

Mosscroft Primary School

Bedford Close, Huyton, Liverpool, Merseyside L36 1XH

Inspection dates

10–11 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, governance has not improved as quickly as other aspects of leadership in the school.
- Governors do not ask enough searching questions about how additional funding is used, for example, to help the most able disadvantaged pupils to excel.
- There has been a decline in the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the early years. This was due to children not making good enough progress, particularly in reading and writing.
- Governors' systems for checking that they are meeting their statutory duties lack rigour.
- The quality of some teaching and learning in some classes is not as good as it is in others. This stops pupils from making stronger gains in their learning.
- The most able pupils are not challenged well enough in lessons. Too few reach the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of each key stage.
- Leaders are not using pupils' performance information to accurately track the progress of different groups of pupils. As such, the most able pupils do not progress well enough to achieve the highest standards in writing and mathematics.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual development is not as strong as the work to develop pupils' moral, social and cultural development.

The school has the following strengths

- Due to the strong leadership of the headteacher, the school has improved most aspects identified as weaknesses at the previous inspection. She has effectively tackled the weakest teaching within the school.
- The proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are similar to those nationally in reading, in writing and in mathematics.
- Attainment in Year 1 phonics has improved over the last three years to become close to national figures.
- The effectiveness of middle leadership has improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and their attendance has improved to broadly average. Very positive relationships between pupils and staff mean that school is harmonious and pupils feel safe.
- Improvements to their presentation show that pupils take greater pride in their work.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve governance by:
 - communicating appropriately high expectations for pupils' progress so that they achieve the highest standards
 - asking more challenging questions about the achievement of different groups of pupils, particularly the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged
 - ensuring that governors are fulfilling all their statutory duties, such as governors checking to make sure that the publication of information on the school website is up to date.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by developing assessment systems to track the progress made by different groups of pupils, particularly the most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils, to ensure that they are supported effectively and make stronger progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - challenging the most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils to achieve the highest standards
 - developing wider opportunities for pupils' spiritual development and their awareness of British values
 - reviewing the use of the sports funding to ensure that there is a greater range of opportunities for pupils to extend their learning at the end of the day.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, the strong leadership of the headteacher has eradicated the weakest teaching, and standards have risen in phonics and in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2. The headteacher has been supported well by middle leaders, who have grown in confidence and developed the necessary skills to ensure that everyone is playing a part in school improvement. However, the school continues to require improvement because too few pupils make good progress over time. Not enough pupils, especially the most able, achieve beyond the expected standard. This arises from a lack of challenge in lessons.
- Senior leaders are not effectively tracking the progress of different groups of pupils. This means that they are not always able to set high enough expectations for the most able pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.
- Leaders' pupil premium strategy is effective in supporting pupils to achieve the expected standard but is not helping the most able disadvantaged pupils to achieve beyond this.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils' spiritual development within the school. Leaders have identified the need for a more consistent approach to developing this throughout the curriculum, especially to develop pupils' knowledge of other faiths and their traditions.
- The physical education and sport funding has been used to develop physical education (PE) within the school, but there is only a very limited range of extra-curricular clubs on offer, a concern raised by both parents and pupils.
- Whole-school assemblies, on topics such as democracy, help pupils to gain a basic understanding of British values. While pupils clearly show respect for others, they struggle to explain any other values because there are not enough opportunities for, for example, the rule of law and individual liberty to be explored more fully in the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is a strength of the school's work. This is due to strong leadership of this area. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and accurately, and teaching, including small-group sessions, is tailored well to meet the specific learning needs of these pupils.
- Pupils enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum, as seen in their topic books, and themed weeks, such as the 'celebrating Britishness through art' project. The curriculum also provides international links that help pupils to compare their own culture with that of their pen pals in France.
- Pupils understand the importance of equality. They discuss topics such as racism, disability and transgender issues with maturity and understanding.
- Leaders promote the professional development of all staff and this is starting to impact on the quality of teaching. Staff respond well to this and are working well as part of a team.

