

# Queen's Park CofE URC Primary School

Rivington Road, St Helens, Merseyside, WA10 4NQ

## Inspection dates

13–14 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Almost all pupils, at all key stages throughout the school, make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In the large majority of lessons, teaching is good and some is outstanding. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are polite and well-mannered to each other and to adults.
- Pupils enjoy school and are cared for very well. Bullying is rare and pupils feel very safe in school.
- The curriculum is well planned to meet pupils' individual needs and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. The good and interesting range of subjects and topics contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quality of leadership and management from senior leaders and the governing body is good. There is a clear focus on improving teaching and raising achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few lessons require improvement and not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is not of a consistently good quality and does not always help pupils to learn well. Pupils do not always heed this guidance.
- The school does not provide enough opportunities for staff to share the good practice that contributes to the best teaching.
- In a few lessons, teaching assistants are not always used well enough to enable pupils to learn quickly.
- Senior leaders and the governing body do not check well enough the progress made by different groups of pupils.
- Attendance remains slightly below the national average and too many pupils are late for school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons taught by 16 teachers. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, staff, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked closely at the school's work including the school's analysis of how well it is doing and its improvement plan, documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's data on pupils' progress and pupils' work.
- There were eight responses from parents recorded in the online questionnaire (Parent View) but this was not enough for the results to be reported. However, inspectors took account of the 122 responses to the parents' survey carried out by the school in January 2013, together with informal conversations with some parents.

## Inspection team

Alan Parkinson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sheila Loughlin	Additional Inspector
Sheila Mawer	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Queen's Park is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well-above the national average. The pupil premium is the additional funding provided for children in local authority care, children known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of forces' families.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are well-below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well-below average. The proportion of those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has achieved the Arts Mark, the Activemark Gold award and the Basic Skills award.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching from Reception to Year 6 so that it is at least consistently good and increase the proportion of outstanding lessons to raise pupils' achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, by:
  - developing further the use of marking to ensure that there is consistently clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve and that teachers' written comments are followed up by pupils
  - ensuring that teachers consistently deploy teaching assistants to enable them to always actively support all groups of pupils so that they learn more quickly
  - providing more opportunities for teachers to share best practice in teaching and so enable all pupils to make rapid progress.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by:
  - using assessment data to more rigorously check the progress of different groups of pupils across all subjects
  - developing further strategies to improve attendance and ensure that pupils arrive at school on time so that attendance rises to at least in line with the national average.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age and well below for some children, especially in their reading, writing, and social and emotional skills' development.
- Effective planning ensures that activities and tasks are tailored to meet the developing needs of the children. Children make good progress, especially in reading and writing, as a result of this good provision. By the end of Reception, children's skills are slightly below the national averages in reading and writing. Although improving, children's social and emotional skills are less well developed and are below the national average.
- The progress made by pupils between Years 1 and 6 is good. Although pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is improving, by the end of Year 2 it is slightly below the national average.
- Between Years 3 and 6, pupils make good progress and their attainment is at, and sometimes above, national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- An emphasis on improving pupils' reading and writing skills through the whole-school reading-and-writing programme is successfully raising pupils' attainment in all key stages. Inspection activities such as hearing pupils read and looking at pupils' work confirm that current pupils, throughout the school, are making good progress.
- The school has strong and effective processes to monitor the progress of individual pupils. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those who are eligible for pupil-premium funding and those from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar, and sometimes better, progress than their peers.
- The 2012 unvalidated results show that the gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils, including those supported by the pupil premium are closing well. The pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional support such as one-to-one or small-group work focusing on literacy and mathematics. In 2012, the proportion of those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and making more than expected progress was greater than those pupils not eligible for free school meals in both English and mathematics. Similarly, the gaps in attainment between these two groups continue to narrow.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching provides pupils with many opportunities to be actively involved in lessons. Pupils say that they feel that they are taught well.
- Throughout the school, the indoor classrooms and general learning areas are bright and show displays of pupils' work that excite pupils' imagination or develop their creativity and thinking skills well.
- In the best lessons, teaching is well organised and planned. Pupils are given work that helps them to learn quickly and teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to share their ideas with each other. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge so that they explain the work well and extend pupils' understanding. Adults question pupils effectively and encourage pupils to think for themselves.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics has improved and pupils' achievement is improving as a result. For example, in a Year 2 geography lesson investigating ice and water, pupils used their mathematical skills to record the results of their experiment. They also developed their creativity skills when writing a poem about ice after a recent snowfall at school. Teachers and support staff encourage pupils to make good use of their phonics skills (linking letters to the sounds that they make) to read difficult words, and so make good progress.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always tell them clearly enough what they need to do to improve. Teachers do not always ensure that their written comments are followed up by

pupils.

