring considerable skills and expertise to the role. They are determined to quickly tackle weaker aspects of the school and provide appropriate support for leaders and are holding the school to account well. School leaders provide a range of information which offers governors a sharp view of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. Governors make regular visits to gain accurate, first-hand views of the school. The board of governors has a clear understanding of the school's finances, including the sport funding, and are aware

of the impact of decisions about the use of pupil premium funding and how gaps in pupils' achievement are closing. Governors ensure that teachers' and leaders' performance is linked to the school's targets. The board of governors ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In lessons where activities provide the appropriate level of challenge, pupils show great enthusiasm for learning and concentrate well. In lessons where activities are too easy, or teachers do not move learning on at the right time, pupils become inattentive because work is not well matched to their needs. Pupils enjoy working cooperatively in small groups. They enjoy sharing their ideas and listen carefully to each other.
- Pupils and staff commented that behaviour has improved significantly and school records show a reduction in incidents of bullying and name calling over time. At break times, pupils mostly behave well with only occasional examples of boisterous behaviour which occur mainly at lunchtime.
- Pupils are keen to make a contribution to the life of the school. The head boy and head girl are excellent ambassadors for their school and members of the school council are increasingly involved in making decision. The editorial group are rightly proud of the excellent newsletters they produce.
- Pupils take a pride in their school and look smart in their uniforms. Most are extremely polite and say they enjoy school. Parents agree that their children are well cared for by school staff and that they feel well informed. The headteacher's regular newsletters provide a wealth of information about the school.
- Owing to the swift action taken by senior leaders, the very low attendance rates seen in recent years have been reversed and attendance is now close to average. The daily 'wake-up and shake up' session attended by pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 gets the day off to an excellent start; there is a real 'buzz' in the corridors as pupils move around school at this time! School records show that more pupils are getting to school on time. The school is working successfully to help pupils who arrive after the school day has started to realise how important it is to be on time. Regular information about attendance is posted on the school's website. This is very effective in highlighting the relationship between attendance and achievement.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, for example, when using the internet. They know about the different types of bullying, including cyber and prejudice-based bullying. They feel confident that adults listen and respond to any concerns they have.
- Pupils think that disruptions to learning now happen less frequently because of the introduction of the school's values which are understood by all. Pupils say that staff apply the school's rewards and sanctions system, fairly. The 'traffic light' warnings help pupils understand when they need to change their behaviour in class.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors, the school's analysis of the most recent questionnaires for parents and the results of Parent View all express confidence in the care provided for pupils. The care and support provided for potentially vulnerable pupils is good. Parents say that staff work with them and try to remove any difficulties that prevent pupils from learning.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- In the last year pupils, particularly those in Year 2 and Year 6, have begun to make faster progress because of improvements in the quality of teaching. Teaching is not yet consistently good enough to securely overcome underachievement arising from a legacy of some weaker teaching and so requires improvement.
- Progress is uneven across current classes in the school. It is slower when too little is expected of pupils and when tasks are too easy, do not challenge the most able in particular, and too little work is demanded from pupils. In some lessons, too much time is spent on what pupils know and can do and learning does not move on quickly enough once pupils have shown they understand what is being taught.
- Where expectations are high, pupils rise to the challenge, try hard and produce a good quantity of work. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson pupils were set a task using algebraic equations. They were challenged to select numbers to test out the formulae provided. Every member of the class worked hard,

selected numbers that presented them with a challenge and showed great perseverance and concentration. All were rewarded with a great sense of achievement when they successfully solved the equations. This was an excellent example of pupils developing their understanding by using their mathematical knowledge to solve problems, however, pupils' books show that these sorts of opportunities are infrequent at present.

- Marking is regular and offers praise for work well done but pupils are not always given clear advice about how they can improve their work. Opportunities to improve literacy skills are sometime missed when topic books are marked.
- A common feature of all classrooms are the warm relationships that exist between adults and pupils. Pupils enjoy praise and encouragement and opportunities to share humour.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable care and support for pupils with special educational needs and those who need some extra help to catch up with their work.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because, too few pupils reached the higher levels even though standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 improved. Standards were similar to the national average in the Year 6 tests at the end of the academic year.
- A three-year decline in standards at the end of Key Stage 1 has been halted. Pupils now reach the standards expected of them for their age but too few, particularly the most able, consistently do better than this.
- Standards also improved in other year groups but not as rapidly as those in Year 2 and Year 6. As a result, gaps in achievement owing to weaker teaching over time remain, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Most Year 6 pupils made the progress expected of them last year and the proportion doing better than this was similar to the national average, which was an improvement on previous years. However, the progress made by other year groups in reading, writing and mathematics is still uneven.
- In 2013, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 6 was around a term behind other pupils nationally. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 last year improved and was broadly similar to other pupils in the school. The pupil premium funding is being deployed increasingly effectively. It is helping to close the attainment gaps between pupils eligible for this funding and others in the school, particularly in Year 2 and Year 6. However, this is not yet consistent across the school and there is more to do to close the attainment gaps in some year groups.
- The good levels of support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive enables them to achieve well given their starting points and individual abilities. They receive additional support in small groups and working one-to-one with teaching assistants. This helps them achieve at least as well as their classmates and demonstrates the school's commitment to providing equal opportunities for all pupils and groups.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the average standard in the Year 1 screening check in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) continues to improve and is now above average.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children start school with skill levels lower than is typical for their age. Language, communication, literacy and physical development skills are particularly low.
- The proportion of children working at a good level of development by the end of the early years, although below the national average, is improving year-on-year. However, too few children consistently make better than expected progress or exceed the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year.
- Too few opportunities are provided to enable children, especially the most able, to develop their writing and number skills when working independently. As a result, progress in writing and number skills is slower than in the other areas of learning and standards are below average when children enter Year 1.
- Children receive a warm welcome in the school which helps build their confidence as they become familiar with classroom routines. As a result they settle quickly and show great curiosity, keenly exploring their environment and eager to learn, particularly when working independently.
- The early years leader has created a nurturing environment where children feel safe and happy. However, leadership and management require improvement as information gained from checking how well children are doing is not used well enough to help all staff take every opportunity to move learning on quickly,

particularly for the most able.

- Links with parents are well established. Parents say that their children are cared for well and settle happily into the school.
- The local authority is providing some additional support for the early years team, following the joint review of the school with the headteacher.

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

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| Unique reference number | 106305 |
| Local authority | Trafford |
| Inspection number | 448328 |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 443 |
| Appropriate authority | The board of governors |
| Chair | Fred Varden |
| Headteacher | Anita Edwards |
| Date of previous school inspection | 26 November 2009 |
| Telephone number | 0161 775 2937 |
| Fax number | Not applicable |
| Email address | partingtonprimary.chris@traffordlearning.org |

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