

LIPA Primary School

Upper Duke Street, Liverpool, Merseyside L1 7BT

Inspection dates

12–13 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Governors have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing. They carefully check all aspects of the leaders' work and provide a good level of challenge.
- The headteacher is an effective leader. His drive and determination to improve the school are shared by staff and governors.
- Leadership responsibilities are shared among the staff. Senior leaders and curriculum leaders are enthusiastic, committed and highly skilled. As a result, leaders have the capacity to improve the school further.
- Teachers provide an extensive range of curriculum activities that are tailored well to match pupils' needs.
- Provision for the most able pupils is good. However, teachers do not always provide enough challenge, especially in mathematics, so that these pupils can reach their full potential.
- This is a happy school where pupils feel safe.
- Leadership of the early years is very effective. Staff in the Reception class provide exciting activities which are well matched to children's abilities.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Overall, pupils behave well. However, occasionally a small minority of boys do not behave as well as they should.
- Leaders recognise that pupils' attendance is not good enough. However, they are taking effective action to improve attendance overall and reduce the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school.
- All pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, make good progress from their starting points.
- Girls achieve well and make good progress across this school. However, a small number of boys do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders, including governors, must ensure that pupils' rates of attendance continue to improve. They should further reduce the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school.
- Improve the performance of boys by ensuring that they make the same strong progress as girls.
- Ensure that the most able pupils are consistently challenged, especially in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and newly-appointed assistant headteacher are ambitious for the pupils and staff of LIPA Primary School. Since the school opened in 2014, the leadership team has grown to meet the needs of an increasing number of pupils.
- Subject leadership is effective. Leaders have a clear understanding of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their earliest starting points. They use this information well to ensure that most pupils make good progress in their learning.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. The vast majority of parents hold the school in very high regard. One parent noted, 'LIPA Primary School provides a safe and nurturing environment for our daughter. The staff are fabulous and work closely with all of the pupils to ensure that they make excellent progress.'
- Systems to improve the performance of teachers are effective. All teachers have targets which link with aspects of the school improvement plan. Leaders provide a broad range of training opportunities. These enhance teachers' knowledge of the curriculum and their ability to interpret data to support pupils' progress.
- The school prepares its pupils well for life in modern Britain. As part of a focus on charitable giving, pupils donated clothes to a charity in France linked to migration. Two members of staff, and a human rights lawyer, delivered the clothes to a warehouse in Calais. The lawyer returned to the school as a 'real-life super hero' to talk to the pupils. This developed pupils' understanding of individual liberty.
- Pupils have a clear awareness of British values. They are given opportunities to become involved in the recruitment of staff, which helps them to understand the purpose and process of democracy.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, with a focus upon the creative arts. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the 'outcome at the end' sessions as each topic concludes. A broad range of extra-curricular activities is offered by the school. Pupils particularly enjoy 'fabulous theatre' and other music, dance and drama activities. All pupils receive homework to broaden their reading skills. Research opportunities are given to pupils to enhance the work that they undertake in school.
- Leaders ensure that reading is a high priority. Effective use is made of the school's library area and there is a strong emphasis on reading for pleasure and information. Through the school's newsletters, pupils are encouraged to attend local theatres. The school community is justly proud to have received the Liverpool Reading Quality Mark at gold standard. This recognises the leaders' commitment to developing high standards of literacy.
- Leaders have ensured that additional government funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well. These pupils make strong progress from their individual starting points. However, some of these pupils do not attend school as often as they should.
- A local authority advisor provides effective support to leaders. As a consequence, much progress has been made in tackling the school's areas for improvement which are

identified in their school development plan. Following support with the teaching of phonics for example, the number of pupils passing the national phonic screening tests has increased.

- The physical education (PE) and sport funding is spent wisely to provide pupils with a wider range of experiences and to support teachers in their delivery of this area of the curriculum. As a result, PE and sport is delivered well by staff and by PE specialists. Pupils also have access to a much wider range of resources, both in school and during after-school activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is developing well. Pupils take part in a wide variety of cultural activities. They particularly enjoy singing with other pupils in the locality. One parent noted, 'The children are encouraged to be empathetic, culturally sensitive, politically engaged and part of life in their city, thanks to the school's many projects, events, trips and activities.'
- Leaders self-evaluate aspects of the school's performance accurately. They identify ways in which practice can improve. Leaders recognise that this now needs to be further developed to include an evaluation of all aspects of the early years provision.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively by leaders to support the needs of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have effectively identified the barriers to learning experienced by this group and additional staff have been employed to provide academic and pastoral support. As a result, these pupils achieve at a broadly similar level to that of their peers by the end of Year 2.

