

Flixton Junior School

Delamere Road, Flixton, Urmston, Manchester, M41 5QL

Inspection dates 14–15 October 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Teachers and learning assistants constantly strive to do their best and, as a result, teaching is consistently typically good with examples of outstanding practice.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils start school with above average standards. They make good progress in reading and writing and outstanding progress in mathematics.
- At the end of Year 6, standards in reading and writing are well above average and standards in mathematics are high.
- Pupils who receive extra support through additional government funding make good progress. They attain standards similar to and sometimes better than their school peers and other pupils nationally.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are keen to learn, well mannered and polite. They feel safe and happy in school. Attendance is above average.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It makes an important contribution to their good behaviour and their positive attitudes. It prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders and managers provide a strong driving force for the school. They make sure that pupils' achievement and teaching are good and are continuing to improve rapidly.
- Planning for improvement is based on a very clear picture of the remaining priorities.
- Teamwork is a strength across the school. Staff are united in their resolve to ensure pupils achieve those standards of which they are capable.
- The governing body is highly skilled and effective at holding the school to account. Governors have an excellent understanding of the school, its strengths and how it can become even better.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The outstanding teaching in the school is not shared widely enough to improve teaching.
- Subject leaders are not given enough opportunities to visit lessons so that they can play an even bigger part in driving improvement.
- A minority of parents are unhappy with aspects of the school's work. This is because the school's strategies used to inform parents of its work are not effective.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons. In addition, they made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils from Year 3 and Year 6 read. They also gathered other evidence related to the quality of teaching over time.
- The inspectors observed one lesson jointly with the headteacher. They also observed the headteacher reporting back to the teacher on his findings regarding the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also met with two governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspectors took into account the 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also spoke informally with groups of parents who brought their children to school.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed in the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and scrutinised the work in pupils' books, the school's own data on pupils' current progress, improvement plans, planning and monitoring information and minutes of governing body meetings. Records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding and child protection were also considered.

Inspection team

Anthony Kingston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila O'Keeffe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Flixton Junior is an average-sized primary school.
- Since the previous inspection, the school worked with Tyntesfield Primary School, Trafford, through which it received support.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below that usually found.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, eligible for support through the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are in the care of the local authority.
- Virtually all pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to move rapidly towards becoming an outstanding school, senior leaders should provide subject leaders with more frequent opportunities to visit lessons so that they can play an even bigger part in driving improvement.
- Improve the quality of teaching further by regularly sharing the outstanding teaching which exists in the school so that all teachers can continue to improve their skills and thus increase pupils' progress.
- Improve parents' views of the school's work by increasing parental awareness of the effectiveness of its performance.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good.
- The headteacher leads the school with a clear vision and determination. He is well supported by his senior leadership team, a close-knit staff and a highly skilled and committed governing body. All share the same vision for the school, which was described by one teacher as being a place where, 'Children are at the heart of the school and as a staff team we are driven to ensure continuous improvement and do the best we can for the children in our care.'
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body have a crystal clear understanding of how to make the school even better. They focus their actions for development on a solid understanding of what the school is good at and what it needs to do to continue to improve. As a result, together they have brought about significant improvements in the leadership and management and the quality of teaching and raised pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics since the previous inspection.
- The school has very successfully developed a tier of subject leaders. They are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and good role models in the subjects they lead. This is reflected in their work on preparing for the introduction of the new National Curriculum. However, although they provide effective support to colleagues, they have limited opportunity to look in detail at the quality of teaching so that they can play an even bigger part in driving improvement.
- The school has benefited well from the support it receives from the local authority. The local authority feels that the school has made good progress since its previous inspection. Inspectors agree with this view.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has worked in partnership with a local school, which has played an important role in bringing about improvements in leadership and management.
- The senior leadership team has put in place a robust system to check the quality of teaching and for managing staff performance. Teachers feel supported by the headteacher and welcome feedback about their performance in lessons. Feedback is sharp and focused. Clear targets are set and training and support are given to ensure they are met. This leads to accurate advice and relevant training.
- The school's system for checking on pupils' progress is rigorous and robust. It is used to provide support for pupils at risk of not making the progress expected of them and to hold teachers to account for the progress made by the pupils in their care.
- Careful thought has been given to how leaders will maintain the extensive level of information they have on pupils' progress as the school implements the new National Curriculum. Plans are already underway to help staff to assess accurately the level that their pupils are working at and to measure the progress that they make.
- The curriculum is carefully planned to meet pupils' interests and provides them with many memorable experiences. For example, they relish the food technology activities in which all pupils take part from making bread in Year 3 to a restaurant organised by Year 6 pupils in which vegetables grown in their own allotment are cooked and served to parents and visitors. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing literacy skills and mathematics, including opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and in different subjects. The curriculum makes good links between subjects so learning is meaningful and enjoyable.
- Art is a strength of the curriculum. Pupils use a range of medium to produce some stunning art work throughout the school. For example, the clay busts made by Year 3 pupils are spectacular, showing careful observation, skilled manipulation of clay and patience.
- The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, preparing them well for secondary school and for the responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. For example, they willingly take on roles and responsibilities because, as one pupil said, 'It's a way of helping the teachers who do lots for us.' Pupils listen to, and value the views of others. Adults in school model respectful attitudes and pupils respond well by showing respect to each other.
- The school checks that all pupils have equal opportunity to succeed. Overall, the needs of all groups of pupils are identified promptly and support is provided where most needed.
- The school has used the primary school sports funding to improve the quality of the teaching of physical education. It has increased the opportunities for pupils to prepare for and take part in inter-school tournaments and updated its physical education equipment. The impact of the effectiveness of the provision is evident in pupils' increased levels of participation.
- Parents' responses to the online questionnaire show that, although the majority of parents think the school is effective, a minority are unhappy with aspects of the school's work. Senior leaders and governors

