# Hope Primary School – A Joint Catholic and Church of England **Primary School**

Lordens Road, Huyton, Merseyside, L14 8UD

10–11 J	lune 2015	
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# Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

#### This is a good school.

- This is a very caring school where senior leaders, teachers, all staff and governors know pupils, families and the community exceptionally well. Together they cater well for pupils' educational, social and emotional needs and ensure that their time in school is highly memorable and rewarding.
- Senior leaders and governors have a highly effective relationship, and high aspirations for pupils. With the full support of staff, they have ensured that standards attained by pupils and the quality of teaching have improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils are safe and are well looked after. Their behaviour is always at least good in all situations. Pupils are polite, care about one another and their school, and are proud of their achievements.
- Teaching across the school, including in the early years, is good. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that pupils are stimulated and actively engaged with the outstanding curriculum.

#### The leadership, management and provision for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs are exemplary, and support pupils' outstanding progress well.

- In 2014, the overwhelming majority of pupils made good progress, and attained well in reading, writing and mathematics from starting points in the Nursery that are often much lower than those typical for their age.
- At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014, pupils' attainment in all subjects was the best that it has been since the school opened, and much better than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Parents are immensely proud of their 'fantastic' school which they say is like 'an extended family'. They are fully satisfied that their children are safe, well looked after and are progressing well.
- Early years provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good. Children enjoy their extensive learning and playing areas, make good progress and achieve well.
- It is not yet an outstanding school because
- Occasionally, opportunities are missed for pupils to refine and develop their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills, and extend their writing, in subjects other than English.
- At times pupils, especially the most able, are not sufficiently challenged to deepen their thinking and develop their reasoning skills in mathematics.



# Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised during lessons and separately with senior leaders.
- There were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for inspectors to consider. Inspectors considered the school's own surveys of parents' views, and held a meeting with 10 parents.
- Responses to the inspection questionnaire completed by 38 members of staff were considered.
- A meeting was held with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors met with school leaders and staff responsible for various subjects, including English, mathematics, Key Stages 1 and 2. They evaluated the provision made for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and children in the early years.
- A meeting took place with two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included the school's checks on the quality of teaching, evaluated the content of development plans and the school's reviews of its own performance. Information about pupils' progress, various records of pupils' attendance, behaviour records and safeguarding documentation was scrutinised.

### Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Maureen Hints	Additional Inspector
Lyn Pender	Additional Inspector

# Full report

# Information about this school

- This is an above average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is more than twice the national average. In 2014, the great majority of Year 6 pupils had special educational needs.
- Three quarter of pupils are disadvantaged and are supported by pupil premium funding. (The pupil premium is additional government funding schools receive to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.)
- Almost all pupils White British. However, the school admits an increasing number of pupils with English as an additional language.
- Children in the early years provision attend Nursery on a part-time basis, and Reception classes full-time. The school also manages provision for two-year-olds which is separately registered with Ofsted. This provision is yet to be inspected.
- 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.
- Since the time of the previous inspection there have been a number of appointments, including four newly qualified teachers and several teaching assistants. The senior leadership team has been reorganised and a number of new governors have joined the governing body.
- A breakfast club is available to pupils. This is managed by the governing body.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding, and in so doing raise levels of attainment across the school, particularly in writing and mathematics by:
  - providing as many opportunities as possible for pupils to refine and develop their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills, and to extend their writing across all subjects
  - ensuring that all pupils, especially the most able, are challenged to deepen their thinking and develop their reasoning skills in mathematics.