Governance of the school

- Governors, including the chair of the governing body and deputy chair, bring a wealth of relevant knowledge, skill and expertise to their positions. Governors analyse and understand the strengths and areas for development within the school. They also ensure that performance targets are challenging and are monitored effectively.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures and receive a broad range of appropriate training and updates. This has enabled them to provide appropriate support and challenge. They fulfil their statutory duties.
- Governors care deeply about the pupils and are passionate that pupils receive a curriculum which is broad, balanced and linked closely to the performing arts. They were pivotal in creating the vision and ethos when the school opened three years ago. The successful creation of the ethos is captured by the comment of one parent, 'The ethos of learning through creative arts is real.'
- Governors involved in recruitment have undertaken necessary training. This helps to ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed when selecting new members of staff.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record of checks on staff and visitors is up to date and compliant. Vetting checks carried out on new members of staff and volunteers are well organised and rigorous.

- Staff receive regular training relating to safeguarding. Leaders ensure that detailed audits are undertaken to evaluate the school's procedures to keep pupils safe.
- Those with responsibility for safeguarding ensure that they and others carry out their roles effectively. As a consequence, the school remains a safe place for pupils to learn.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Effective teaching supports pupils' learning and progress. This is reflected across the curriculum, including in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress is clearly evident in books, where teachers encourage pupils to write imaginatively and in different styles.
- Classrooms are bright and well organised. Pupils have a wide range of resources which they use effectively to help them learn.
- Pupils enjoy the way that teachers organise learning into different topics. They write with enjoyment and imagination, often because their writing is linked to the topic that they are studying. Pupils are able to link their learning to the books they read. They also make connections between their learning and British values. As one pupil noted, 'Every lesson is a challenge', while another pupil said, 'Learning is tricky but fun.'
- Teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. These pupils make good progress from their initial starting points. Funding is used effectively to employ specialist staff and to purchase resources.
- Teachers have introduced an online assessment system which is being used effectively in the early years. It is also being used effectively to track pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Leaders now plan to extend this system to other subjects across the curriculum. The school has effective links with other schools in the locality. These links enable leaders to share good practice across a range of areas, including pupils' assessment.
- Overall, the teaching of mathematics is good and pupils are given regular opportunities to undertake problem-solving activities. However, on occasion, expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve are not high enough. Planned activities during do not always provide enough challenge. The most able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teaching assistants care for pupils well. They are now taking a more proactive approach to ensure that pupils focus them effectively on their learning.
- The teaching of phonics is not consistent across all classes. Leaders are acutely aware of this. Where it is most effective pupils are challenged and teachers use sophisticated language. However, at other times teaching is not always clear and pupils are sometimes confused by the guidance received from teachers.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and have good attitudes to learning. One pupil noted that, 'you have to listen to other people...to be open-minded.' Occasionally some boys become distracted in lessons when they are not working directly with an adult. Leaders are aware that these pupils need further support in developing resilience when approaching 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.
- The pupils spoken with during the inspection demonstrated a clear understanding of what is needed to be a successful learner. They understand that good behaviour is important, together with listening to teachers and concentrating. They also understand the value of good attendance.
- Staff know pupils very well and this is recognised by parents. As one parent noted, 'My son has received the most outstanding, sensitive support with his special needs'.
- The pupils spoken with during the inspection demonstrated a clear understanding of the various forms that bullying can take. They said that bullying was very rare and that staff dealt with instances very quickly.
- Pupils have a good understanding of safety and are aware of many potential dangers in modern life. They are clear on how to stay safe online. Pupils are also aware of their own role in keeping themselves safe.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy the responsibilities of being reading ambassadors and eco-representatives. One pupil noted that, 'Our school is really safe. We have a garden, a greenhouse and lots of plants growing.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in the playground and as they move around school.
- Pupils genuinely care about others and demonstrate a high capacity for empathy. A recent 'peace project' gave pupils in Year 2 opportunities to explore what their understanding of peace was. The written responses from pupils demonstrated a high level of emotional understanding and engagement.
- Overall attendance is below the national average. Persistent absence is above the national average. Leaders, including the governing body, are aware of this issue and are using a range of approaches to work with parents and pupils to stress the importance of good attendance. For example, a families and attendance officer has been appointed and the school is working closely with the local authority improvement advisor and an education welfare officer. Together, they are leading improvements in this area. As a result, attendance for a range of groups is improving. Nevertheless, leaders are aware that a firm line must be taken when parents remove their children to take unauthorised holidays during term time.
- A large majority pupils behave well in classrooms, although a small proportion of boys are sometimes distracted and lose concentration.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In the three years since the school opened, leaders and teachers have worked hard to

ensure good levels of achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, outcomes have improved over time and progress from pupils' original starting points is good.

