

# Inspection of Linaker Primary School

Sefton Street, Southport, Merseyside PR8 5DB

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Inspection dates:

3 and 4 October 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are happy at school. They told inspectors that everyone is made to feel welcome.

Pupils spoke with pride about how they are getting better at learning. They respond well to being challenged. As such, pupils are becoming increasingly independent and resilient. They are keen to help each other and to carry out leadership roles.

The school has raised its expectations of all pupils. Pupils' achievement is improving, especially in reading. However, pupils' learning across other subjects is uneven. This hinders older pupils from achieving as well as they should. Added to this, some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not receive the support that they need to succeed. In the same way, some children in the early years do not acquire aspects of the fundamental knowledge that they need for future learning.

Pupils described how staff help them to sort out any problems or worries that they may have. Many pupils spoke fondly about accessing the 'snug', where they can enjoy quiet time with their friends.

In class and around the school building, pupils generally behave well. Conversely, some pupils' behaviour on the playground and at lunchtime falls short of the school's expectations. At times, this can result in some pupils' play becoming overly boisterous.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school has taken decisive action to address the issues raised at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement is improving due to the well-thought-out curriculum that is in place. The order in which pupils need to learn key information is clear. This means that teachers are becoming increasingly adept at helping pupils to catch up on missed learning. Pupils revel in the raised expectations that the school has of their achievement. As a result of the strengthened curriculum, pupils are better prepared for their next stages of education.

The school is in the early stages of implementing the revised curriculum in several subjects. Some teachers are not as confident to deliver aspects of curriculum content as they should be. As a result, there are inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is delivered across the school. This hinders how well some pupils learn.

Teachers typically check that pupils understand what they are learning. However, the school's assessment systems are underdeveloped. This prevents teachers from identifying and addressing gaps in pupils' previous knowledge as quickly as they should. For example, some teachers have only recently started to address the gaps in pupils' writing knowledge, including in the early years.

The school places a high focus on reading. Alongside other curriculum improvements, the school has strengthened its reading curriculum. Staff are well trained to deliver the reading curriculum to a consistently high standard. Pupils told inspectors how reading helps them to learn new vocabulary and supports their learning in other subjects. Children in the Nursery Year enjoy sharing stories, songs and rhymes. They learn how to use phonics to read words as they progress into the Reception classes.

Pupils' achievement in reading is much stronger than published information about the school suggests. Most pupils leave key stage 1 with secure phonics knowledge. They build up their reading knowledge well as they progress through key stage 2. Pupils who struggle with reading, or those pupils who speak English as an additional language, benefit from carefully tailored support. They develop into accomplished readers.

The school does not support staff to manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. Added to this, some routines, including those for outdoor play in the early years, are not well established. This hinders some staff from applying the school's behaviour policies appropriately. As a result, some older pupils, including some pupils with SEND, do not behave as well as they should. Sometimes, this spoils social times for other pupils.

The school has not ensured that teachers have a secure understanding of how to identify and meet the differing needs of pupils with SEND. While the school has secured improvements in this area, some staff are not fully equipped to meet these pupils' needs effectively. This means that some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they should.

The school supports pupils' broader development well. Pupils told inspectors how the clubs and activities on offer help them to develop new talents and interests. Pupils value the diversity within their school community. They respect each other's differences. Pupils also benefit from the high-quality pastoral support that they receive, especially when they visit the 'snug'. Many pupils, including those with SEND, described how skilled staff help them to grow in confidence and be ready to learn.

The school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors have strengthened their knowledge and expertise. This is helping them to hold the school more fully to account.

Stronger relationships have been forged between members of the school community. Parents and carers value the advice and guidance that staff provide to support their children's learning. Teachers value the support that they receive from leaders to improve their practice and manage their workload. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their well-being.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

#### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's revised curriculum is in the early stages of being implemented, including in the early years. As a result, there is variability in how confidently staff deliver the curriculum. The school should ensure that teachers are fully equipped to deliver the curriculum consistently well from the Nursery Year to Year 6.
- The school's assessment systems do not enable teachers to check how well pupils, including children in the early years, are learning the intended curriculum. As a result, teachers do not identify or address pupils' misconceptions quickly enough. As the curriculum is rolled out, the school should ensure that assessment systems support teachers to remedy pupils' gaps in knowledge.
- The school does not ensure that some teachers are equipped well to meet the additional needs of some pupils with SEND. Consequently, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they should. The school should ensure that staff receive appropriate guidance to enable them to identify and meet these pupils' individual needs effectively.
- The school does not provide effective support to enable staff to manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. Some older pupils, including some with SEND, do not behave well during social times. The school should ensure that staff are fully supported to implement the school's behaviour policy successfully.

### How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

### Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at

any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104864
<b>Local authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294201
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	438
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	David Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jan Holmes
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.linakerschool.co.uk">www.linakerschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 September 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher was appointed during the academic year prior to this inspection. This followed a period of interim arrangements for leadership at the school.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's educational provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school. An inspector also spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, religious education, Spanish and physical education. They spoke with the leaders of these areas of the curriculum. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- Inspectors also looked at examples of pupils' written work from other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school. An inspector scrutinised the school's records of pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they dropped off and picked up their children from school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Claire Cropper, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lindy Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Sherriff	Ofsted Inspector
Elaine Jackson	Ofsted Inspector

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