# **Inspection judgements**

#### The leadership and management are good

- This is a highly welcoming school which respects parents, and works well to engage them in their children's learning. All members of the school community including staff, pupils, families and the church, are immensely proud of their school, and ensure that its attractive and well-planned facilities are well looked after.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders and governors are highly aspirational and want only the best for pupils. Together they have shown a steely determination and successful drive to improve the quality of teaching, and raise standards for pupils. This they have done through the eradication of teaching that was not good enough, implementing a comprehensive programme of staff training, harnessing the support of parents and working in partnership with a wide range of organisations.
- The work of leaders responsible for the coordination of English and the mathematics project teams is helping to improve standards. This is demonstrated in their openness in sharing ideas and good practice with their partner schools and in their correct focus on improving pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar skills, and deepening their mathematical understanding. Middle leaders are highly effective in raising standards, for example, through the 'reading committee', made up of pupils who arrange book displays and manage book loans, improving teachers' practice through monitoring the quality of marking and supporting teachers new to the school.
- The performance of teachers and teaching assistants is closely monitored and regularly reviewed. Inspection evidence indicates that teachers are set challenging targets, which are making a good contribution to the school's priorities, including those linked to improving levels of attainment.
- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively to ensure that eligible pupils' achievement is good, and their attainment is catching up to that of their peers. The school's own data show that any gaps between eligible pupils and their peers are narrowing even further and that they are achieving well for their age.
- The school's outstanding new curriculum is fully implemented. All pupils, including children in the early years, benefit from highly memorable learning experiences, including a wide range of visits and visitors, which stimulate their interests and are helping to raise levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly effective. During the course of the inspection Year 6 pupils were working on a range of 'live' community-based projects, including planning bingo events, tea and coffee mornings for the elderly, and helping to clear houses and gardens for local people. Pupils enjoy their residential opportunities in Key Stage 2, as well as Spanish, music, visits to Chester to explore its history, and many educational visits to various museums, galleries and theatres. The school has been awarded Artsmark Gold for the excellent quality of its art work.
- Pupils are well aware of British values, and enjoy meeting visitors from other cultures. They are highly appreciative of the increasingly diverse nature of their school, study all major world faiths, and celebrate various festivals. Pupils learn about democracy, respect, tolerance and the rule of law. They are fully aware of their rights, but know that with these rights come responsibilities.
- The school's work to promote strong relationships with parents, the church, and the community is second-to-none. This is best exemplified through its work with parents. Parents know that their views are valued. They enjoy their involvement in reading, cookery, family literacy, and homework projects. Parents who have children with disabilities and special educational needs are highly complimentary about the respect that they are accorded, as are those supported in acquiring English as an additional language.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure the primary school sports funding is spent very efficiently and inventively to engage as many pupils as possible in sporting and physical education activities. This includes BMX (bicycle) coaching, delivered by a world champion, athletics, with a long-distance runner and a member of 'Team GB', and dance. Funding has also helped to increase participation in competitive sports, for example, the school's mixed gender netball team recently won the Knowsley championships. It also improves staff skills in teaching various sporting activities.
- The school's work to challenge discrimination and promote equality of opportunity is good. Inspection evidence shows that all groups of pupils make good progress. Initiatives to ensure that the curriculum is of equal interest to all pupils are helping to narrow any gaps between different groups of pupils, including boys and girls.
- The school has a 'light-touch' relationship with the local authority, with which it has most recently worked to explore strategies to improve pupils' attendance.
- The school takes exceptionally good care to ensure it has very effective arrangements in place for

safeguarding pupils. This helps to make sure that all pupils, including children in the early years, are confident to talk to adults, and that all staff are highly competent at dealing with pupils' concerns.

#### The governance of the school:

- Governors know their school well. They come into school regularly, to talk to and learn with pupils. This
  was the case during the inspection when both the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body
  worked with Year 6 pupils to plan a series of community-based projects.
- Governors have high ambition and great expectation for the school which they support and challenge in equal measure. They know that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are good, but are not complacent. Governors know that the effective work to improve mathematics, grammar, punctuation and spelling, for example, needs to be maintained in order to raise levels of attainment, and move the school from good to outstanding.
- Governors know that teaching is good because they receive regular reports from senior leaders on the quality of teaching. They spend time in classrooms and regularly review teachers' targets so that teaching and learning improve. They recognise teachers' effective work, and are prepared to reward them for improving standards.
- Governors know that funding through the pupil premium is making a difference for eligible pupils. They
  also know that the breakfast club, attendance awards, subsidies for visits and residential trips, the work
  of the learning and parent mentors and targeted support in reading, writing and mathematics are all
  boosting pupils' progress across the school and improving their attainment.
- Governors have a continually improving understanding of data about how well pupils' performance compares with that of pupils in other schools nationally. They engage in regular training to ensure that they are kept abreast of developments in education, and are well placed to continue their effective work.

