

St Anne's (Stanley) Junior Mixed and Infant School

Prescot Road, Old Swan, Liverpool, Merseyside, L13 3BT

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- By the end of Year 1, pupils' phonic skills (letters and the sounds they make) are consistently below pupils of the same age nationally.
- By the end of Year 6, attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others are too wide in mathematics, grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Teaching over time has not been effective enough in enabling all groups of pupils to make good progress, particularly in mathematics, grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is not led and managed effectively enough. This has resulted in some pupils at both Key Stages 1 and 2 not achieving as well as they should.
- In the early years, staff do not promote learning well enough during children's play or the activities they choose for themselves. Checks on how well different groups of children are learning are not rigorous enough.
- Leaders' and governors' view of the school is too positive because they have not understood the importance of the weaknesses in achievement for some groups of pupils.
- Governors do not ask senior leaders searching enough questions about pupils' achievement, including that of groups for whom the school receives additional funding, because they lack the training to do this effectively.

The school has the following strengths

- The school's work to rectify the significant fall in achievement in 2013 is having a positive impact. This shows that leaders have the capacity to continue to improve the school.
- Pupils' achievement in reading has improved. In the most recent Year 6 tests, pupils attained high standards in reading and all made good progress.
- Attainment in writing has improved considerably. By the end of Year 6, pupils attained standards that were similar to pupils across the country and most made the progress expected of them.
- The school is highly effective in its work to keep pupils safe and secure. Staff establish trusting and supportive relationships with their pupils.
- Behaviour is good and the school ensures that pupils develop a strong moral code and learn to respect and value people's differences. Pupils are very well prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum is broad and provides pupils with interesting experiences during and outside school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, analysed their work and checked the school's data about their attainment and progress.
- Inspectors held three formal discussions with pupils and spoke with others informally in lessons and at break and lunchtimes.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior and other leaders, three governors and a representative from the local authority.
- A range of documentation was analysed, including the school's own evaluation of its work, safeguarding documents, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance and information about teachers' performance.
- Inspectors took account of 40 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), a small number of written comments by parents and the school's own survey of parents' views. Inspectors spoke with some parents as they brought their children to school.
- The views of 37 staff who responded to the staff questionnaire were considered.

