

# Leasowe Primary School

Oxley Avenue, Leasowe, Wirral, Merseyside, CH46 1RU

**Inspection dates** 23–24 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- All pupils achieve well. After a dip in achievement in 2013, pupils in 2014 made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics to reach at least average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with a wide range of special needs make equally strong progress because of the quality of support they receive.
- Children make good progress and are well looked after in the Early Years class.
- The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good, as is their attitude to learning. Pupils are keen to talk about their work and show what they have learned.
- The care and support offered by the school are excellent. Pupils feel safe and have an excellent awareness of how to keep safe. Parents agree.
- The school works with a wide variety of outside agencies to improve attendance and the welfare of children and families whose circumstances put them at risk.
- Displays are vibrant and enticing and create a wonderful environment in which to explore and learn.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure that the quality of teaching is good, that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed and set high expectations for their pupils and staff.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is consistently good across the school, but there is some inconsistency in the quality of advice offered to pupils about how to improve their work. Not all pupils respond to requests from teachers to improve or complete their work.
- Leaders have a clear vision for how they want to develop and improve the school, but planning documents lack precise, measureable targets. Governors have a good understanding of how the school works, but rarely observe this for themselves.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited lessons in all year groups taught by eight teachers. She observed sessions led by both teachers and teaching assistants where pupils were practising letters and sounds. The inspector listened to pupils from Years 1 and 6 reading, met pupils at playtimes and attended a harvest assembly.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, members of staff, a representative of the local authority, pupils and members of the governing body.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at development plans, records of pupils' progress, arrangements for safeguarding, the work in pupils' books and arrangements relating to pay and performance.
- There were insufficient responses to analyse on Parent View, the online questionnaire. Instead, the inspector gained the views of parents from the school's questionnaire in July and from talking to parents at the start of the school day and after assembly.
- The views of staff were gained from meetings and from a scrutiny of the 18 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Judith Straw, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Leasowe is much smaller than the average primary school.
- Children are taught in seven classes.
- The great majority of pupils come from White British heritage, with few from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, known to be eligible for the pupil premium is very high, well over three quarters of all pupils. Pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is just below average, but the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special needs is high, nearly three times the national average.
- In 2013, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Further improve the quality of teaching by:
  - making sure that teachers consistently provide useful advice to pupils about how they can improve their work
  - providing time and opportunity for pupils to respond to teachers' comments and requests after their books have been marked.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that development planning identifies clear, measureable targets so that the school can identify precisely how successful it is in meeting its objectives
  - implementing development plans to provide governors with more opportunities to view the work of the school at first hand.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong and effective leadership. Together, they lead an enthusiastic and committed team of teachers who work hard to break down barriers to learning and give every pupil a chance to succeed.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and shows that the school knows where improvements can be made to have the best impact on pupils' progress and well-being. The school is successful in driving improvements, but planning documents do not provide detailed and precise targets than can be measured.
- Detailed systems to check on pupils' progress ensure that everyone has an accurate understanding of which pupils need extra help.
- Teachers' performance is managed well. Teachers know that they are accountable for the progress made by pupils in their classes and that this is linked to pay structure.
- The special needs co-ordinator ensures that the high proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are enabled to make the best possible progress. She maintains an on-going dialogue with outside agencies, teachers, teaching assistants and parents, as well as the children themselves. Some of these pupils make exceptional progress because of the encouragement and care that they receive.
- Statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are fully met and are highly effective.
- Attendance has improved over the last year because of the on-going emphasis the school places on its importance to pupils and parents.
- In this small school, all staff take on leadership roles in managing subject areas. Collectively, they have provided a rich curriculum so that exciting learning pervades all classes and the curriculum constantly evolves. No opportunity is lost to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Stunning displays about favourite books such as the Narnia series by C.S. Lewis, Erik the Viking and the Iron Man are embellished with splendid sculptures done by pupils. The current display for Remembrance is thought-provoking. Entire walls are devoted to pupils' work on the rainforest, Victorian Britain, the Blitz and the Great Fire of London. There is an annual residential trip for older pupils, during which they experience many outdoor activities and gain confidence and new skills. Regular trips ensure that they find out about their own culture and that of others, for example, the Gormly sculptures at Crosby beach.