#### The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well at all times. This includes when at play, during lunchtimes, when moving around the school and when in class. Their good behaviour makes an exceptional contribution to the calm and purposeful nature of the school and to their good achievement.
- Pupils, including children in the early years, enjoy coming to school. Though below average, pupils' attendance is continually improving. This is due to a number of factors, including the school's relentless efforts to impress upon parents the relationship between attainment and attendance, the effective work of parent and learning mentors, the 'walking bus', awarding prizes for good attendance and sending 'text alerts' to parents before school.
- The school's well-attended breakfast club provides opportunities for pupils to learn and play with their friends and ensures that they are punctual and ready to learn. Pupils enjoy having responsibilities as librarians and eco committee members, and take on their entrepreneurial roles, selling garden produce for example, in earnest.
- Pupils are polite and respectful to one another and adults. They are courteous and polite, enjoy welcoming visitors into their school, like to talk about their learning and take pride in their appearance.
- Pupils are of the opinion that behaviour is good almost all of the time, but concede that 'once in a blue moon' people 'fall out', but soon 'make up'.
- Pupils are highly appreciative of their generous open spaces, fields, outdoor reading sanctuary and 'MUGA' (multi-use games area) where they play and interact harmoniously.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying, and the various forms that it can take, and are adamant that it never happens in school. Pupils have a good understanding of most forms of discrimination. For example, they are fully aware that people can be discriminated against because of 'their skin colour, religion or nationality', but are adamant that 'it doesn't happen here', and say that there would be serious consequences if it did.
- All parents who completed the school's surveys of their views, as well as those who spoke to inspectors, are of the view that their children are safe at school. Staff, pupils and governors are also of this view. Inspection evidence, including a scrutiny of the school's behaviour logs and safeguarding documentation,

- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using computers and electronic devices, and know that they should always seek the advice of an adult if they are unsure about the safety of a website or internet link. The school's 'safer internet' assemblies have helped to develop parents' understanding of the potential dangers of surfing the internet, and all pupils know that they can apply the 'zip it, block it, flag it' rule to anything on the internet that appears unsafe.
- Pupils have a good understanding of dangers and risks, and understand safe and unsafe situations, because they have regular discussions with various visitors from the rail, police, fire, health, children's and social services. Pupils learn how to ride their bicycles sensibly, know to steer clear of motor cycles and 'quad-bikes' when not in school, and have a good awareness of the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