- Teaching contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through activities such as school assemblies, links with the local community, school trips and by encouraging cooperation and group working. For example, a visiting artist has worked with the pupils to create displays that raise the profile of the school's values through art.
- Teaching assistants are used well in the majority of lessons to support learning, particularly for the less-able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. In these lessons, their contribution enables pupils to develop their skills and achieve well. However, in a few lessons, the use of teaching assistants is less effective because their role is more passive and so some pupils do not learn quickly enough.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They say that they like school and enjoy their lessons.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is very good. Pupils are fully aware of different forms of bullying. They report that bullying is rare and any instances are quickly resolved. Pupils feel confident to talk to an adult if they have any concerns.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school because they are well cared for by teachers and other adults. They understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, Years 3 to 6 learn how to swim, pupils learn about road safety and safer cycling and Year 5 take part in 'Crucial Crew' learning about safety in and out of the home.
- The pastoral system is a strength of the school and ensures that pupils are well cared for. Effective partnerships with parents and external agencies ensure that pupils who display any cause for concern are identified early and this ensures that appropriate support is provided. The school's support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially more vulnerable is very effective.
- The responses to the parental survey carried out by the school are very positive. They indicate that almost all parents agree that pupils behave well in school, that they are not bullied and that they are well cared for at school.
- The school provides opportunities for pupils to develop as responsible individuals. Some pupils make a significant contribution to the school community by taking on positions of responsibility such as the school council, team captains and the worship team. Pupils also successfully raise money for charities such as Macmillan Cancer, Children in Need, Red Nose Day and the local hospice.
- The school has established good links with the local community. For example, the school choir led singing at the Remembrance Service in the Town Hall Square as well as for the switching on of the Christmas lights in front of 3,000 people.
- Attendance remains slightly below the national average. Over recent years, the school has implemented strategies to raise attendance and ensure that pupils arrive at school on time. As a result the number of pupils persistently absent has decreased. However, too many pupils still do not arrive at school on time and a few are so late that they do not get their attendance mark.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for further development. They have a clear objective for further school improvement with a strong focus on teaching and learning. The school uses data from checking the progress of individual pupils to identify any areas of underachievement and provides additional support when required. However, the senior leaders and governors do not rigorously check and evaluate the progress made by different groups of pupils to ensure that they all learn as well each other.

- The rigorous systems and processes used to monitor the quality of teaching and learning provide accurate feedback to teachers on their performance and ensure that teaching and achievement continue to improve. The headteacher uses information about the quality of teaching well when developing the training programme for staff, and when advising the governing body about teachers' promotion and movement up the salary scale. However, the school does not provide enough opportunities for teachers to share good and outstanding practice in teaching.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of skills in a stimulating learning environment that has a positive impact on pupils' progress. The wide variety of enrichment activities are valued by the pupils and contribute positively to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, the recent 'Technology Week' involved all pupils in designing and making a variety of models that were displayed at a fair in school for parents at the end of the week. Year 6 pupils also visited a national car manufacturer to see the process of building a car from start to finish.
- The local authority provides effective and valuable support to help the school develop the quality of teaching and to support senior leaders and the governing body.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is very well informed and is able to effectively challenge and support school leaders at all levels. However, governors do not always rigorously check and evaluate the progress of different groups of pupils across all subjects to ensure that they are making at least similar progress to that of other groups. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's finances and members ensure that they are kept informed of how teachers' salaries are linked to pupils' progress. This includes the allocation of funding for those eligible for pupil premium through, for example, providing one-to-one support to improve the English and mathematical skills of pupils who are at risk of falling behind. The governors undertake their statutory duties effectively. Safeguarding procedures and policies meet statutory requirements.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130382
<b>Local authority</b>	St Helens
<b>Inspection number</b>	403614

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	350
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roy Quinn
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Thorpe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01744 678202
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