

# Lister Junior School

Green Lane, Liverpool, Merseyside, L13 7DT

**Inspection dates** 27–28 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not consistently good. Pupils, particularly the most able, are not always given work that challenges them to reach their full potential.
- Marking does not always give pupils the precise guidance they need to improve their work, particularly their spelling, nor does it always accurately identify next steps, particularly for the least able.
- Standards reached by the end of Year 6 are above average in English and mathematics. Pupils' progress from their various starting points requires improvement because too few pupils make more than the progress expected of them in English, particularly in writing.
- The progress pupils make in applying their writing and reading skills is hampered by the way pupils are grouped for phonics (the sounds letters make) making it difficult to precisely meet the needs of all pupils, especially the least able.
- Some subject leaders are not yet fully involved in tackling weaknesses in teaching and driving improvement in teaching and learning in their subjects.

### The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is broadly average and improving. Pupils are keen to learn and have good relationships with each other and with adults in the school. They feel safe in school.
- The headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteachers, provides very clear direction in this improving school.
- The leadership team monitors teaching and learning closely and has an accurate understanding of what needs to be done to improve further. As a result of the work it has done, standards have recently risen and progress has accelerated in both English and mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons including short visits to other activities led by teachers and trained assistants. Five of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteachers.
- A group of pupils from Years 3 to 6 met with inspectors. Discussions were also held with staff, including senior leaders. Meetings were conducted with members of the governing body and with a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) during the inspection. Inspectors took account of the results of a parental survey recently carried out by the school and correspondence from parents.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work with the leadership team and read a range of documents. These included documents about the school's strategies to enable leaders to gain an accurate view of its performance, school improvement plans, pupils' current progress, policies and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Judith Tolley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kathleen Harris

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Lister Junior School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and children of service families) is higher than that usually found.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than average.
- The school has a number of awards including Healthy School status and Kite Mark (silver) for physical education.
- The school shares the site with Lister Infants' School which is inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Raise the standards that pupils reach and increase the rate of progress further, especially in English, by:
  - reviewing the arrangements for teaching phonics so that the needs of groups of pupils of differing ability are more closely met in order to improve their reading and writing more rapidly
  - ensuring pupils are always given precisely the right level of challenge to achieve their potential, particularly the most able
  - ensuring marking always gives pupils precise guidance about how to improve their work, particularly their spelling and handwriting
  - increasing the subject knowledge of teachers and teaching assistants in their teaching of reading.
- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring subject leaders, particularly in English, are fully involved in working alongside teachers to improve their practice.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils make the progress expected of them from their starting points but fewer pupils than nationally make more than the progress expected of them in English. Most children enter the school in Year 3 with skills and knowledge that are above average in English and mathematics. By the end of Year 6 they make the progress expected of them in English and good progress in mathematics. However, their progress is uneven as they move through the school. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading and writing are above average and in mathematics are well above average.
- Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards have improved over the last three years. In 2013, there was a rise in the standards reached by pupils, especially in mathematics at the end of Year 6 and the proportion of pupils making more than expected progress compared favourably to national figures.
- The most-able pupils make the progress expected of them from their starting points in mathematics, in reading, and in writing, with some reaching the highest levels by the end of Year 6. In lessons, however, opportunities are limited for these pupils to apply their learning in a variety of contexts to increase their independence as learners and challenge them fully.
- Pupils write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences and use a good range of vocabulary and structures. However, the quality of their work is hampered by the accuracy of their spelling and the quality of their handwriting.
- The progress made by pupils in developing their reading and writing skills is slowed because there is a very wide range of ability within phonics groups so that the needs of the most and least able are not adequately met. Teachers and teaching assistants do not always have the detailed knowledge of developing early reading and writing skills they need to be able to give pupils, who have fallen behind, the help they need to make rapid progress in these areas.
- Achievement in mathematics has improved recently, with all pupils now making the progress expected of them and many making more than expected progress.
- By the end of Year 6, most pupils read a variety of texts with a good level of fluency and understanding. Most are able to talk in detail about what they have read, and can compare and contrast books they have enjoyed.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same expected progress as their peers.
- The extra support, such as extra help in the classroom and support from teaching assistants, that the school provides with the additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium enables these pupils to reach their targets and to make the same expected progress as their peers. Gaps between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in English and mathematics and their classmates are closing.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good across the school. Although there is some good and outstanding practice, teaching over time is too variable.
- Teachers present new ideas clearly and activities are well designed to engage pupils' interest. For instance, in a Year 6 English lesson pupils' interest was immediately engaged by the soundtrack of a Second World War air raid and, as a result, they were able to imagine the scene and use this experience to describe the scene in their writing.
- In Year 6 pupils made outstanding progress in learning how to work out percentages and apply them to sales prices. As a result of a series of very well-planned activities and the way the teacher responded swiftly to pupils' needs, their progress accelerated in applying their calculations to real life situations. However, this is not always the case; on occasions work does not always challenge the most-able pupils sufficiently or provide enough support for the less

able to work confidently without direct help from adults.

- Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively together. They ask pupils searching questions to get them thinking and to see how much they have understood or to challenge them to solve problems for themselves. For instance, in a Year 4 English lesson, pupils worked very confidently with a partner to identify the key features of a poem and then went on to write a poem of their own. However, in some lessons, opportunities are missed to enable pupils to work things out for themselves.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are instances of good practice within the school. However, too often marking does not give pupils the guidance they need to improve their work, particularly their handwriting and their spelling.
- The impact of teaching on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development requires improvement; it is particularly strong when pupils work collaboratively and can learn from each other, but opportunities are missed to develop pupils' confidence and independence as learners in this way.

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

- Behaviour is good. Pupils are considerate to each other and work and play very well together. Pupils support each other well, for example, when working with a partner. They take responsibility very seriously and are proud of their contribution to the school, for example, as school councillors both in school and as representatives in the School Parliament, as play leaders and buddies for younger children in the infants' school and as advocates for those in the junior school.
- Disruption to lessons is rare and pupils work responsibly and with enthusiasm, especially when given the opportunity to work independently of the teacher or in small groups to solve problems themselves. They listen carefully to others and respect their views.
- Pupils have good relationships with adults, and they feel safe and are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively. They are aware of the different forms of bullying, such as name-calling and cyber-bullying that can take place and know how to deal with it.
- Pupils know how to stay safe and have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They value the wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, that is provided and which has a positive impact on their health and well-being.
- Attendance is broadly average. It has improved over the last three years. Persistent absence has decreased as a result of the good work the school is doing in encouraging attendance and pursuing those families whose children do not attend regularly enough.
- Pupils who may have challenging behaviour are supported very effectively to make good choices and, as a result, incidences of poor behaviour are very rare.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- The headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteachers, provides very clear direction. The members of the leadership team have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and what could be improved further, based on a close analysis of pupil progress and monitoring of teaching and learning. As a result, standards have recently improved and progress accelerated in both English and mathematics.
- Teaching and learning are closely monitored by senior leaders, and teachers new to the school are effectively supported. Teachers work well together in year group teams to plan lessons and this is successful in ensuring consistency of approach across classes but there remain inconsistencies in the detailed planning for the progress of groups of differing ability within those classes.
- Subject leaders are involved in checking the school's performance in their subjects through lesson observations but they are not fully involved in holding teachers to account or in working

alongside teachers to improve practice in teaching and learning in their subjects, especially in English. This is a key reason why teaching requires improvement and is not yet good.

- The senior leadership team has a detailed analysis of pupils' progress and this is used effectively to trigger timely interventions for pupils. A comprehensive system of appraisal and performance management has been adopted which is linked to the pay scales and is used to identify training for teachers.
- Safeguarding meets government requirements and discrimination in all its forms is rejected.
- The school works well with local agencies, the local network of schools, including the high school, and with parents to ensure that all pupils settle well to learning. This includes detailed information through newsletters as well as workshops for parents so that they can help their children with their learning at home. The school is committed to providing an equal opportunity for every pupil. For instance, some pupil premium funding is used to enable these pupils to participate in visits and other activities designed to enrich their learning.
- The curriculum requires improvement because there are weaknesses which prevent the most able and the less able from doing as well as they might, particularly in reading and writing. The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of activities and visits out of school that enhance pupils' learning and which promote pupils' physical well-being and their personal development. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching in sports and physical education.
- The new primary sport funding is being used well to provide extra coaching for sports activities in the playground and after school. This is not only promoting pupils' physical development and well-being effectively but also encouraging some pupils to join in who might not otherwise do so.
- Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided effective support for this school to ensure continued improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas which need to be improved. Governors are increasingly involved in checking the school's performance, including data that show pupils' attainment and progress. As a result, they are now in a good position to hold leaders to account. They have a clear understanding of the performance of staff including how good performance is rewarded and any underperformance is tackled. The efficiency of spending is scrutinised, for instance the effectiveness of the use of pupil premium funding. Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.

## 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>	104554
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	426064

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anne Butler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Simon King
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 November 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 2284196
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