

Somerville Primary School

Northbrook Road, Wallasey, Merseyside CH44 9AR

Inspection dates 1–2 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school provides a very positive atmosphere which helps pupils to learn well. Teachers and other adults have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. Pupils say that they enjoy school and that they find their learning exciting.
- Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge which are below, and in some instances well below, those expected for their age. Some pupils make outstanding progress in English and mathematics and almost all achieve broadly average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Most teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. As a result, most groups of pupils, including those who receive support through the pupil premium funding achieve well over time.
- Behaviour is outstanding, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary, as is the respect that they show towards each other and to adults. There have been exceptional improvements in behaviour over time, because staff have skilfully implemented effective systems to manage pupils' behaviour.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and staff have a clear view of how successful the school can be and are keenly focussed on improving teaching and raising achievement for all pupils. The curriculum provides a wide range of first-hand experiences which fire the imagination of pupils and encourages them to succeed.
- Governors are highly effective. They ensure financial stability for the school and hold the headteacher rigorously to account for all aspects of the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils attain better than expected standards for their age in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Improvements in writing have not been sustained, especially for the girls in Key Stage 2.
- While most teaching is good, there is not enough that is outstanding. High-quality marking and feedback, which guides pupils on how to improve, is not yet fully evident across the whole school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also visited lessons for short periods, attended assemblies and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of the responses of the seven parents who completed the on-line survey (Parent View) when planning the inspection, and also considered findings from questionnaires and surveys organised by the school. Questionnaires completed by 22 staff were also taken into account.
- Inspectors met with a number of school staff including the headteacher, senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the Chair of the Governing Body, the vice-chair and other governors and the manager of the Early Years Foundation Stage. A meeting was also held with the local authority school improvement adviser.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, including those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding.
- Various documents were scrutinised. These included: teachers' monitoring and planning files, the school development plan and the school's self-evaluation, safeguarding documentation, behaviour logs, policies, information about pupils' progress and tracking information.

Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Gillian Hunter	Additional Inspector
Liam Trippier	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is almost twice the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of children who are supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average.
- Since the last inspection several members of staff have left. Three newly qualified teachers have been appointed and two teachers are currently on secondment to the local authority. There have also been recent changes to the governing body, which includes the appointment of a new Chair of the Governing Body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more pupils attain standards higher than expected for age in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2, by helping them to become more confident learners and providing regular opportunities for them to practise their writing and mathematical skills across different subjects.
- Increase the proportion of girls reaching the expected standard in writing by the end of Key Stage 2, by ensuring that the curriculum enables girls to do as well as boys in writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that all lessons are good or better by:
 - ensuring that the work that teachers set always challenges pupils to do their best, especially the more able pupils
 - ensuring that teachers consistently use marking and feedback to help pupils to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with overall skills that are often well below those expected for their age. They make good progress through the school and achieve broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Progress is outstanding for some pupils, with a high proportion making better than expected progress in mathematics.
- The school provides a successful range of activities to support most pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy small group work because it helps them with their comprehension, reading and writing skills. Such actions have been effective in ensuring that gaps in attainment between groups of pupils are narrowing. However, some gains made in writing have not been sustained for all groups, especially girls in writing in Key Stage 2, whose attainment is not as good as it was last year nor matches that of boys.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs do much better than similar pupils in other schools nationally, especially in mathematics.
- Attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 1 has improved year on year and significant improvements have been made at Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' reading skills have improved at both Key Stages 1 and 2 and their attainment in reading is now broadly average. The school's use of the pupil premium funding, for example, to employ additional staff and to provide targeted small-group support, has contributed well towards improving outcomes for those pupils supported by this funding.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good with some that is outstanding. In the best lessons, teachers know their pupils well and always challenge them to do their best.
- A small minority of lessons require improvement because the purpose of the lesson is not made clear to pupils, or plans do not make sure that all pupils have work that allows them to do their best.
- Teachers have outstandingly good relationships with pupils. They listen carefully to pupils and ask searching questions which help them to develop their thinking skills. In the best lessons, pupils work well together in pairs and small groups. However, girls and more-able pupils are not always challenged enough and as a result, they are not as interested and involved as they could be.
- Teaching assistants and other adults support certain pupils in the classroom or in small-group sessions to help them with their learning in English and mathematics. When lessons are well paced and pupils are able to get on with their work quickly, the support given is effective in improving the progress of pupils of average and below average attainment.
- Teachers make sure that pupils know how well they are getting on and what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils are given good opportunities to review their work and to read teachers' comments.
- Teachers make learning as active and interesting as possible through relating classroom work to real-life experiences. A highly effective mathematics lesson involved pupils in small groups planning a bonfire night party. Pupils rose to the challenge with great enthusiasm and set to work on calculating the amount of fireworks they could buy with their given budget.
- Teachers take every opportunity to build pupils' self-confidence by getting them to come to the front of the class and share what they have learned. In a lesson where reception children were practising their sounds and learning to read, some came to the front of the class and identified the correct letters to make various sounds. They enjoyed showing other children what they had learned and all showed their appreciation by applauding.
- Homework is set regularly and pupils are encouraged to use the school's virtual learning environment and website to check on what they need to do. The school encourages parents to

