

# Litherland Moss Primary School

Moss Lane, Liverpool, Merseyside L21 7NW

## Inspection dates

21–22 February 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher provides high-quality leadership. Her determination and ambition for all pupils to receive the support they need in order to do their best ensures that pupils flourish socially, emotionally and in their learning.
- The governing body provides effective challenge and support for leaders. Governors use their knowledge of the school well to inform their work.
- Teaching is consistently good and so pupils achieve well. Teachers plan engaging activities that capture pupils' interest and meet their learning needs.
- Pupils behave very well both in classes and around school. They treat each other and adults with respect and are proud to belong to Litherland Moss.
- The pastoral support that pupils receive is excellent and contributes strongly to helping remove barriers to learning and to pupils' good personal development and well-being.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are safe. There is a strong culture of vigilance across the school. Pupils are cared for very well by all staff and the school is a safe haven for them.
- Pupils benefit from a rich and varied curriculum and take full advantage of the many extra-curricular opportunities the school provides.
- The headteacher and governors have developed an effective team of senior and middle leaders who work diligently together to improve opportunities and accelerate learning for pupils. However, leaders' plans for using additional funding do not consistently contain appropriate, measurable targets.
- From often low starting points, the majority of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the work that most-able pupils are given is not always challenging enough and too few of them reach the higher levels standards of which they are capable.
- The school's new assessment system does not identify pupils who should exceed the expected standards for all pupils. This means that the school does not track the progress of higher-ability pupils rigorously enough.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They make strong progress so that they leave the Reception class ready for the demands of key stage 1. Further improvements are needed to make sure that the outdoor provision for the Reception children is more closely linked to areas of learning.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, by:
  - increasing expectations of what higher-ability pupils can achieve and giving them challenging activities so that more of them are reaching the higher standards
  - improving the outdoor learning environment for the early years to make it more exciting and more closely linked to areas of learning.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, by:
  - continuing to improve the school's assessment system so that it tracks the progress of higher-ability pupils rigorously and identifies when pupils exceed national expectations
  - tightening the plan for the use of the physical education (PE) and sports funding to make targets more measurable.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher, governors and other senior leaders set a clear and ambitious vision for the pupils of the school. They have established a set of values that permeate all aspects of the school's work and drive progress. They set high expectations for their staff and themselves. Staff contributions at all levels are valued and morale is high. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving rapidly and is having a positive effect on the learning of pupils.
- The headteacher's philosophy of 'no excuses' means that all pupils flourish no matter what their circumstances. This is because pupils are very well supported to overcome challenges and barriers to their learning. The most vulnerable families are given extra support to ensure that their children achieve well. A typical example includes school staff accompanying parents to medical appointments to ensure they get the help they need.
- Performance-management arrangements are robust and closely checked by leaders and governors. Whole-school priorities are translated into targets for teachers at all levels. These are closely aligned to the school's evaluations of what staff need to do to improve the pace of learning for pupils. Teachers' performance is regularly reviewed against their targets. A comprehensive training programme supports the continuing development of all staff.
- Middle leaders now provide a greater contribution to school improvement than seen at the time of the previous inspection. This is because the headteacher and governors have invested in developing leadership skills through a broad range of coaching and training programmes. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning in many subjects, including science and PE, is improving.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well through a relevant and diverse curriculum. The work in pupils' books evidences learning about a range of different world faiths including Islam and Hinduism. Subjects such as personal, social and health education (PSHE) are used skilfully to challenge stereotypes. For example, pupils in key stage 2 recently explored the impact of homophobic bullying on celebrities including Elton John and Ellen DeGeneres.
- Pupil premium funding is used carefully and effectively to support the large numbers of disadvantaged pupils. A broad range of initiatives, including employing an attendance officer and a learning mentor, are helping to make sure that disadvantaged pupils make strong progress. In 2016, the overall progress that this group made by the time they left school was similar to that of other pupils nationally.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. This is because they ensure that additional funding for these pupils is used effectively by the school.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is rich and varied. Well-planned opportunities help pupils to develop academically and personally. Activities such as 'forest school' and 'rainbow' sessions demonstrate the school's commitment to the wider curriculum and reinforce British values like democracy and the rule of law.

- Opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities are plentiful. All key stage 2 pupils can attend clubs for four days a week. They can choose from a wide range of activities including maths, homework, music, sport, drama and chess. Further opportunities are also available for younger pupils. These well-planned activities make a big difference to many pupils, enhancing their learning and enjoyment of school.
- The vast majority of parents are pleased with the progress that their children make and the support they receive. Inspectors spoke to several parents on the playground who had high praise for the school. They enjoy the many opportunities the school offers for them to visit and share in their children's learning. The school successfully bid for lottery funding to enable it to pay for parents to accompany school trips. This affords parents the opportunity to continue the learning at home. Most parents of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities appreciate the care that the school exercises, which allows their children to make good progress in their learning.
- The school website provides a wealth of information about all aspects of school life. It is up to date and easy to navigate. It gives a very clear insight into what the school aspires to achieve and its values. All statutory information is included.
- The local authority provides light-touch support at the request of the school. It fully endorses the school's view of its own performance as a good school. It has recently supported the school with an evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in English grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- The additional government funding to promote sport and PE is spent effectively. It is used well to provide professional development and training for staff and increase pupils' participation in sporting activities after school. Although school leaders monitor the use of this funding carefully, plans do not set out targets that are measurable. This means governors do not have all the information they need about the full effect of the spending on pupils' participation or attainment.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors know the school very well. They have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This is because they are kept well informed about the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils as they move through school.
- Governors hold leaders to account by challenging them about the information they receive. They contribute towards plans to raise attainment and improve the attendance of pupils. Attendance panel meetings and penalty notices issued by governors have contributed to improved attendance.
- Governors have successfully managed a high staff turnover since the last inspection, creating a strong and committed team of staff.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has stringent policies and procedures. All staff are familiar with these and follow them carefully.
- Designated safeguarding leaders and the safeguarding governor work closely as a team to ensure that pupils and families who need help receive it quickly.

- Inspection evidence confirms that the school is vigilant in carrying out safeguarding checks to assess adults' suitability to work with children. Staff have received appropriate training and know what to do if they have a concern about pupil safety or welfare.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching across the school is good. The work in pupils' books shows that they make good progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Similar good progress was seen in other subject areas including history and geography.
- Pupils say they enjoy their learning. This is because most teachers plan lessons that grab pupils' attention and inspire them to learn. In key stage 2 science lessons, for example, pupils are asked to consider 'What would a journey through your body be like?' as they learn about the human circulatory system.
- The strong emphasis that the school has placed on developing pupils' writing skills and improving the presentation in their books is paying off, especially in key stage 2. The systematic approach to the teaching of English grammar, punctuation and spelling is contributing to this. Improving the standard of work and pupils' pride in it is evident in pupils' books across a range of subjects.
- The teaching of reading, including phonics, has been a major focus for staff training. As a result, these are well taught across the school and especially in key stage 1. Pupils use their phonic knowledge well when they meet unfamiliar words. As a result, they learn to read confidently and enjoy books and stories.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Pupils' needs are identified early so that they receive help quickly. Some school staff are specially trained to deliver bespoke programmes, particularly in speech and language, and to provide support for pupils experiencing behavioural difficulties. These specifically focused interventions enable pupils who fall behind to catch up quickly.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and contribute to pupils' willingness to 'have a go' at new learning. Pupils receive appropriate feedback from adults which supports them in understanding how to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed to provide effective support for pupils. They work closely with teachers and know what is expected of them so that in most classes they are able to support pupils' learning.
- In a small number of lessons, work is not always matched to pupils' ability. When this happens, higher-ability pupils, for example, are not always stretched as much as they could be and the progress they make slows down.

## Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare makes a significant contribution to the good progress that pupils make. The school's nine values that include aspiration, respect and service above self, permeate all aspects of school life and are modelled by leaders.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe. This is because the school carefully plans a programme of activities for all classes to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of risks and how to avoid them. Visitors from Bully Busters and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) support this work.
- Pupils take great pride in being selected to represent their peers in the 'rainbow project'. This innovative initiative gives pupils the opportunity to lead important aspects of learning in school. For example, after careful preparation they teach younger pupils about cultural identity, equality and diversity. These pupils lead assemblies on themes such as internet safety and 'show racism the red card'.
- Pupils are encouraged to take decisions and play an active part in school life. For instance, they design any fundraising activities and choose the charities that the school supports with the money raised.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Using the 'Litherland Moss Way', school values are modelled by staff in daily interactions both with each other and with pupils. This results in very positive relationships and mutual respect between all members of the school community.
- Older pupils are given leadership responsibilities to encourage them to use their skills and influence younger pupils positively.
- Incidents of bullying are rare. If they do occur they are tackled quickly. This was confirmed by pupils who talked to inspectors and also through the school's own very thorough records of incidents. Pupils try very hard to get along with everyone. The school diligently teaches pupils about different forms of bullying.
- Pupils enjoy the school's reward systems and are keen to earn badges and raffle tickets. More importantly, they enjoy the praise and acknowledgement from adults which recognises that they are upholding the school values and are following 'The Litherland Moss Way'.
- Attendance rates are rising slowly and are now almost in line with those for all pupils nationally. Leaders' efforts to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils are beginning to pay off and absence rates for this group are decreasing rapidly.
- The school does everything it can to improve the attendance of individual pupils, including collecting pupils from their homes and providing them with breakfast. Pupils enjoy these arrangements. As a result, they have a very positive start to their school day and are in the right frame of mind for learning.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Caution needs to be taken when interpreting published data due to the high mobility and small numbers of pupils in some year groups. For example, in Year 6 in 2016 over one third of the pupils who took the national tests were not in the school in Year 2. In addition, these fluctuations make any comparisons over time potentially inaccurate. Consequently, the inspectors took particular account of the school's own information on pupils' outcomes.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 was below average. However, the school's own data shows that the progress of these pupils was good, especially for those who had been in the school since Reception.
- The rate of progress increases as pupils move through key stage 1 and key stage 2, most notably in reading and mathematics. This means that by the time pupils are ready to leave Year 6, their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations in mathematics and writing and is above expectations in reading.
- School-wide programmes to improve pupils' reading skills are helping to raise standards for pupils of all abilities. Pupils who need to catch up with their peers are making good progress because they read and engage in comprehension activities daily and are encouraged to read at home.
- Leaders ensure that the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used to good effect in English and mathematics. This includes providing extra sessions both before and after school for disadvantaged pupils to help them improve reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- The school's own data shows that, each year, an increasingly large proportion of pupils are on track to meet the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the data does not track the most able pupils specifically or the number of pupils who should exceed national averages.
- Very few pupils reach the higher standards at the end of Year 2 or Year 6. Senior leaders are aware of the need to accelerate the progress of the most able pupils.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The leadership and management of the early years are good. The early years leader has a clear overview of strengths and priorities for development. She works closely with the Nursery manager to ensure that children are very well supported.
- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge below those that are typical for their age. They make good, and occasionally outstanding, progress during their time in the Nursery and Reception. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development, although still below average, is increasing each year. As a result, a greater proportion of children are ready for their transition into Year 1. The number of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development continues to rise. In the Nursery, a small proportion of these children make outstanding progress from their very low starting points.
- Children make good progress, especially in the development of their communication