- The school sets a high priority in making sure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education and for life in modern Britain. Pupils feel relaxed and confident about moving to much bigger high schools when the time comes. They have opportunities to meet the teachers at local secondary schools and contribute to many community events such as the Halloween procession in the area.
- The school uses funding for disadvantaged pupils very effectively. Funding is spent on providing extra teaching time, a focus on reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), music and speech and language therapy. The school ensures that every pupil has a good variety of first-hand educational experiences by providing funding for trips and visits. In 2014, the gap in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of others narrowed significantly.
- Sport funding is used to provide pupils with the opportunity to take part in new sports such as hockey, tag rugby and handball. Staff are developing their long-term skills. As a result, there are more after-school clubs, more pupils attend and pupils are more confident and fit.
- The local authority provided excellent support in the year in which standards dipped. However, they recognised that this was an exceptional year and that school leaders were well able to manage their own recovery. The school is generally regarded as one which requires only light-touch support. Some teachers are used as examples of good practice within the authority.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are well aware of their responsibilities and discharge them well. They share the vision for the school which is to make a difference to the life chances of the children in the area. They know about the quality of teaching and the curriculum and how well pupils are doing in all classes. They recognise that in small schools, data comparing this school with others are less valuable than checking on the progress of every individual child. Governors ensure that salary progression is closely linked to proven good performance in the classroom. They check on the progress of disadvantaged pupils and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They make sure that some of the sport funding is used to ensure that every child can swim, an important skill in a coastal area. Safeguarding arrangements are secure. Governors ensure that every pupil has an equal opportunity to be successful. Governors do not visit school very often and part of their development plan is to come and see the school in action for themselves.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons, they work well together in pairs or on their own. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and enjoy their lessons. The very small minority who occasionally are less attentive are supported by teachers and teaching assistants so they do not disrupt the learning of others in any way.
- Pupils behave well at break and lunchtimes enjoy the well-equipped play areas. Some older pupils support others, for example, by helping at the reading club.
- The School Council is involved in decision-making and contributes to discussions such as the school rules and how the school should work towards the next level of the ECO schools award.
- Pupils report that they are free from bullying. There is never physical bullying, at most it is confined to a little 'name-calling', usually about physical appearance. Name-calling is not homophobic or racist. Pupils know that any bullying is dealt with very quickly by adults. Pupils have total confidence in the school staff to keep them safe and look after them.
- Pupils are proud of the contribution they make to the life of the school and the wider community. They enjoy sporting competitions with other primary schools. They enjoy celebrating the main Christian festivals in assembly, but also learn about other faiths through religious education lessons.
- Parents and staff are agreed that the behaviour of most pupils is good. Any poor behaviour is managed successfully.
- Attendance is just below average, but has risen sharply in the last year. The school misses no opportunity to encourage and support attendance and works with parents and families to make sure that children attend regularly.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- All staff are very experienced in understanding, identifying and supporting children at risk. As a result, child protection arrangements are excellent. Record keeping is meticulous, as is the use of outside agencies to support pupils' health, well-being and safety.
- High quality risk assessments are in place which contribute to pupils' feelings of being safe and secure.
- Parents have full confidence in the school to keep their children safe and free from harm.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Evidence from observing teaching, looking at the work in pupils' books and talking to pupils and parents show that teaching is consistently good across the school.
- Planning in every lesson shows that teachers make sure that every child is able to practise their weaker areas, make progress and have an enjoyable learning experience.
- Mathematics is taught well and pupils make good progress because of the emphasis on problem-solving and mental arithmetic. Pupils are expected to explain their answers. There is a weekly session devoted to problem-solving every Friday, which pupils enjoy. Teachers make number work interesting and use creative ideas to involve the children, for example, using dominoes to find random decimals and then multiplying the result.
- Activities are often practical, so pupils develop important skills alongside factual learning. For example, an activity on centimetres and millimetres was made fun by pupils measuring themselves (and the inspector). Practical work in science is also made enjoyable. A Year 2 class made bread rolls in the morning and learned how heat changes the ingredients. In the afternoon, they looked at the impact of hot and cold on water, holding ice cubes and looking at a boiling kettle.
- In English lessons, pupils practise many different kinds of writing, such as poetry, biography and factual writing. They make good progress because they understand the importance of drafting pieces of work and then improving them over several re-writes. Recent work on biographies of Winston Churchill are impressive in their research and scope, work on writing about the feelings of being a soldier or an evacuee shows great empathy in understanding the lives of others. Teachers put a good focus on the importance of spelling and grammar.
- Teaching assistants make a very effective contribution to the learning of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They work closely with class teachers and the