recognise they have to improve their strategies to restore parents' faith in what they are doing.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is highly effective. Governors play a strong part in leading the school forward through ensuring plans for development are fully focused on the most important aspects of school life. They are kept very well informed by the headteacher but supplement this with many visits to the school to observe lessons and to speak with staff and pupils. They are able to interpret the data on pupils' attainment and progress so they know how well the school is doing compared with others nationally. Consequently, they are well equipped to challenge leaders and staff to do even better. Their systems for rewarding good teaching through performance management are thorough and are well understood by teachers. Financial management is rigorous. Governors ensure that all spending is focused sharply on improving provision for pupils. They monitor very closely the use of additional funding, pupil premium funding, for example, to ensure that it is used well to improve the attainment of eligible pupils. Governors ensure the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- They have positive attitudes and display good behaviour. Together these make a significant contribution to the calm yet vibrant learning environment, the quality of their learning and the sense of belonging to a community in which everyone is valued. However, just occasionally in lessons where activities are less interesting, a few pupils become fidgety and do not pay full attention.
- Pupils are proud of their school and speak highly of it. They respect the school environment which is kept tidy and free from litter or coats and bags strewn across cloakrooms.
- Around school, pupils are polite, calm and respectful of others. They show maturity and make a good contribution to the school community by taking on many roles and responsibilities such as librarians, growing vegetables in the school's allotment for the Year 6 restaurant and acting as ambassadors when escorting visitors around the school.
- They understand the impact of their actions on others and try to be kind and understanding at all times, so that the school remains a happy and welcoming place for all.
- The school's records show that instances of poor behaviour are extremely rare.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils feel safe. They are very aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is very rare. This was explained by one pupil who said, 'Why should there be any bullying when everyone is your friend?' They look after one another very well and are able to solve any problems between themselves or by asking their friends or adults to help them.
- The school has effective systems to check attendance and encourage pupils and parents to see the importance of coming to school. Attendance is well above average
- Most parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, say their children are happy, safe, well looked after and that behaviour is good.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good across the school with some that is outstanding. This is reflected in pupils' good progress in reading and writing and outstanding progress in mathematics. The work seen in pupils' books, the school's records of the quality of teaching and the teaching observed during the inspection confirm this. As yet, however, outstanding teaching is not shared widely enough within the school to improve the skills of all teachers and further increase the progress that pupils make.
- Improvements in teaching have brought about accelerated progress and raised standards in reading, writing and mathematics over the past two years. Better use of pupil progress information means that teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are higher than previously. Teachers successfully plan learning activities that build on pupils' understanding from the previous lessons. As a result, pupils are appropriately challenged to make rapid gains.
- In class, teachers routinely manage their pupils well. They explain tasks clearly so pupils know what is expected of them. Planning to ensure that lessons cater fully for pupils of all abilities is usually a strong feature of teaching. In writing especially, this is supported well by the use of suggestions provided by the teacher which pupils draw on to ensure their work meets teachers' high expectations.