Inspection team

Margot D'Arcy, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Craig Richardson	Additional Inspector
Jennifer Lawrence	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special education needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils that speak English as an additional language is below average and only a very small proportion is at an early stage of learning English.
- Early years provision is part-time for Nursery children and full-time for Reception children.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- A new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in September 2014.
- A very small number of pupils attend off site provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that the teaching of phonics by all staff in the early years and Year 1 enables pupils to make rapid progress so that their attainment, including that of disadvantaged pupils, by the end of Year 1 is at least in line with pupils of this age nationally
 - ensuring consistently good teaching of mathematics to all groups of pupils, including in any additional support programmes, so that the gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others narrows considerably
 - ensuring that disadvantaged pupils attain higher standards and make better progress in grammar, punctuation and spelling so that their attainment is in line with or much closer to that of other pupils nationally
 - ensuring that all pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and capabilities
 - ensuring that staff in the early years are more involved in promoting good learning in children's play and the activities they choose for themselves, both inside and outdoors, and that children's next steps in learning are based on information from regular, ongoing assessments of what they know, understand and can do.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring effective leadership and management of the provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
 - ensuring more rigorous analysis of data about the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils, including in the early years, to better inform leaders' and governors' view of the school's effectiveness
 - providing training for governors on how to challenge school leaders about pupils' achievement and the impact of the school's spending of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that governors' decisions about any increases in teachers' pay take account of pupils' achievements.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The transition of the new headteacher from her previous role as deputy headteacher has been seamless and staff are fully supportive of their new leader. Although large, the school's ethos resembles that of a 'close knit family' in which pupils are exceptionally well cared for, valued, and nurtured to become responsible young citizens who have a strong moral code and appreciate and respect people's differences.
- School leaders are aware of the need to improve pupils' phonics skills by the end of Year 1 and have taken action to this end. A focus on this aspect last year enabled many pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 to catch up quickly and these pupils are now using phonics competently. Although standards by the end of Year 1 are not yet high enough, recent changes to the way phonics teaching is organised are beginning to pay off.
- The need to close the attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others is high on the school's agenda. Inspection evidence shows that for pupils currently in the school these gaps are narrowing, although inconsistencies still remain, especially in mathematics. Progress gaps are narrower than attainment gaps because disadvantaged pupils' attainment has historically been much lower than that of other pupils.
- Senior leaders and governors firmly believe that the school is highly effective in promoting the achievement of all pupils and that the school adds much to broaden pupils' life experiences and develop them spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. In many aspects, this view is confirmed by inspection evidence. However, in some areas, the school's view of itself is overly positive, coloured by too broad a view of the overall picture of achievement, the indisputable commitment and hard work of the staff and the school's past successes.
- Leaders' analysis of the achievement of different groups of pupils is not sufficiently rigorous. Consequently, although there is acknowledgement that improvements are still needed to raise achievement in phonics and for disadvantaged pupils, the significance of these weaknesses is not weighed sufficiently well in leaders' and governors' evaluations of achievement, the quality of teaching and the school's overall effectiveness.
- Indicators of underachievement for some pupils with special educational needs have not been spotted and, therefore, not investigated. Leadership and management of this aspect of the school's work are not effective. With the exception of the small proportion of pupils who attend alternative provision for part of the week, pupils' achievement is not checked or tracked rigorously. The current action plan is not sufficiently focused on pupils' achievement. The headteacher has recognised that greater oversight of this aspect is needed and had already determined that the impact of work to boost pupils' achievement should be measured more frequently.
- There are some significant strengths in leadership and management. A concerted focus on pupils' reading and writing during the past year, including from middle leaders, has been very successful in improving achievement and is clearly evident in the recent test and assessment data at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Decisive action has also led to pupils' improved attendance and a significant reduction in the incidences of persistent absence. Unreported and extended absences are followed up rigorously and where parents have difficulties getting children to school, staff go the 'extra mile' to collect pupils from home. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and meet requirements.
- The curriculum remains broad and interesting. The arts, computing and physical education feature strongly and there are plenty of opportunities to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects. There has been significant investment in updating the reading scheme; the recent expansion of school and class libraries took good account of pupils' views and preferences. Extra-curricular clubs, including gardening, choir, eco-club and clubs to boost pupils' achievement in reading and writing are popular and well attended.
- Close links with the local community and the school's international school status add to the highly positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The programme for personal, social and health education, including assemblies, provides pupils with extremely good guidance on how to recognise and respond to unsafe situations and how to identify and challenge all types of inappropriate behaviour. Core values, such as honesty, understanding, friendship, respect and tolerance are continually fostered throughout the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Good use is being made of the primary school sports funding to improve pupils' physical development and enjoyment of sport. Visiting specialist coaches provide very high quality teaching for pupils and training for staff. Productive partnerships with local football clubs and leagues have been established and funding has been successfully targeted to engage and support the least active pupils in new and additional sports and health clubs.