special needs co-ordinator to make sure that pupils in their care make the best possible progress, even when that progress is measured in very small steps.

- Marking is meticulous and regular. However, sometimes the advice offered as to how pupils can improve their work is not specific enough to help pupils improve. Pupils do not always respond to requests from teachers to complete work or explain their answers further.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- In 2013 pupils in Year 6 did not make good progress and underachieved. Many of these pupils faced serious barriers to learning and despite the best efforts of all the staff, few reached the levels of which they were capable by the end of Year 6.
- In unpublished results for 2013-14, pupils in Year 6 achieved well in reading, writing and mathematics, as they had done in 2012. These pupils achieved the best results for four years and reached at least national standards in reading, writing and mathematics. More pupils made good progress than is the case nationally.
- Girls and boys make equally strong progress. In 2013, girls underachieved significantly, but this is not a general pattern and was related to that specific group of children.
- Very few pupils enter the school identified as having high ability. However, in 2014 the most-able pupils made such good progress that over one third made better than expected progress, achieving well above expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils are very much in the majority in this school and make up at least three quarters of all pupils in each class. In 2013, the gap between their achievement and that of other pupils was wide. They were five terms behind other pupils in the school in reading and mathematics and two years behind in writing. Against all pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were two years behind in all subjects. In 2014, the gap narrowed considerably to just two terms. However, numbers are small and a statistical analysis is less important than a review of individual pupils' progress. This shows that progress was good for all in 2014.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported very well and parents speak highly of the help given to their children so that they can learn and make progress. The special needs co-ordinator leads a team of experienced and talented teaching assistants who have regular training to ensure that they have the expertise to support different learning challenges.
- Listening to children read and talking to them shows that many pupils develop a keen interest in reading and can explain very well which stories they enjoy and why. The library displays show high quality work in learning about countries such as India, Australia, Italy and countries in South America.
- Pupils report that they especially enjoy mathematics across the school. They really benefit from the focus on problem-solving and know that it is not enough just to get the answer right, it is also necessary to know why the answer is right.
- Pupils enjoy using the school laptops and tablet computers and develop considerable expertise in research and fact-finding.

### **The early years provision** is good

- Nearly all children start school with weaker skills in speaking, listening and number work. They settle quickly and soon begin to make progress. In unpublished data for 2013-14, over half of all the children achieved a good level of development over the year. Children make the best progress in speaking and listening.
- Activities are made interesting by adults so that children want to get involved. For example, the teacher had made an alien mask and children were making their own masks and finding a name for their aliens which would show that they understood alliteration; for example, one alien was named Ding Dong.
- The children develop good social skills. They get on well together, take turns and respond to adults. They are patient and kind with children who are still having difficulties with speech. Even after only half a term, they all knew the classroom rules and responded quickly when asked to do so.
- Children learn early writing skills by copying their names through tissue paper and then moving on to writing on their own.
- The role play area was set up as a doctor's surgery during the inspection. Children enjoyed making appointments and explaining their symptoms.

- Children learn equally well indoors and out. All the areas for learning are available outdoors and children enjoy the gardens, equipment and play areas.
- Good planning, teaching and leadership and management are evident in the early years class. The curriculum is lively, interesting and exciting to children so that they want to explore and find out more.

## 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>	105055
<b>Local authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	449133

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	149
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stephen Miller
<b>Headteacher</b>	Roger Flaherty
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 April 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 638 1126
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 346 9307
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