

Florence Melly Community Primary School

Bushey Road, Liverpool, Merseyside L4 9UA

Inspection dates

15–16 February 2017

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| 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

- Leaders, including governors, have not focused clearly enough on ensuring that improvements to teaching raise the achievement of all pupils rapidly enough.
- Governors, especially those new to post, are not always clear about the best way to challenge leaders and managers about the work of the school.
- Pupils' achievement has improved especially in reading and mathematics, but progress is variable and still requires improvement.
- Pupils' progress in writing, particularly that of the most able, is not good enough because pupils are not given enough opportunities to write at length.
- The quality of teaching overall is inconsistent. Teachers' expectations about what pupils can achieve are not high enough, particularly in key stage 1.
- The most able pupils are not challenged enough to ensure that they achieve as well as they could. Not enough pupils achieve the higher standards they are capable of.
- The presentation of pupils' work is inconsistent.
- Children in the early years do not make rapid progress because the activities that children choose for themselves lack purpose and focus.
- Adults in the early years do not focus closely enough on the development of children's speech, language and communication skills.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has steadied the ship and, along with the assistant headteacher, has an accurate understanding of the school's position. There is now an improving culture for learning.
- Pupils behave well, they feel safe and an increasing number enjoy coming to school.
- Teaching in Year 6 is effective; pupils make good progress during their final year in school.
- Opportunities for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are good.
- The majority of parents are supportive of the school and are very happy with the better progress their children are making.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management to improve outcomes for all pupils, by:
 - ensuring that leaders and managers at all levels closely monitor the quality of teaching to ensure consistency
 - effectively using assessment information to improve progress for all groups of pupils.
- Improve teaching and learning to accelerate the progress of all pupils, by:
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are as high as they can be, particularly in key stage 1
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are challenged to work at greater depth
 - ensuring that all pupils are given enough opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects
 - improving pupils' presentation skills across the curriculum.
- Improve standards in the early years, by:
 - giving children engaging and challenging opportunities to practise their skills of speech, language and communication through a range of experiences
 - making sure the activities given to children allow them demonstrate skills such as resilience, perseverance and independence.

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 previous inspection there have been numerous staffing changes and changes to governance. The headteacher, appointed after the inspection, acknowledges that the school has been through a turbulent time. He has taken effective action to address many of the previous weaknesses. As a result, teaching is improving and behaviour is good.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher are aware of the school's current position. However, they have not focused accurately enough on regularly checking the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, pupils' progress is inconsistent.
- Leaders have introduced a new system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Assessments are accurate. Nevertheless, leaders, including governors, do not always use the information to hold teachers to account for the progress of all pupils.
- Arrangements for the management of staff performance are in place. Staff have valued effective professional development and it has led to improvements in teaching. For example, the teaching of phonics is now more effective.
- The use of funding to support disadvantaged pupils is not yet fully effective in improving progress. The recent appointment of a teacher to support learning in Year 6 is having a positive impact on the progress of these pupils. The money is also spent well in giving pupils a range of opportunities they may not otherwise get. For example, a group of disadvantaged pupils recently visited the Houses of Parliament.
- The government's funding for school sport and physical education is spent well. For example, specialist coaches deliver gymnastics and dance in school and pupils have access to a range of sporting opportunities.
- The curriculum is balanced and pupils enjoy studying a range of topics in key stage 2. However, there are not always enough opportunities to write at length and in key stage 1, pupils are not always given exciting opportunities to learn practically and this can restrict the progress they make.
- Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a very wide range of extra-curricular activities including football, dancing, music and Spanish classes. Pupils say they enjoy these opportunities because they help contribute to a healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils have some understanding of British values. For example, the school council are involved in the Liverpool Schools' Parliament and pupils celebrate events such as the Queen's birthday and Remembrance Day. Older pupils have an understanding of democracy as they are able to apply what they learned about Ancient Greece to life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural understanding is strong. Pupils are given opportunities to engage in a range of experiences. For example, the school choir performed in the town hall as part of a local community project and they visit a wide range of places of worship, including a temple.
- The school is appreciative of the support received from the local authority. This support has helped to improve the teaching of mathematics and has helped leaders deal with