skills, because the quality of teaching in the early years is strong. Staff have an accurate view of the progress that children are making because they analyse their needs carefully. Progress records and detailed observations through photographic evidence and written reports support these judgements.

- The early years setting provides plentiful opportunities for two-year-old children to learn and play. During the inspection, children showed great confidence using the exciting outdoor space to play musical instruments and build constructions. They benefit from a stimulating environment that closely matches their needs and as a result they make good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- Leaders make sure that teaching plans are well matched to the learning needs of individual children and this helps prepare children well to move on to their next steps in Year 1.
- Children feel safe because staff develop very positive relationships with them. This helps to promote security and consistency in children's lives. Children grow in confidence and begin to make choices by seeking out preferred activities and resources.
- Phonics is taught systematically from Nursery upwards. The good subject knowledge of teachers and teaching assistants supports children to make good progress in learning their letters and sounds.
- Children understand the routines and expectations of the early years setting. They take turns to share equipment and respond readily to adult instructions. Staff are skilled and adapt activities quickly to ensure that children maintain interest and good learning takes place.
- Children in the Nursery classes benefit from a wide range of both indoor and outdoor resources that provide exciting and stimulating learning opportunities. Provision for older children in the early years foundation stage is also good, though the outdoor space is not used as well as it could be. Leaders are aware of the need to match the outdoor provision for the Reception class to the standard of the Nursery.
- Staff work hard to engage parents in their children's learning. They keep parents informed of their child's development and progress. Activities such as 'Little Moss/Big Talk' encourage parents to continue supporting the development of vocabulary at home.
- Safeguarding in the early years setting is effective. Adults make sure that the environment is secure and they have established rigorous systems to keep children safe. The early years leader understands all of the requirements and procedures for safeguarding and staff are fully up to date with all of the necessary training requirements.



## School details

Unique reference number	104875
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10024255

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.


Type of school	Primary and Children's Centre
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Sweeney
Headteacher	Sarah Greer
Telephone number	0151 9284544
Website	<a href="http://www.litherlandmoss.co.uk">www.litherlandmoss.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:Head.litherlandmoss@schools.sefton.gov.uk">Head.litherlandmoss@schools.sefton.gov.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	4–5 June 2013

## Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements for the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than average but numbers are increasing. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at different times of the year is higher than found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who receive additional support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is lower than in other schools nationally.
- Over 60% of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. This is much higher than average.

- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school met the floor standards in 2016. These are the minimum expectations of pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics set out by the government.
- The school provides a breakfast club and a wide range of extra-curricular clubs for pupils.
- The early years comprises Nursery and Reception classes. Children attend Nursery from age two upwards.
- The school has responsibility for the Children's Centre with which it shares a site.
- Litherland Sports Park and Litherland High School are also on the same site.

## Information about this inspection

- Teaching and learning were observed across classes and key stages. Some observations were conducted jointly by the lead inspector and the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, as well as governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at their work and talked informally with pupils during breaktimes.
- The views of pupils were also considered during more formal discussions with inspectors.
- Inspectors took account of the school's own surveys of pupils and parents.
- A wide range of the school's own information and documentation was studied, including: the school's own data on progress; self-evaluation and plans to raise attainment; improvement plans and records of the checks made on teaching and learning; records relating to attendance and behavior; documents relating to safeguarding; and an external adviser's check on the quality of English grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Information about the performance management of staff and safeguarding practices was also examined alongside policy documentation.
- The opinions of staff were taken into account through formal and informal discussions. One response was made to Ofsted's questionnaire.
- The four views expressed by parents in the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire were considered. Inspectors spoke to 22 parents in the school and parents' comments communicated via free text were examined. 

## Inspection team

Cathy Parkinson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lenford White	Ofsted Inspector
David Woodhouse	Ofsted Inspector

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