#### The quality of teaching

#### is good

- The quality of teaching, including in the early years, is good. Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained, highly skilled and work together very effectively. They know pupils exceptionally well and link topics, whenever possible, to visits to places of interest in order to stimulate pupils' imagination, and improve their writing. As a result, the vast majority of pupils make good and often outstanding progress.
- Pupils learn in bright, well-organised classrooms, with lots of displays of their writing and art work. Most classrooms offer a variety of information to support pupils with their learning. This includes targets, goals, and information that pupils can 'magpie', and include in their writing and mathematics work. Reading has a very high profile, with book displays and details of a wide range of children's authors in various locations.
- Classroom activities are always purposeful, and teachers are always clear about what pupils will be learning. Most pupils are of the opinion that their learning is 'usually hard'. Inspection evidence, including a full scrutiny of pupils' work, demonstrates that this is the case. Pupils are especially interested in 'going the extra mile', particularly with their family learning projects, when they are able to work on topics of interest in depth, and share the fruits of their labour with their classmates.
- Typically there is an industrious 'buzz' of excitement in classes. This was the case when pupils in Year 6 studiously prepared, and then confidently presented their ideas for community-based projects to their peers. In Year 4 pupils could barely contain their excitement when reflecting on their meeting with 'Romans' the previous day during their visit to Chester.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' work is marked and up-to-date. They indicate how pupils can improve their work, and check to see if their suggestions are taken and that work is improved. Pupils take care of their books, and ensure that their work is of a very high standard across all subjects. Teachers clear and consistent marking is helping to ensure that pupils make good progress overtime in English and mathematics.
- Teachers consistent approach to teaching reading and writing is helping to improve pupils' phonic (the sounds that letters make) skills. This was demonstrated well in a mixed Year 1/2 English class where pupils were busy identifying the characteristics of different types of dogs. The teacher was careful to allow time for pupils to read their writing out aloud, and introduce new punctuation such as commas. Pupils made good progress and were able to write short sentences such as, 'Big, fluffy and strong, my black dog chases other dogs' by the end of the session.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics, and achieve well in this subject. This is because of teachers' continually improving subject knowledge, and their focus on making sure that pupils, from the Nursery up to Year 6, are fully aware of the importance of mathematics in everyday life.
- This was exemplified in a Year 1 mathematics class when an Italian had written to the class asking them to make a pizza for a party. After summarising previous learning on fractions, pupils made their pizzas, and then cut-out various toppings for them. Pupils progressed well because they found the topic interesting, and enjoyed working out the fractions represented by different pizza portions. However, not all pupils, especially the most able, are challenged to deepen their thinking, and develop their reasoning skills in this way.
- Pupils work together exceptionally well in pairs, small groups and on their own. In class they are always on-task and are used to working diligently through various activities. This was the case in a Year 5 class where pupils worked on a wide variety of tasks linked to their topic work on Mayan culture. Pupils demonstrated a good understanding of Mayan food, social activities and medicines, and were constantly reminded by their teacher to use 'interesting adjectives', similes and different forms of punctuation in their writing. They were also encouraged to use dictionaries to check their spelling, and extend their

vocabulary.

However, pupils' writing skills are not always developed as well as this, and at times opportunities are missed for them to refine and develop their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills, and extend their writing across all subjects.

#### The achievement of pupils

is good

- In 2014, at the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading, writing, grammar, punctuation, spelling and mathematics was below average. However, the data has to be treated cautiously because the majority of pupils in the year group had disabilities or special educational needs. Overall, data mask the fact that the attainment and progress of pupils both with, and without disabilities or special educational needs, were above that of similar groups of pupils nationally.
- The attainment of pupils without special educational needs or disabilities was average in mathematics, and above average in reading, writing and spelling, grammar and punctuation. The proportion making more than expected progress was well-above average in all subjects.
- Pupils' progress across Years 1 and 2 was good in reading, writing and mathematics. Their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has continually improved since the school opened, and is much higher than at the time of the previous inspection.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils identified as secure in their phonic skills in the national phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 was below average. However, almost all pupils were secure at the screening check in Year 2. This is because of teacher and teaching assistants' good training in phonics, and their consistent approach to teaching reading.
- Pupils enjoy reading, and read books from an ever-widening range of authors. Initiative such as 'Drop Everything and Read', regular visits from the Book Wizard, and access to the outdoor reading sanctuary have created an excitement about reading and are helping to improve standards and accelerate pupils' reading progress.
- In 2014, Year 6 pupils' achievement in writing was good, with a much higher-than-average proportion making outstanding progress. Good teaching and a rich and exciting curriculum contributed well to pupils' good and sometimes outstanding progress in writing in most year groups in 2014, and continue to do so this year.
- However, pupils' attainment is not quite as good as it should be because occasionally opportunities are missed for pupils to refine and develop their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills, and extend their writing in subjects other than English.
- A broadly average proportion of pupils without special educational needs or disabilities attained National Curriculum Level 5 in mathematics in 2014, and their progress was at least good across most year groups, often from very low starting points. Specialist training and the good leadership of the mathematics project team are helping to raise standards even further.
- However, no pupils attained the highest possible National Curriculum Level 6 in this subject in 2014, and no pupils are currently working at this level. Senior leaders have made it a priority to raise pupils' levels of attainment by deepening pupils' mathematical thinking and developing their reasoning skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are looked after outstandingly well by highly trained teachers and teaching assistants who have excellent relationships with parents and use a wide range of specialist partners. At the end of Year 6 in 2014, the attainment of pupils with special educational needs was well above that of similar groups of pupils nationally. Most of these pupils made outstanding progress in all subjects often from exceptionally low starting points.
- The school has a small, but increasing, number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The inclusion manager and teachers ensure that the progress of these pupils is closely monitored, and that their families are well supported. As a result, they are soon fully integrated into school life, and make the same good and outstanding progress as their peers.
- In 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in mathematics at the end of Year 6 was less than a term behind that of their peers in school. It was equal in reading and writing. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment was less than two terms behind all pupils nationally in mathematics, and under a term behind in reading and writing. Their progress was in line with all pupils nationally in all subjects. The majority of disadvantaged pupils made outstanding progress in all subjects. The school's own data show that they continue to make outstanding progress in all subjects across the school.
- The school's work with the most able pupils is improving, as evidenced by the increasingly challenging work in pupils' books in Key Stages 1 and 2. Additional responsibilities as, for example, digital and science

