

Kingsway Primary School

Ashville Road, Wallasey, Merseyside CH44 9EF

Inspection dates

27–28 February 2018

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and governors have worked effectively to maintain the good standard of education seen in the previous inspection. Their efforts have secured particular improvements in the quality of teaching in mathematics, and in the effectiveness of early years provision.
- Pupils currently in the school, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, are making typically good progress from their different starting points.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is a strength of the school. Pupils' learning in science and history is strong and they also benefit from specialist teaching and coaching in some areas, such as in music.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use their questioning skills successfully to check and develop pupils' skills and understanding. They are supported well by an effective group of teaching assistants.
- Good teaching across the school is helping to ensure that most pupils are working at the expected standard for their age. However, teachers are less effective at ensuring that the most able pupils make quicker progress and so reach the higher standards.
- Behaviour is good and pupils are happy and feel safe in school. They have positive attitudes to learning.
- Children get off to a good start in early years. Provision for children from two years and upwards through to Reception class is well planned and delivered. As a result, standards of attainment in early years are rising strongly.
- Rates of attendance, having dipped alarmingly, are now improving rapidly as a result of leaders' effective actions.
- Pupils' attainment in phonics has risen each year and, for current pupils, is now broadly average. However, a legacy of previous underachievement in phonics means that many older pupils are still struggling to use common spelling patterns accurately.
- Middle leaders are developing their skills, and benefit from good-quality professional development opportunities. Many are relatively new to their roles, and so the impact of middle leadership is yet to be fully realised.
- Governors provide good support for leaders and check that finances are used wisely. Their skills in using performance information, such as national assessment data, are less well developed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning in order to accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers develop pupils' spelling skills and knowledge more consistently, particularly for those pupils whose phonic knowledge is less secure
 - improving teachers' awareness of what most-able pupils are able to achieve, and then providing the challenge needed for pupils to reach those standards.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of middle leaders in securing improvements within their area of responsibility
 - sharpening governors' skills in using school performance information effectively and ensuring that their challenge to school leaders is recorded accurately.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher's great care for the school, and her determination for it to successfully meet the specific needs of pupils and families in the community, shines through. Along with other leaders, including governors, she is ambitious for the school and determined to make sure that it continues to move forward.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have made sure that plans are in place to tackle those areas that require further improvement. They have been successful in securing improvements in many areas of the school's work, most notably in the quality of early years provision and the teaching of mathematics. They have also recognised the need to improve outcomes in reading, and there are positive signs that their actions in this area are beginning to bear fruit. Pupils' vocabulary is developing and older, most-able readers' skills in using inference to deduce meaning from the text are improving.
- Many middle leaders in the school are relatively new to their role or to the school itself. They are beginning to undertake leadership tasks, such as checking on the quality of teaching and monitoring the progress shown in pupils' work. Some of the work that they have done has been well focused and perceptive, such as spotting gaps in challenge for most-able pupils. However, at other times their checks on the quality of teaching and learning are quite superficial, focusing more on compliance with school policies than on the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement.
- Teachers, including those with leadership roles, have benefited from a broad package of professional development opportunities and welcome the chance to develop their skills and progress in their careers. Many leaders are currently undertaking accredited leadership development programmes. There is a clear sense of teamwork within the school.
- The quality of the curriculum is a strength of the school. Pupils are provided with a wide-ranging and engaging curriculum that successfully develops their skills and knowledge across a range of subjects. For example, pupils carry out scientific experiments and draw conclusions from their findings. They carry out independent research, identify symbols on maps and spot similarities and differences in history. Provision for music and physical education (PE) and sport is strong, making good use of specialist teachers and sports coaches.
- The curriculum is well enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular clubs and by trips out of school, such as to the Tate Gallery in Liverpool, and a residential visit to France.
- Leaders make sure that targeted funding is used to good effect. For example, pupil premium funding is used to support and broaden the experiences of disadvantaged pupils across the school. Funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has a positive impact on those pupils' learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. Pupils are thoughtful and sensitive to the needs of others and show respect for other people's beliefs and ideas. Leaders ensure that there is good coverage of topics linked to British values, and from this, older pupils were able to explain what voting was, could name the Prime Minister and knew some information about the Houses of Parliament.

- The local authority has provided the school with effective support and challenge, and the school also works effectively with a small cluster of schools located within the local area. This allows staff to share and benefit from examples of good practice.