staffing issues.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has been through a period of substantial instability in the last two years. Although the situation is now more settled, governors do not consistently hold leaders stringently to account for the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils.
- Assessment information is now more readily available, but not all governors probe leaders about what they are doing to improve performance and raise standards.
- Governors have an improving understanding of the financial position of the school, including how additional funding is spent to support disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and to enhance sports provision.
- Governors are aware that the school website does not fully meet the requirements for the publication of information on its website; the admissions policy is under review.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding has an extremely high profile in school. All staff are trained appropriately, policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and everyone is fully aware of their duty to keep pupils safe. The pastoral support officer provides very good support for vulnerable pupils and their families. Pupils know they can talk to someone if they have worries or concerns. Appropriate risk assessments are in place to ensure that the school site is safe for everyone.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they should.
- Teaching is variable across subjects and years. Teaching in Year 6 is good, but there are weaknesses elsewhere, particularly in key stage 1. Teachers do not have high enough expectations about what pupils can achieve. As result, the most able pupils do not make enough progress.
- The use of assessment information is inconsistent. At times progress slows, linked to a lack of challenge. On these occasions, teachers do not allow enough time for pupils to think for themselves or use and apply their skills independently, particularly in writing.
- Teaching of writing is variable. Teachers do not always insist that pupils present their work neatly and accurately. As a result, the presentation of pupils' work, including their handwriting, is inconsistent across the school.
- Developments in the teaching of reading in key stage 2 indicate that pupils are reading more for their own pleasure and the number of pupils achieving the expected standard for their age is increasing.
- The teaching of phonics is improving in key stage 1. Pupils use their knowledge to sound out unfamiliar words and the school's own assessment data indicates that more

pupils will pass the Year 1 phonics check in 2017.

- The teaching of mathematics, although it requires improvement, is similarly improving, particularly in key stage 2. Pupils are given more opportunities to reason about numbers and solve problems.
- Improvements in teachers' subject knowledge are enabling more teachers to set tasks to extend learning. For example, in Year 6 pupils were given a range of mathematical problems related to fractions and used their reasoning skills to work out the answers.
- Topics such as the Ancient Egyptians and cities across Europe engage pupils so that they are eager to learn.
- The quality of homework is good. Pupils are given homework regularly and sometimes are given extended projects. For example, in Year 3 pupils enjoyed making a 'book in a box' at home. For example, one box depicted 'Charlie and the chocolate factory'.

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 proud to go to Florence Melly School. Year 6 are particularly proud of their school blazers and how smart they look; they are good role models for other pupils. However, pupils do not always take the same pride in the presentation of their work.
- Pupils say that everyone gets along together. They have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including prejudiced-based bullying. They say that on the very rare occasion that bullying does occur, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by teachers.
- Pupils are given opportunities to take on leadership roles, including school council, enterprise projects and the 'show racism the red card' project. This ensures that pupils can give their opinions about what happens in their school.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and the vast majority of parents wholeheartedly agree. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe on the internet because they receive well-planned and timely advice on the use of social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils and staff say that behaviour has improved considerably in recent months because a new behaviour policy has been introduced and pupils can earn rewards for good behaviour. Although this system is quite new, there has been a reduction in the number of behaviour incidents on the school yard.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered and they move around school in an orderly fashion. Many pupils were observed by inspectors holding doors open and saying 'please' and 'thank you'.
- There has recently been a marked improvement in pupils' attendance and pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. The school has robust procedures to chase up

