

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Nursery and Primary School

Grantham Road, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 4LT

Inspection dates 24–25 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
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.

- Pupils' achievement is good. From starting school with knowledge and skills which are typical for their age, children progress well in their learning to leave Year 6 with above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in their learning from their individual starting points. This is due to highly effective support from teaching assistants which helps them to achieve well.
- The provision for the pupils with autistic spectrum disorder meets their needs well helping them to learn effectively.
- Early years provision is effective. It is led well, helping children make a good start to their learning in school.
- Pupils have an exceptionally clear understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet because e-safety is so well taught in school.
- Pupils are kept exceptionally safe in school by the caring and supportive staff.
- Pupils play together very nicely during break times on the playground. They clearly enjoy their break times and include their friends well in their games so no one feels left out.
- School leaders and managers clearly know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have a good understanding of how to improve the school further.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils' achievement in writing and the early years outdoor learning area have been improved successfully by school leaders and managers.
- The determined headteacher is well supported by an effective senior leadership team and governing body. Together they have improved teaching and achievement well since the previous inspection.
- Effective subject leaders check regularly on the quality of learning in their subjects and have high quality plans for how to improve pupils' achievement further.
- The school continues to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few variations remain in the achievement of some groups of pupils in reading and mathematics, and particularly in writing.
- A small number of the most able pupils are not fully challenged to achieve their best in all lessons.
- Occasionally, marking does not help all pupils to improve their learning well enough.
- Too few pupils are given opportunities to deepen their understanding fully and master using their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects of the curriculum.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons and part lessons. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher plus the deputy and assistant headteachers.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, school staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a group of governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a school improvement partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors held discussions with parents and groups of pupils. Inspectors also spoke informally to pupils in lessons, during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors scrutinised the work pupils produced during lessons and in a wide range of their books over time. They also listened to a small number of pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read.
- Inspectors closely observed the work of the school and looked at the latest school data on pupils' achievement and the progress they are currently making. Other documentation scrutinised included the school development plan, safeguarding information, behaviour logs, attendance records and minutes of recent meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of the 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), one letter from a parent and two messages left by parents with the inspection provider. They analysed 48 responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Declan McCauley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Pamela Davenport