Governance of the school

- Governors are too reliant upon the headteacher when evaluating the performance of pupils and when setting expectations for pupils' achievement. They lack the confidence and skills to ask questions about pupils' performance. This has been recognised by the headteacher. The local authority has been providing support to develop governors' skills in rigorously questioning leaders about the school's performance.
- Governors do not effectively question the use of the pupil premium funding, despite being provided with detailed reports by the headteacher. They have focused too much on the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard, paying too little attention to how well the most able disadvantaged pupils fare.
- The school website is not fully up to date. Governors do not check on how often the information is updated.
- Governors effectively review the performance of staff. They ensure that staff performance targets are met in full.
- Governors have a good grasp of the school's finances. They appreciate the support they have received from the local authority to ensure that the school budget is monitored and managed effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There are very positive relationships between staff and pupils in the school. Pupils feel that they can approach members of staff if they have a concern. All the parents with whom inspectors spoke agree that they have no safeguarding concerns.
- The designated safeguarding leaders receive annual training on their responsibilities and provide all staff with regular updates. Consequently, staff are clear about their responsibility for keeping pupils safe and they are well equipped to pick up on any signs that may suggest a pupil is in distress. They have a good awareness of the safeguarding procedures to follow to register their concerns.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. For example, they talk with confidence about how they keep themselves free from harm when they are online, because they are taught these skills through workshops and assemblies.
- Safeguarding records are stored securely and the paperwork for pupils who are looked after by the local authority is comprehensive and effective. Plans for these pupils are clear and focused on their needs. Consequently, these pupils do as well as others in school.
- The school has taken appropriate steps to ensure the safety of those pupils who sometimes attend local authority funded alternative provision to support their needs.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is variable and does not offer consistently high expectations for pupils' learning. Lessons do not provide the challenge required to

stretch the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Consequently, pupils do not develop the depth of understanding required to apply their learning across a range of subjects, particularly in mathematics. Work in pupils' books shows this lack of challenge to be typical over time. Many of the pupils spoken with confirm that they often find their work too easy.

- The pupil premium funding has been used to provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils. This approach has not been successful in improving outcomes for the most able disadvantaged pupils, as none of these pupils achieved a higher standard by the end of key stage 2 in writing and in mathematics. This is because leaders are focused on attainment rather than the progress pupils make. As such, there are missed opportunities to identify the groups of pupils that can make better progress.
- Work in pupils' topic books shows that there are good opportunities to write across the curriculum. The presentation of pupils' writing has improved since the previous inspection and they are taking greater pride in their work.
- Engaging topics, such as a recent Year 6 focus on local history, allow pupils to extend their learning in a range of subjects. For example, pupils design their own geodome, Year 2 practise geographical fieldwork skills and Years 3 and 4 pupils enjoy exploring their topic on chocolate.
- Pupils speak favourably about the new approach to mathematics where they can support each other to solve the problems teachers set, although in lessons pupils agree that some of their work is too easy.
- Early reading skills are taught well. Reading texts are matched appropriately to pupils' abilities and interests. Pupils who find reading more difficult are supported well through frequent opportunities to read to adults. This is building their confidence and enjoyment.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well within class and through additional small-group learning sessions. They are supported by adults who skilfully model new ideas and question pupils to ensure that they make good progress in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are self-confident and prepared to put forward their ideas in a thoughtful way. This is, in part, because teachers provide opportunities for pupils to share ideas and collaborate in paired work and small groups.
- In lessons, pupils debate topics, showing respect for the opinions and views of others. This was evident in Year 6 where pupils were challenged to look at the language features that would need to be used to present a balanced argument.
- Year 6 pupils wear their shirts and ties with pride and in readiness for their transition to secondary school. They respond positively to the school's strategies, such as increased homework, to prepare them for the next stage of their education.