absentees and ensure that they attend school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Children start school with skills and knowledge below those typically expected for their age. Progress through key stage 1 is inconsistent. Many pupils make expected progress, but too few pupils make better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because teaching is variable and there are gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge due to staffing difficulties in the past.
- Similarly, in key stage 2 the pace of progress is inconsistent. Results of national assessments in 2016 showed that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards at the end of key stage 2 was similar to the national average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics.
- Current assessment information and work in pupils' books indicate that pupils make rapid progress in Year 6; however, this is not enough to make up for insufficient progress in previous years.
- The number of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check in 2016 was below the national average. Currently, pupils in Year 1 are making better progress in phonics and more are working at the level expected for their age. This is because there is a clear focus on the use of phonics to read unfamiliar words.
- The most able pupils are not achieving the standards of which they are capable. This has been noticeable in mathematics. However, there are signs this year that staff have increased the challenge for pupils in mathematics lessons. As a result, achievement is improving.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because they are given support with their learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils perform similarly to their peers in school. Progress is variable. In some year groups there is evidence that the progress of these pupils is accelerating and that differences are beginning to diminish between their progress and the progress of other pupils nationally. However, this is not consistent across the school and there remains a difference for the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- The school's current assessment identifies that achievement in reading is improving. Leaders have begun to ensure that more opportunities for developing reading skills are used in all classes.
- Achievement in mathematics is also improving because pupils are being given more opportunities to problem-solve and use their reasoning skills. The proportion of pupils working at the level expected for their age is increasing.
- National data in 2016 showed that achievement in writing was broadly in line with the national average; this continues to be the case. Nevertheless, work in pupils' books indicates that they are not given enough opportunities to write at length and therefore not enough pupils are achieving the higher standards in writing.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children enter the school with skills that are below those typical for their age. In particular, children have low communication and literacy skills.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception is below the national average. During their time in early years, children, including disadvantaged children, make the progress they should but few make better progress. This is because children are given insufficient opportunities to develop characteristics of learning such as curiosity, independence and resilience. Too often, teachers give children tasks that do not allow them enough opportunity to think and investigate for themselves.
- Teaching requires improvement. Tasks are planned carefully and there is a range of activities for children to enjoy. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to engage in sustained play, especially when they have opted to work without the support of an adult. Staff do not always focus closely enough on developing speech, language and communication while children are learning.
- Some aspects of teaching are good. Children are given opportunities to learn both indoors and out. The indoor and outdoor environments are attractive and very well resourced. Children are excited to learn. A group of girls were very keen to tell inspectors that a bear had visited their classroom, but not to worry – ‘it was a friendly bear’.
- The early years leader plans effectively. She ensures that assessments take place regularly and in an organised way. Assessments are accurate, but the expectations of what children can achieve are not high enough. This means that children are not always fully prepared for Year 1 and the transition is not as smooth as it could be.
- There are warm relationships within the early years. Children are well behaved and work happily together. For example, one group of boys were busy making a tower, while another group acted out a story.
- Relationships with parents are very good. Parents are appreciative of the work that staff do.
- Procedures to keep children safe are good. Policies and procedures are communicated effectively and adhered to by all.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 133336 |
| Local authority | Liverpool |
| Inspection number | 10024095 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 447 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Rev Tom Allen |
| Headteacher | Mr Ken Heaton |
| Telephone number | 0151 2261929 |
| Website | www.florencemelly.org |
| Email address | k.heaton@fmp.liverpool.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 11–12 February 2015 |

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about admissions on its website.
- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium funding is much higher than the national average.
- There have been a number of changes to the leadership team since the last inspection, including a new headteacher and new chair of the governing body. There have also been a number of changes to the teaching staff.
- The local authority has supported the school since the previous inspection.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in lessons; including one observation carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors listened to pupils reading. They looked at examples of pupils' work and observed pupils at lunchtime and breaktimes.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. They spoke to parents as they brought their children to school.
- There were 33 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). There were 30 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' current progress across the school, the school's view of its own effectiveness, and how the school checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspectors checked the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and looked at records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

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