Additional Inspector

Michelle Murray

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. Many of these pupils have very complex learning difficulties.
- The school provides designated provision for up to 24 pupils aged five to 11 with autistic spectrum disorder.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average. The term disadvantaged pupils is used to describe those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority. These pupils receive additional support through the pupil premium funding.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- Children attend Nursery sessions part time and the Reception class full time.
- The school is a member of the Southport Learning Partnership.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegation were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to narrow attainment and progress gaps between groups of pupils by:
 - making sure the most able pupils are fully challenged in their learning
 - reflecting on and successfully implementing a method of consistently helping all pupils to improve their work through effective marking
 - ensuring more pupils are given opportunities to deepen their understanding and master using their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects across the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The effective senior leadership team is successfully led by a highly skilled and determined headteacher. She is passionately and successfully driving school improvement to secure the highest quality standards for all pupils.
- A culture of high expectation has been effectively created by school leaders and is shared widely by all leaders and managers. Pupils thrive in their learning because of this and everyone in school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve no matter what their starting point.
- Senior leaders have secured many improvements in the quality of teaching, achievement and early years provision since the previous inspection because of their unfaltering focus on improving outcomes for all children and pupils.
- Middle leaders are effective in their roles. Teaching is well led. All leaders and managers, including subject leaders, have a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses within their areas of responsibility. Very clear, appropriate and well-designed plans exist to bring about further improvement.
- School leaders see the value in providing effective opportunities for all staff to continue to develop their craft of teaching through attending professional development meetings and training. This has many benefits for pupils and staff. Many staff leave school to move to promoted posts in other schools because of the effective support they receive as part of the school community thus helping to further strengthen the teaching profession.
- The pupil premium funding is used astutely to support disadvantaged pupils more effectively in their learning than previously, so they achieve well.
- As a recognised rights respecting school equal opportunities are afforded to all pupils. Discrimination is not tolerated and good relations are fostered successfully as part of the caring and supportive nature of the inclusive ethos by which everyone abides.
- The curriculum is rich and highly engaging for pupils. It supports effective learning strongly through the innovative and exciting learning opportunities afforded to pupils. High quality and exciting learning opportunities, designed to stimulate and engage children effectively, were observed by inspectors. One of these involved the conversion of the school hall into an aircraft so pupils from the early years could fly to New Zealand to learn about a different way of life on the other side of the world. Boarding cards issued by staff dressed in character and passports stamped brought learning fully to life for children. However, the curriculum does not meet the needs of all pupils fully.
- The curriculum prepares pupils effectively for living in modern Britain. A week is set aside each year when pupils learn effectively about what it means to be British and how values such as respect and tolerance are cornerstones of our modern day society. A family who wrote to the inspection team expressed the view that school helps pupils to be kind, tolerant and responsible members of society.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision and special educational needs is strong, as is the leadership and management of the resource provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and are a key element of ensuring pupils are kept safe in school. The school works well with a range of agencies such as the local authority education welfare service to ensure pupils are kept exceptionally safe in school.
- Additional funding to support the development of sport in schools is being used effectively by leaders and managers. It is bringing about improved participation in sports clubs, success in sporting competitions and further developing the skills of teachers. The work of sport coaches in improving the knowledge and skills of teachers is bearing fruit and staff can now more confidently teach sports such as hockey, gymnastics and multi skills.
- The local authority rightly provides a light touch level of support to this high performing school. The school gains much from membership of the Southport Learning Partnership. Through the partnership, staff also develop their skills well in effectively supporting other schools in the Southport area.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Members of the governing body clearly understand how well the school is performing compared to other schools, through the use of nationally published and school generated data about pupils' achievement. Governors know much about the quality of teaching in school and manage the performance of staff well; they are rigorous in their pursuit of excellence. Governors do not shy away from making difficult decisions about tackling teachers' underperformance and they reward good teaching appropriately. Governors expressed a clear desire to narrow attainment and progress gaps for groups of pupils. They quite rightly see this as a key priority.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are exceptionally polite and well mannered around school. They are respectful towards both each other and adults in school. In lessons, their behaviour is exemplary and makes an exceptionally strong contribution to their good achievement.
- The well-improved school playground is a delightful place for pupils to meet and socialise. When they meet their friends they play nicely together ensuring no one is left out as they include lots of other pupils in their games.
- Break times are enjoyed well by pupils but when breaks are over pupils move rapidly and in exceptionally orderly and quiet processions back to their classrooms to continue their learning.
- Pupils wear their uniforms with pride. They are clearly proud of the part they play in their successful school community.
- If any minor behaviour issues occur, pupils confidently say they would be well resolved by the adults in school immediately when brought to their attention.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- The school site is a safe place to be for pupils and staff. Only bona fide visitors are permitted to access the school buildings after clearing the exceptionally stringent security checks at the school entrance carried out by the diligent members of the school administration team.
- Rigorous checks are undertaken before staff are employed to ensure there is nothing in their backgrounds which could pose a risk to children. The records of these checks are especially well maintained by the highly efficient school business manager who carries out her duties meticulously.
- Children are very well protected in school because of the extremely strong and effective links, which school staff have established with other professionals, such as social services and the local authority education welfare service. As a result, pupils' attendance is above average.
- Pupils have an exceedingly strong knowledge of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet because of the high quality teaching of e-safety in school.
- Pupils enjoy attending school regularly and are well aware of how important it is to be in school regularly to learn well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching over time results in pupils achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics. The sounds which letters make (phonics) are taught well to younger pupils and enables them to read well; this is also helping them to improve their writing skills effectively.
- Pupils are questioned very effectively about their understanding of what they have been taught which helps teachers and teaching assistants to understand how well their teaching is helping pupils to learn. This forms part of the ongoing and regular assessment which promotes good learning. When pupils are keen and enthusiastic to take part in practical mathematical activities, teachers adapt activities to increase the level of challenge for pupils.
- The classrooms form an effective, bright and stimulating learning environment promoting learning effectively. Displays around school are well presented and provide further learning support for pupils. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning throughout the whole school.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught well throughout school. The teaching of writing has improved successfully since the last inspection and is resulting in improved achievement.
- Teaching assistants are key in supporting pupils effectively in their learning. They make an important contribution to the success of the school.
- The most able pupils are challenged well in many lessons. In a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were observed undertaking very challenging calculations and using a diverse range of strategies to crack codes effectively. Occasionally, this level of challenge is not delivered as effectively which slightly hinders pupils' achievement.
- In many lessons, opportunities are provided to deepen pupils' knowledge well. This helps them to master using their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects across the curriculum, helping them improve