leaders, and librarians in Key stage 2 are helping to improve their attainment, as is harder work in class, extra challenges and extended research projects. However, at times the most able are not sufficiently challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability.

#### Early years provision

is good

- The leadership and management of all aspects of the early years provision are good. Nursery and Reception teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to ensure children's early learning is highly memorable and fully engaging.
- The majority of children enter the Nursery class with skills and abilities well below those typical for their age in all areas of learning. School data show that children's language and communication skills, and their knowledge and understanding of the world are especially weak at this stage. However, all children benefit from good teaching, delivered by caring, skilled and well-qualified staff. They soon settle into the Nursery and Reception classes and make good progress in all areas of learning. In 2014, an above-average proportion of children entered Year 1 with the skills and abilities necessary for the next stage of their learning. This represents good progress from their low starting points.
- Children benefit from bright and vibrant classrooms where they can practise and develop their number skills, engage in role-play and use computers and tablets. They have access to an extensive outdoor learning and play area, which includes several buildings, including a restaurant, hairdressers, supermarket, ice-cream parlour and church, which form Hope Street. Children can cook in the mud kitchen, listen to stories in the outdoor reading area and play on various wheeled toys. They keep fit though digging, practise their writing and creative skills under covered areas, play with their friends, and exercise in the grassed areas and gardens.
- Parents are happy that their children are safe and are well looked after, and are appreciative of the opportunities that they have to get involved in their children's learning. Staff are constantly exploring ways in which to encourage parents to work with the school, and offer 'stay and play' sessions and initiatives such as, 'books at breakfast' and 'dads, lads and lasses' sessions. In addition to this, resources are provided for parents to help their children learn at home.
- The quality of teaching is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers take every opportunity to develop children's speaking, listening, and counting skills. This is shown in all classes during registration where adults demonstrate good questioning skills as they encourage children to listen carefully and respond to their names.
- Adults are inventive and make learning engaging. This was exemplified when Nursery children met Mrs Freeze the ice-cream seller and learned how to make ice-cream, before selling it in the shop on Hope Street. In the Reception class children produced a poster to try and find class animals that had been stolen by Pete the Pirate.
- The good safeguarding practices and procedures operating in Key Stages 1 and 2 are adhered to in the Nursery and Reception classes. Adults' high expectations of children's behaviour help to ensure that children settle into their classes quickly, behave sensibly and safely, and progress well.
- Leaders are of the view that all aspects of early years are good and inspection evidence confirms this. Staff have made it a priority to develop outdoor provision even further, including for the benefit of twoyear-old children, and to raise levels of attainment, especially for the most able and boys, in writing.

# 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	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.
		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.

# School details

Unique reference number	135796
Local authority	Knowsley
Inspection number	461730

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	300
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Stott
Headteacher	Belinda Basnett
Date of previous school inspection	19 April 2012
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