- The classrooms are bright and well organised with books and displays of pupils' work displayed across a wide range of topics. Prompts and information to which pupils can refer when working are features in every classroom. Pupils use them well to help them understand what is expected of them, to support their learning and help them to work things out for themselves.
- Teachers expect pupils to think deeply and to explain their reasoning using technical vocabulary where appropriate. Their questions probe pupils' understanding and help them to know where to adjust the lesson if necessary. Teachers give pupils time to think and develop their ideas. It is a notable feature of learning that the pupils listen intently to the teacher and to one another and show great interest in what is being discussed.
- Learning assistants liaise very closely with teachers, routinely assessing the effectiveness of their support to promote good standards of achievement. They are often responsible for specific group tuition using an effective range of strategies to support the learning of pupils who are in danger of falling behind. They are skilled and highly effective in giving pupils a boost to their learning.
- Since the previous inspection, the quality of marking and feedback has improved significantly. There are many examples of exemplary practice in which pupils are helped to understand exactly what they have done well and how to improve their work as they move on to new learning. Pupils, in turn, make written responses to these comments and teachers often check to ensure that pupils act on the guidance given. This makes a very good contribution to the eradication of errors and moves pupils' learning on rapidly.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Based on assessments at the end of the infant school, pupils' attainment when they start Flixton Junior is above average.
- In 2012, standards at the end of Year 6 fell from well above average to average. This decline was stemmed immediately and in 2013, standards in reading, writing and mathematics improved rapidly to well above average.
- In 2014, the progress made by Year 6 pupils from their starting points on entry to Year 3 was good in reading and writing and outstanding in mathematics. As a result, the standards reached by the end of Year 6 remained well above average in reading and writing and improved to outstanding in mathematics.
- The school's own data and inspection evidence confirm that this good progress will be maintained for future year groups.
- In mathematics, virtually all Year 6 pupils who left the school in 2014 attained the expected level, two thirds attained Level 5 and almost a quarter Level 6, the highest level of all.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is well above the national average. This reflects the emphasis put on reading across all subjects and the investment in improved resources. Younger pupils demonstrate they can read with good understanding while older pupils speak enthusiastically about their love of reading. This was exemplified by one pupil who said, 'I enjoy escaping into a book, getting lost in the story-line and being taken into different worlds.'
- Pupils' writing is helped by the emphasis that is given to reading which boosts the range of words they understand and use, and to speaking and explaining ideas in lessons. This is increasingly reflected throughout pupils' writing, enhancing the fluency and meaning of what they write.
- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic groups, those who speak English as an additional language and those who join the school at times other than that expected, make progress similar to that of their school peers.
- The most able pupils make similarly good progress to that of their peers. Hence, despite the well-above average proportion of pupils who on entry to the school have reached the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics, an even greater proportion reach the higher Level 5 by the end of Year 6.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional learning assistants. Because of the well-targeted support, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils over time is similar to and sometimes above that of non-disadvantaged pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, there were very few pupils eligible for this funding. They attained standards similar to non-disadvantaged pupils in the school in writing, were three terms ahead in reading, and six terms ahead in mathematics. In the same year they reached standards equal to four terms ahead non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in reading, writing and eight terms in mathematics. This is achieved through the effective use of individual and small-group support that is focused on individual needs.

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	106318
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	452003

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	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Harrison
Headteacher	Jason Redmond
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2013
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