- The school has established good links with parents, the vast majority of whom are extremely happy with the school's work to educate their children and keep them safe. Leaders have recognised the need to provide parents with more information to enable them to support their children's early reading development.
- Until last year the local authority provided 'light touch' support for the school. Support has increased during the last 12 months in response to the identification of weaknesses in pupils' phonic skills and in gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others. The local authority is supporting the school well in its journey to improving these aspects, for example, plans are already in place to improve governors' understanding of the school's performance data so that they are able to challenge school leaders more effectively about pupils' achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are a committed group and have recently increased their involvement in the school, visiting lessons and looking at pupils' work. While governors do not shy away from asking questions about the school's work, the limitations in their understanding of the school's performance data means that they have not challenged school leaders well enough about pupils' achievement.
 - Governors are aware of the issues regarding younger pupils' phonic skills and the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, but believe that this is not related to the quality of teaching. They are aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent, for example, to employ additional staff, but insufficiently aware of the impact of this spending on pupils' achievement. Consequently, while governors are committed to ensuring that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed they are not checking rigorously enough to ensure that this is what happens in practice. Governors have ensured that the school's work to tackle discrimination and keep pupils safe is highly effective.
 - Systems to check teachers' performance in relation to whether they are enabling all pupils for whom they have responsibility to achieve as well as they might have been stepped up recently and are due to be extended to the high number of support staff in the near future. However, weaknesses in governors' understanding of the school's performance data has led to some pay awards being sanctioned without sufficient consideration of the impact of the work on pupils' achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are well-mannered and work hard and successfully to live up to the school's high expectations of their behaviour. In discussion, most pupils were positive about behaviour at the school, with a typical comment being 'It's almost perfect'.
- Pupils' good understanding and acceptance of the school's values is reflected in their good behaviour on the playground and as they move around the school. Pupils greet visitors politely and it comes as 'second nature' to them to hold doors open and offer assistance.
- In lessons, pupils show respect for their teachers and each other; most take pride in presenting their work well. Pupils listen carefully when teachers are speaking and show good interest and consideration when other pupils are answering questions or presenting their work to the class. Even younger pupils show maturity in encouraging classmates who find learning more difficult, and they are generous in their praise and admiration when these pupils achieve a personal target.
- While pupils are keen to learn and willing to apply themselves well to their work, there are times when they lose interest and concentration. This was evident in lessons and pupils' books when the work they were given was too easy, including for the lower attaining pupils as well as for the most able pupils. For example, when discussing with the lower attaining, disadvantaged pupils about mathematics work marked as incorrect, the pupils explained that the work was 'dead easy' and that they had made mistakes because they 'already knew it and were not in the mood to do it again'.
- Pupils are well aware of the importance of good attendance and being punctual to school. They like the incentives and try hard to achieve the rewards. Improvements in the last year have brought attendance close to the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The strong procedures that have always been a feature of the school's provision have recently been further improved. There are meticulous checks to assess risks to pupils' safety and robust systems to identify, record, and follow up any safeguarding concerns and the very rare incidences of inappropriate behaviour. Partnerships with specialist agencies and alternative provision to ensure pupils' safety are excellent and have had some very positive impact.
- The school has ensured that pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep safe, including when

using the internet and mobile technology. Pupils are adamant that racist behaviour is not a feature of the school. Pupils are taught about all types of prejudice-based behaviour and bullying and what to do if they experience this or see it happening to others. Pupils say that they feel safe in school at all times and are confident to confide any worries to the staff, whom they trust to sort these out.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching has not been strong enough over time to promote consistently good progress for all groups of pupils. This includes teaching from support staff who often work with pupils who do not learn as quickly as others or who need additional help to enable them to catch up.
- Observations of teaching and analysis of pupils' work reflects a number of strengths, including in mathematics and phonics and in promoting good learning for some disadvantaged pupils. However, these strengths are not consistent across year groups. Currently, teaching is not reliably promoting the rapid progress needed to enable gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others to close quickly. This is most notable in mathematics, including in the early years.
- In lessons and in pupils' books, the most consistently effective learning in mathematics is for the most able pupils, although occasionally work for this group is not challenging enough. Lack of challenge is more frequent for middle and lower attainers in this subject, although this is not a weakness in all year groups.
- The teaching of reading and writing is mostly strong and effective. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to reading and realise that this is the key to finding out information and improving their learning.
- Teachers develop pupils' speaking skills and vocabulary well, including through debate, drama and role play. This provides pupils with a solid platform for writing and was evident in the examples of stories, accounts, instructions, diaries and letters seen in pupils' work. The teaching of grammar, spelling and punctuation has been given a high priority this year and there were good examples of this being taught well both in literacy lessons and other subjects.
- Where teaching has the most impact on pupils' learning, teachers' subject knowledge is secure and their questions to pupils show that they are aware of pupils' different needs and learning styles. Pupils' learned and applied themselves better when they were given work that captured their interest and motivated them to think deeply about ideas. This was evident in both literacy and mathematics work.
- The new system for providing feedback to pupils through marking is mostly working well, although it is not yet consistently embedded across the school. There are some good examples of teachers providing pupils with 'next steps' to improve their work and pupils responding to these and providing their teachers with feedback on how challenging or difficult they found the work.
- Some good impact of support staff on pupils' work was noted in lessons during the inspection, but at other times this was less effective. While these staff have received comprehensive training alongside teachers, the overall impact of their work is not fully known because it is not rigorously measured.
- Strong relationships between pupils and adults are evident throughout the school.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Over time, the attainment of Year 1 pupils in the phonics check has been consistently lower than the national average. While the proportion of pupils attaining the required standard in 2014 increased for all groups, attainment remained below average and the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was particularly low.
- The results of the 2014 phonics re-check at the end of Year 2 showed improvement on the previous year and reflected the impact of action taken to tackle pupils' historically low phonic skills on beginning Year 3. This year higher proportions of Year 2 pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, attained the required standard, but over one quarter did not and the majority of these were disadvantaged pupils.
- However, inspection evidence shows that of the pupils currently in Years 3 and 4 who did not attain the required standard by the end of Year 2, most have caught up and are now proficient in using phonic skills in their reading.
- The attainment and progress of Year 6 pupils in the 2013 national tests and assessments fell significantly, particularly in mathematics and writing. The most recent Year 6 national tests and assessments showed significant improvement in reading and writing. Attainment in reading was much higher than the national average and almost all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, made good progress. Attainment in writing improved to slightly above the national average and reflected that most pupils had made the progress expected during Key Stage 2.