- School records show that bullying is rare, and pupils are confident that staff tackle harmful behaviour effectively. Pupils know what forms bullying take. They know what action to take if bullying does occur and they are willing to report any instances of unkind behaviour or derogatory language.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct in and around the school is good. They are polite and courteous, holding doors for adults to pass through. When talking to adults, they are lively and eager to contribute.
- During lessons, pupils support each other's learning and at playtimes play well together. They work well together when solving problems and act as an additional source of help.
- The parents with whom inspectors spoke and those who completed the online survey report that their children are happy at school.
- In lessons, there is no disruptive behaviour. On occasion, some pupils, especially the most able, switch off from their learning because it lacks sufficient challenge. Good behaviour is celebrated at assemblies each week, which is popular with pupils and encourages them to do their best.
- Attendance is improving. The most recent figures provided by the school show that attendance is currently broadly average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The school's published data shows that few pupils achieve the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. The most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils do not make enough progress to achieve the highest standards. This is because they are not provided with work that stretches their thinking.
- Inspectors found that there are few opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills across the curriculum. Consequently, there are lost opportunities for pupils to deepen their mathematical understanding by applying their learning in different contexts.
- Pupils' attainment in phonics at the end of Year 1 has improved over the last three years. As a result, pupils are confident and fluent readers who show persistence when reading texts.
- The higher expectations of the presentation of work in pupils' books have instilled a sense of increasing pride in pupils. Their mathematics books are neatly presented and well ordered. Writing books show a clear improvement in pupils' handwriting. There are more opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum. This was an area for improvement from the previous inspection which has been tackled successfully.
- The school's use of assessment allows leaders to track the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The information provided by the school shows that these pupils make good rates of progress from their starting points.

- Pupils with more complex needs attend off-site specialist provision run by the local authority. This impacts well on their sensory and social needs.
- Targets for pupils who are looked after are detailed in their personal plans. They are well defined and the school provides these pupils with the support to achieve their goals.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Leaders in the early years do not have an accurate view of children's progress and standards. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development declined in 2016 and was below the national average. Although changes in staff have contributed to this, the reasons for the decline have not been fully explored by leaders. As such, most children who typically enter the school with skills just below the level expected for their age, do not catch up rapidly enough.
- The use of additional funding for disadvantaged children is targeted to meet their individual needs, but this is not making enough difference. The proportion of disadvantaged children reaching a good level of development is below average. This means that they are not as well prepared for the demands of Year 1.
- There is variation in the quality of teaching and learning within the early years provision. The level of challenge adults provide does not consistently support children to extend their learning. Where children make the strongest progress, learning is supported well by adults who model tasks and language appropriately.
- Children work with a good degree of exploration and they are starting to make links between ideas. For example, in one Nursery session children printed shapes using paint and then started to count the number of prints they had done.
- Outcomes for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are good. This is due to the effective support that they receive from staff who model social skills with a clear focus on developing pupils' understanding through language. Sensory tasks, such as playing with foam, encourage children to interact with one another to describe the sensation.
- Children are settled in their environment. They cooperate well with one another, take turns and share. There is no disruption to lessons and children are aware of clearly established routines. This is due to the high level of care and support that children receive from staff.
- Parents are positive about the early years provision. Staff are proactive in engaging parents through daily contact, workshops and regular updates in their 'taking school home' books.
- The leadership of the early years is proactive in promoting pupils' safeguarding and this is effective. There are no breaches of statutory requirements and all staff receive training and support regularly to keep children safe.

School details

Unique reference number	104439
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10026819

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr N Bowmaker
Headteacher	Mrs P France
Telephone number	0151 477 8190
Website	www.mosscroftprimary.co.uk
Email address	mosscroft@knowsley.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum, complaints procedure, the use of the pupil premium grant, accessibility plan, information about governors or the charging and remissions policy on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from an ethnic minority background is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum

expectations for pupils' progress and attainment by the end of Year 6.

- Children attend the Nursery class on a part-time basis and the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- A small number of pupils attend off-site provision run by the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in each class. This included shorter visits made jointly with the headteacher to observe the work of classes from the Nursery to Year 6.
- Inspectors looked through a range of pupils' work across the curriculum and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally in groups and informally around school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the day and took into account the views of 11 parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- They made observations of pupils' behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes, when pupils were moving in and around the school and during lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, governors, senior leaders and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and its areas for development.
- Inspectors looked at attendance and behaviour records, including records of bullying incidents.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documentation and how this related to daily practice as well as speaking with staff and children.
- Inspectors took account of 17 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Jennie Platt

Ofsted Inspector

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