further in their learning. However, in a small number of classes this is not always the case. School leaders agree with inspectors that currently pupils are not helped to improve their work well enough by marking and they are keen to make changes to improve this rapidly.

The achievement of pupils is good

- From starting school with knowledge and skills typical for their age, children progress well in their learning and development in early years with the majority well prepared to join Year 1. Pupils continue to make strong progress in their learning throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- In the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2014, pupils attained standards which were above average. The latest school data show it is even higher this year. Reading is taught well. Older pupils speak about their enjoyment of reading books from a wide range of authors such as David Walliams, Enid Blyton and Michael Murpurgo.
- Since the previous inspection, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has improved in writing and mathematics and high standards have been maintained in reading. In 2014, standards were above average in reading and mathematics but slightly below average in writing. In Key Stage 2, attainment has improved well since the previous inspection in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, attainment at the end of Year 6 was above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils in 2014 attained above average standards at the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics but were slightly below average in writing. At the end of Year 6, the most able pupils attained above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils made more progress than other pupils in school in mathematics and reading but made slightly less progress in writing. Current school data show disadvantaged pupils are making stronger progress than other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in many year groups.
- From their different starting points disadvantaged pupils progress well in their learning because they are effectively supported and taught.
- In 2014, the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally narrowed from 2013 in reading and mathematics although it grew wider in writing. Compared to other pupils in school the gap for disadvantaged pupils narrowed in reading but grew wider in mathematics and writing. In 2014 compared to other pupils nationally disadvantaged pupils in school were nearly two terms behind in reading, two terms behind in mathematics and nearly four terms behind in writing. In school compared to other pupils the disadvantaged pupils were two terms behind in reading, over three terms behind in writing and over two terms behind in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well from their individual starting points. Their very complex and specific needs are met well through the good quality well-focused support provided by a skilled team of teaching assistants led by an effective leader of special educational needs.
- Pupils in the resource provision make effective progress in their learning. They achieve as well as the disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in school because they are incredibly well supported by caring and dedicated staff. The resource provision plays an important part in school life and pupils rightly see themselves as being part of the school because school staff promote this approach so well.
- The latest school data show a few minor variations in pupils' progress remain. These include groups of pupils such as disadvantaged pupils, a few boys compared to girls plus a small number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

The early years provision is good

- Children get off to a good start in their learning and development after starting school with knowledge and skills which are typical for their age. Children achieve well. In 2014, most children reached a good level of development and were well prepared to join Year 1. This year school data show nine out of 10 are currently at a good level of development, which is a high proportion.
- Good teaching helps children to achieve well in the high quality early years provision. Key workers support children's development well which enables them to make fast progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are equally well supported in their learning which helps them to achieve well.
- The superbly designed outdoor area is used effectively to further extend children's learning. The area is an exciting place for children to spend their time learning. Allied with the very colourful and well laid out

classrooms this is a joyous place for children to learn.

- Exciting and interesting tasks bring learning to life for children. At a young age children learn effectively about British values and how important they are in our modern day society. Children behave exceptionally well, they are very tolerant of each other and they socialise well.
- The early years leader manages the staff team effectively. They have a good understanding of the specific needs of individual children in early years which informs their future learning and aids their development well.
- All possible steps are successfully taken by staff to ensure children are kept exceptionally safe.

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	104916
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	461757

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	588
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Beck
Headteacher	Maureen Hillsdon
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2012
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