help their children's learning through providing an extended support programmes for parents of children in their first term in the Reception class and by inviting parents to come to celebration assemblies.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in the school is outstanding. There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection, in pupils' behaviour at break and at lunch time. Pupils conduct themselves in an exemplary manner at all times, are welcoming to visitors and treat each other in a very respectful way. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent in the vast majority of cases.
- As a Rights Respecting School, all pupils have been involved in the creation of a school charter. Pupils are aware that with rights come responsibilities. This message is reinforced during lessons and displayed throughout the school.
- Pupils say that they like coming to school and say that they feel very safe and enjoy the friendship of their fellow pupils and the confidence of their teachers. All pupils know how to stay safe and they are confident that they can report any concerns to any adult. Incidents of racist and homophobic bullying are very rare. If they occur parents are always informed and all incidents are carefully recorded. All incidents are followed up and reviewed overtime.
- The school has ensured that attendance has improved year on year since the last inspection; it is currently average. Pupils supported by the pupil premium have improved their attendance and support provided has ensured their well-being.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has a very clear view of how the school can be even more successful. The staff and the governing body are determined to ensure the best outcomes for all pupils. The headteacher and governing body have an accurate view of how well the school is performing and set the right priorities for the future.
- Middle leaders have a good understanding of the strengths as well as areas for improvement in subjects.
- The school works well in partnership with other local schools and engages in joint training events.
- The curriculum is good overall. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to learn through first-hand experiences, including inviting visitors into the school and educational visits. Pupils help with the planning of the curriculum by saying what they would like to find out. However, in Key Stage 2 writing tasks do not always appeal to girls as much as to boys and as a result, girls do not achieve as well in writing as boys.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning. They make regular observations of lessons, and make checks on teachers' planning and marking. They talk to pupils to find out their views about their learning. Senior leaders provide detailed feedback to teachers and other leaders on the strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving strongly.
- Senior leaders manage teachers' performance very well and ensure that staff benefit from further training to improve their performance.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand the notion of rights, respect and responsibility and what is right and wrong. The school enhances pupils' spiritual and cultural development through making sure that different religions and cultural traditions are explored. It has extended pupils' knowledge of local, national and global issues through themed weeks and joining in projects, such as 'East meets West', which compared life and culture in China with that in Merseyside and in the north west of England.
- Safeguarding meets the required government standards and the school has ensured good vetting procedures.
- The local authority is very positive about the school for which it provides 'light touch' support.

- Due to the effective management and thorough checks on the impact of pupil premium funding the gap between the attainment of pupils entitled to free school meals and their peers has narrowed over the last academic year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is an outstanding feature of the school. The governing body knows the strengths of the school as well as the areas for development very well. Governors come into school on a regular basis to meet staff and parents and to look at work in classrooms. Challenging questions are asked of the headteacher and senior staff. Minutes of meetings show that reports presented to the governing body are carefully scrutinised and that the headteacher is regularly asked to report on the quality of teaching, the performance of pupils and on how funding, such as the pupil premium is being used. Governors have directed the pupil premium funding to improve attendance and to employ an extra teacher to maintain smaller class sizes and to provide focused support for those pupils most in need of help.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105000
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	402959

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	475
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr C Griffiths
Headteacher	Mr A Davies
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2008
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