- Pupils make good progress in other subjects that are often taught together through topic work. The work that pupils undertake in their own books and in large class books demonstrates clear development in both skills and understanding.
- Pupils acquire phonics knowledge well and make good progress in their reading skills from their initial starting points. As a consequence, the school has seen an increase in the proportion of pupils who achieve the phonics screening standard in Year 1. Nevertheless, some phonics teaching is unclear because staff do not always express themselves in a way that pupils fully understand.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about books and they read widely and often. As a result, they are confident when making connections between their reading and their wider learning.
- The 2017 cohort of pupils in Year 2 has made strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their initial starting points.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress. This is because the additional government funding is used effectively to provide interventions and focused support.
- Disadvantaged pupils make the same strong progress as their peers and the school's most recent data shows that their attainment is broadly in line with that achieved by their peers at the end of Year 2.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. The staff focus on developing pupils' language skills through talk and through a celebration of language and culture has had a positive impact.
- Teachers provide opportunities to challenge the most able pupils in lessons but this is not consistent throughout school. This is most notable in the teaching of mathematics, where some work set is too easily mastered by pupils of a higher ability. On such occasions these pupils miss the opportunity to undertake more complex problem-solving and reasoning work.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is led well. The lead teacher has a very secure understanding of the assessment system and is able to use it effectively to check the progress and attainment of all children. As a consequence, teachers are able to plan teaching and learning which is matched effectively to children's needs.
- Support for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and these children make the same good progress as their peers. Funding is used well.
- The majority of children enter the Reception Year with skills, knowledge and understanding below those typical for their age in almost all areas of learning. This is particularly true for children's communication and language skills. From this starting point, children in the early years are making increasingly good progress year on year. This is because teaching is good.

- The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is in line with the national average. As a consequence, most children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children enjoy well-resourced provision in both the indoor and the outdoor environments. Children showed interest and enthusiasm when they completed an obstacle course across a pirate ship and undertook problem-solving activities with number tiles and beads. This shows that resources within school are being used effectively to support learning.
- Children's behaviour is good overall. Children feel safe in school and all safeguarding requirements are met. However, some incidents of low-level poor behaviour, by small groups of boys, are not always checked effectively by staff. As a consequence, valuable learning time is occasionally lost.
- Children's work in books shows that they develop their reading and writing skills very well. They are increasingly able to write independently and to read sentences. A wide range of opportunities are available for writing and children use these effectively. Similarly in mathematics, children enjoy opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning. On occasion, further support is required for the most able children to ensure that they are fully challenged in their mathematical learning.
- Children who have English as an additional language are well supported. Teachers celebrate their cultures and a broad range of languages are regularly shared. As a consequence these children make progress throughout the year which matches that of their peers.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively, for example to provide one-to-one support and small-group work for children with particular needs. As a result, these children make good progress from their initial starting points.
- The partnership with parents is strong and parents talk positively about the support their children receive from staff. A newsletter is sent home every two weeks to ensure that parents are well informed. They receive information about their child's curriculum and understand ways in which they can enhance it, for example through visits in the locality and trips to the theatre. While leaders and staff work closely with parents to develop good attendance habits, school information shows that attendance, although improving, is still below average.

School details

Unique reference number	141103
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10022796

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	155
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs F Clucas
Headteacher	Mr G Parker
Telephone number	0151 958 0020
Website	www.lipaprimary.org
Email address	g.parker@lipaprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is in line with the national average.
- The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups.
- The school opened in 2014 and is gaining two new classes each year. Currently the oldest children are in Year 2.
- The school has an average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in each year group.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some teaching was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The lead inspector carried out a detailed scrutiny of current progress and attainment information for all groups of pupils.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including information about pupils' attendance, school improvement plans, the school's own self-evaluation, safeguarding records, information about managing teachers' performance and staff training records.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start and end of the school day. They took account of 78 responses to Ofsted's online survey (Parent View) and the school's most recent survey of pupils' and parents' views. Seven returns to the staff questionnaire were considered.
- An inspector met with a representative of the local authority who is the school's improvement partner.
- An inspector met with the chair of the governing body and four other governors.
- Inspectors talked with pupils informally at playtimes, visited the dining hall at lunchtime and observed pupils' movement around school.
- Inspectors looked at behaviour at the start and end of the school day and during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with them about their work. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about the books they enjoyed and those that they are currently reading.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the leader of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and the family and attendance officer.

Inspection team

Gill Pritchard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lenford White

Ofsted Inspector

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