Governance of the school

- Governors show a strong commitment to the school and share with school leaders the ambition to make Kingsway a successful, nurturing and innovative school. They have been proactive in bringing people with useful, relevant skills onto the governing body, for example to strengthen governors' understanding of finance.
- Governors have put secure procedures in place for managing the performance of the headteacher and teachers. Decisions they make about pay progression are fair and well informed. They have a sound understanding of how effectively school leaders use additional funding and are particularly proud of the innovative way in which the primary school PE and sport funding has been used.
- While governors have held leaders to account effectively over matters of budget and finance, they are less confident in using school performance information to fully challenge leaders over pupils' achievement. This is particularly the case when making comparisons between the school's performance and that of other schools nationally. Minutes of governors' meetings are brief and so do not clearly capture the depth of discussion that has clearly taken place.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher ensures that thorough checks are made on staff, governors and regular visitors to the school to make sure that they are suitable people to work with children. The school maintains detailed records of these checks.
- School leaders have ensured that staff and governors receive regular training to make sure that their understanding of safeguarding practice is kept up to date. Staff know what to do if they are worried about a child's welfare and leaders quickly and diligently follow up any concerns that are raised.
- Case studies confirm that the school works well with external professionals to provide appropriate support for vulnerable pupils and families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching across the school is effective and is securing improving progress for the large majority of pupils. Teachers typically have good subject knowledge which they use effectively to provide pupils with clear explanations and instructions. They also use questions successfully to check what pupils know and then address any misconceptions or misunderstandings.
- The warm and positive relationships between staff and pupils are a key strength of the school. Pupils respond confidently to their teachers and so behaviour in lessons is consistently good.

- Leaders responded promptly to an apparent decline in reading results in key stage 2 by devoting more time to the direct teaching of reading skills, and particularly reading comprehension. As a result, reading is now being taught effectively throughout the school, and standards are rising again. By the time they reach the upper end of key stage 2 pupils typically have developed a love of books and can discuss their favourite books and authors, who include David Walliams and Jacqueline Wilson.
- Phonics is also being taught to greater effect, as seen in the continuing rise in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Additional support is given to those pupils who have found learning phonics more difficult in order to help them to catch up. Teachers and teaching assistants have secure phonic knowledge. While most of the current Year 1 pupils have a good grasp of phonics, this is not the case for many pupils in the cohorts who performed poorly in the phonics check. Consequently, the teaching of spelling is not improving pupils' skills and knowledge quickly enough because too many pupils still do not have the basic phonic knowledge that they need.
- Teachers develop pupils' writing skills well and provide them with a range of opportunities to write in different styles and for different purposes, such as writing recounts and descriptions. Teachers encourage pupils to experiment with adventurous vocabulary and make sure that they use a range of punctuation with increasing, age-appropriate accuracy.
- Teaching assistants typically make an important contribution to pupils' learning, both when supporting an individual pupil and when working with a small group. The support that they provide for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is especially effective in ensuring that these pupils make typically good progress from their starting points. This confirms that the school's coordinator for SEN (SENCo) ensures that good use is made of the additional funding for SEN that the school receives.
- Mathematics is taught effectively across the school. Pupils learn to work confidently with numbers and teachers provide ample opportunities for them to apply their knowledge and skills to problem-solving tasks. They also learn to identify different properties of shapes at an appropriate level. For example, while younger pupils learn to spot lines of symmetry in different shapes, pupils in Year 6 were solving problems based on the relationship between the radius, diameter and circumference of a circle.
- While the overall quality of teaching across the school is good, there are some inconsistencies in how well teachers challenge the most able pupils and so push them on to fulfil their potential. Some teachers' assessments of what constitutes work at greater depth, or a higher level, is overly generous and so stops them from further challenging their pupils. While some teachers confidently stretch most-able pupils' learning through, for example, excellent questioning, other teachers are less secure in the strategies to use to challenge the most able pupils fully.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Positive relationships between staff and pupils are a feature of the school. Pupils trust the adults in school to look after them. This was summed up by one parent, who said: 'the school offers everything a child needs to feel safe, secure and confident'. This view was typical of almost all of the parents who spoke with inspectors.
- The school teaches pupils about staying safe in different situations. For example, pupils could talk about what they had learned about staying safe online, firework safety and 'stranger danger'.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying. They say that there are very few problems with bullying in their school. Pupils say that any incidents that do occur, such as name-calling, are swiftly dealt with by their teachers.
- The school promotes healthy living well. Children in the provision for two-year-olds are encouraged to try different types of fruit as healthy snacks. Very good use is made of the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport, giving older pupils the chance to take part in a range of exciting physical activities, including climbing, sailing and fencing.
- Pupils who are members of the school council enjoy the added responsibility they are given. They are confident that school leaders listen to and value their opinions, such as in choosing outdoor play equipment.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are well mannered and friendly and their conduct around school is good. They behaved sensibly throughout the inspection despite the great excitement caused by a rare, heavy snowfall. Pupils say that good behaviour is typical in their school, and they know that adults will step in promptly to deal with any instances of poor behaviour. They particularly like the clear system that the school has in place to recognise good behaviour. The school provides effective support for those pupils who otherwise struggle to manage their own behaviour.
- Pupils in all year groups demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They listen well to their teachers and to other pupils and are happy to answer questions and offer their own ideas and opinions. They settle quickly to the activities that teachers have set for them, and almost all pupils take a clear pride in their work.
- Leaders have responded well to a significant decline in attendance rates and rise in the proportion of pupils frequently absent from school. They have put clear strategies in place to address problems with attendance, including holding attendance panels and arranging for home visits to be made. These actions are having a positive effect, and current rates of attendance have risen from being significantly below average to be broadly in line with other schools nationally.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The small size of many cohorts means that published data needs to be treated with some caution. For example, there were eight pupils in Year 6 in 2016 and there are only seven pupils in Year 6 this year. In 2017, the Year 2 and Year 6 classes both

contained 14 pupils. As a result, there are some marked fluctuations in data from year to year.