- Improvements in mathematics were not as positive, with no notable shift in the general picture of broadly average attainment over time. Although most Year 6 pupils made the progress expected of them in mathematics during Key Stage 2, not enough did better than this.
- By the end of Year 6, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in mathematics is approximately a year behind other pupils nationally and 15 months behind other pupils at the school. While there was considerable improvement in the 2014 grammar, punctuation and spelling results, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils' in this aspect was lower than the previous year. These pupils were around 17 months behind other pupils nationally and more than two and a half years behind their classmates.
- In reading and writing, the attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and pupils nationally were much narrower, at around four and eight months respectively. Although the gaps in these areas are wider in relation to other pupils at the school, this is because the attainment of the other pupils rose at a faster rate than that of disadvantaged pupils.
- While inspection evidence shows that the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils currently in the school are closing in all subjects, there is still inconsistency between subjects and year groups, particularly in mathematics, including in the early years.
- The statutory assessment of Year 2 pupils in 2014 reflected an improvement in attainment from the dip which occurred in 2013 and a return to the general picture of broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally and in the school are similar and less marked at this key stage, with the largest gaps being around six months in reading and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do not achieve as well as they should. Within this group, the attainment of pupils whose needs are not particularly severe is consistently below pupils in the same group nationally at both Key Stages 1 and 2 in all subjects. For the past two years at least, these pupils have made inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Within this general picture, some individual pupils have made good gains in their learning and development; this includes the very small number of pupils attending alternative provision to support their specific needs.
- The most able pupils generally achieve well. The recent national test and assessments for Year 6 pupils showed that even though these pupils began Key Stage 2 with above average attainment, they made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and attained highly by time they left the school.
- The very small number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English are responding well to the good support provided and developing skills in learning the language.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery and Reception classes varies considerably from year to year. Over time, the children's skills and abilities have generally been below what is typical for their age, particularly in literacy and mathematics. However, the attainment of the current cohort of children is more typical for their age.
- By the time children leave the Reception Year there are no significant variations in their attainment between different areas of learning. However, disadvantaged children do not attain as well as others in mathematics. This year, the majority of children who left the Reception class were ready for work in Year 1, reflecting an improvement on previous years.
- The proportion of children who attained a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year in 2014 was higher than usual for the school and above the national average. From these children's earlier attainment this reflected an overall picture of good progress. However, because the analysis of children's achievement is not sufficiently rigorous, differences in the achievements of groups of children of different ability are not identified well enough and, therefore, do not inform leaders' actions for improvement.
- The staff are very caring and establish warm and friendly relationships with the children. This ensures that the children behave well, feel safe and gain confidence. Children quickly develop good social skills and learn to play and work together happily.
- During adult-led activities in which staff work with groups of children on literacy and mathematics, they generally make a good contribution to children's learning. This includes assessing children's achievements. However, support staff are not as effective or involved in helping children to learn through play or the activities they choose for themselves. The checks on children's achievements in these contexts are not as effective in helping to determine the next steps for children's learning. While children's achievements are assessed regularly, this is not an ongoing part of the day-to-day provision. This narrows the opportunities for children to learn continuously well throughout the day.
- The outdoor environment is well-planned to support learning. However, while school leaders confirm that

outdoor learning is a continuous part of the provision this was not evident during the inspection.

- A good emphasis is placed on developing children's speaking and listening skills, and staff do this very successfully. There is some effective direct teaching of phonics, but opportunities to build on this during other activities are not always capitalised upon.

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	104622
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	449293

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	366
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Williams
Headteacher	Julie Simons
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2009
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