- The school's tracking information indicates that the pupils currently at the school are typically making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across almost all year groups. Work in pupils' books confirmed that this is the case. It also showed that pupils achieve well in a range of other subjects, and particularly in history and science. For example, pupils show a good understanding of scientific experiments and make good comparisons between different time periods in history.
- Although there is an above-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils across the school, the small size of most classes means that most year groups contain only a small number of disadvantaged pupils. Therefore, the performance of disadvantaged pupils fluctuates between cohorts. However, evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils typically make good progress in their learning from their varying starting points when compared with other pupils in the school and nationally.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their different starting points. These pupils benefit from support that is well planned and effectively delivered. This helps them to learn well and regularly reach their individual targets.
- Over time, outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check have been consistently below average. However, they have improved from year to year, and this picture of improvement is being maintained and the large majority of current Year 1 pupils are working at the expected level in phonics. Previous underperformance in phonics has had a negative impact on older pupils' spelling. Too many pupils make errors spelling common words and words that follow regular spelling patterns.
- School performance information, backed up by evidence in pupils' books, shows that too few of the most able pupils achieve the highest standards in their work of which they are capable. There are signs in mathematics that the increased focus on problem-solving and reasoning is providing greater challenge for most-able pupils and so speeding up their progress, but there is still some way to go before the proportion of pupils working at the higher levels matches that found nationally.

Early years provision

Good

- The headteacher, governors and the leader responsible for early years have a good understanding of the importance of effective early years provision. They recognise in particular the positive impact it can have on children's later years in school. This clear vision led to the school establishing provision for two-year-old children, and this is proving to be popular with parents.
- The provision for two-year-olds, alongside Nursery and Reception classes, means that children enter early years at many different times. Some join the school soon after their second birthday, but around a quarter of the current Reception class started school in September having not previously attended either the two-year-old provision or Nursery. The schools assessment data shows that children typically start in early years with levels of skills and understanding below those typical for their age, and with particular needs in communication and language and social skills.
- Children make good progress in their time in early years. The proportion who reached

a good level of development in 2017 was broadly in line with national average, which was a significant improvement on the two previous years. This improved performance has been continued this year, and a similar proportion of children are currently working at the level needed to achieve a good level of development. This means that the majority of pupils are well prepared for the move into Year 1. Inspection evidence confirmed that transition into Year 1 was well managed and the good start that children are now making in early years is being effectively built upon.

- The early years leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has a good overview of provision in early years and is clear in her understanding of where there is scope for further improvements, such as in providing further challenge for the most able children. She has ensured that links between school and home are effective and parents and carers are encouraged to get involved in children's learning. She also makes sure that there are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Staff assess children's learning and progress well and use their knowledge of individual children to identify children's future learning needs. Staff make good use of the space that is available, both indoors and outside, so that children are able to access a good range of activities.
- Behaviour in the early years is good. Staff ensure that children settle in happily and quickly develop positive relationships with each other and with their teachers. Staff place a strong emphasis on developing children's social skills, and the success of their efforts can be seen from how well children in Reception class play and work together.
- The good-quality provision for two-year-olds ensures that those children get off to a strong start. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and learning, and consistently model key skills such as sharing and turn-taking. For example, they tell children when to say 'please' and 'thank you' when getting food at snack-time. Children respond well and their speech and social skills are developing at a good rate.

School details

Unique reference number	104997
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10045154

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs S Lothian Evans
Headteacher	Miss F Foster
Telephone number	0151 638 5195
Website	www.kingswayprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	schooloffice@kingsway.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 October 2013

Information about this school

- Kingsway is smaller than the average-sized primary school. At the time of the inspection all the pupils were taught in single-age classes, the majority of which contained fewer than 20 pupils.
- The proportion of pupils in the school who have SEN and/or disabilities is higher than the national average, as is the proportion of disadvantaged pupils.
- The school has early years provision for children aged two and upwards. Children attend the provision for two-year-olds and Nursery part time and then attend Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The school runs breakfast and after-school provision.
- In 2017 there were too few pupils in Year 6 to make a judgement as to whether the school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school. They also looked at pupils' work in books, records of children's learning in the early years and other information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors listened to two groups of pupils read and held discussions with two further groups of pupils. They also talked informally with pupils around the school.
- Inspectors took account of two responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They also talked informally with parents at the start of the school day. There were no responses to the staff or pupil surveys.
- Inspectors met a group of three governors, including the chair of the governing body. They also had discussions with staff in the school, including the leader responsible for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, the leader for the early years and the leaders for English, mathematics and physical education.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined several documents. These included information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's reviews of its own performance and records of meetings of the governing body. They also examined safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Neil Dixon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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