

Gayton Primary School

Gayton Road, Heswall, Wirral, Merseyside, CH60 8PZ

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. From starting school with knowledge and skills, which are typical for their age, children make good progress in their learning.
- In 2014, standards attained by pupils in reading and writing were above average and well above average in mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- From their individual starting points, all groups of pupils, including the most able, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. Staff provide a range of well-planned and high quality learning opportunities for pupils. Teaching assistants provide effective support, especially for those who have special educational needs.
- The early years provision is led well. Children make a good start to their learning in school.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They display exemplary attitudes to their learning and make a full contribution to the life of the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils report they feel extremely secure in school because staff work hard to care well for them. This view is shared by the majority of parents.
- The curriculum is rich. Visitors and the school's strong partnerships with other schools both locally and internationally are used well to enrich pupils' experiences and enhance their skills.
- The headteacher and governing body, whose members hold school leaders robustly to account, have managed high levels of staffing disruptions well to ensure that pupils make good progress in their learning.
- The school continues to improve because leaders share a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few teachers miss opportunities when marking pupils' work in writing and mathematics to set challenges which will accelerate pupils' achievement further.
- Senior and subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in checking on the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning and teaching in lessons and part-lessons. No lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, school staff and four members of the governing body, including the Chair of Governors.
- Inspectors held discussions with parents and groups of pupils. Inspectors also spoke informally to pupils in lessons, during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors scrutinised the work pupils produced during lessons and in their books over time. They also listened to a small number of pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at the latest school data on pupils' achievement and the progress they are currently making.
- Other documentation scrutinised included strategic development planning, safeguarding information, behaviour logs, attendance records and minutes of recent meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of the 66 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the 13 responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire and three letters from parents.

Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Pamela Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average. The term disadvantaged pupils is used to describe those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority. These pupils receive additional support from pupil premium funding.
- Children in Reception attend full-time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Four teachers have left the school and four teachers have been appointed since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress in all year groups by ensuring that teachers use marking in writing and mathematics to best effect to challenge all pupils to achieve the very best they can.
- Ensure that senior and subject leaders are fully involved in checking on the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers have established a climate of high expectation for learning where pupils can flourish in their education. They have managed the high levels of staffing disruptions effectively and have well thought out plans in place to ensure that pupils' learning is accelerated further.
- The headteacher and all the staff resolutely ensure that pupils are encouraged to learn well in a caring, exciting and stimulating environment.
- Senior leaders and staff support the headteacher in his determination to ensure that pupils enjoy school and get the best out of their time here. High standards of behaviour are expected by school leaders and staff at all times, which makes a strong contribution to pupils' good learning.
- Senior and subject leaders know what they need to do to carry out their roles in improving teaching and raising pupils' achievement. However, leadership is not outstanding because the high levels of staffing disruption means that some plans for checking on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning have not been implemented fully. The school has plans in place to sharpen these practices, but the impact is not fully evident and some pupils are not achieving as well as they could.
- The good and consistent leadership of the early years means that children enter a vibrant and stimulating environment and make good progress. The leadership of special educational needs is good, ensuring that those who have special educational needs achieve well. This can be seen in the school data and pupils' work in their books.
- School data show that the small amount of pupil premium given to the school is used well and is improving disadvantaged pupils' progress. This is because of the additional support they receive. This targeted support has enabled disadvantaged pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- All pupils are treated equally in school; discrimination is not tolerated. Good relations are fostered well in the caring and supportive learning environment.
- The curriculum is of a high quality. Pupils have many opportunities to study exciting and interesting topics that help them to learn well. In a Year 6 English lesson, pupils produced a radio advert which challenged them to think deeply, carry out research and create a unique advert, which would sell their product. Such learning means pupils have to apply previously acquired technical spoken and written English in their learning and their understanding of technology. This prepares them well for their future lives.
- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. There are a number of activities that promote British values well; pupils learn about the importance of democracy when making important decisions within the school community, for instance, when electing school council and house captain positions. Furthermore, pupils are provided with opportunities to know and understand their rights and personal freedoms and are advised on how to exercise these safely, for example, through e-safety and in independent work.
- Pupils benefit from a number of visits, visitors and partnerships with other schools, including from other cultures and visitors through a developing link with North India. Additionally, pupils actively share their faith and beliefs within the school and celebrate festivities throughout the year. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully across the curriculum.
- The school meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils. Arrangements for keeping pupils safe are fully effective. Staff training in child protection procedures is thorough.
- As a result of its previous successes, the school receives limited support from the local authority.
- Additional funding to improve physical education and sport in school is used effectively. Teachers' coaching skills have been developed well and there is a wide range of sporting opportunities such as dance and cheerleading offered to pupils. The effective use of the funding also ensures that sports opportunities are available to everyone.
- Most parents are very supportive of all the school does and feel that communications between home and school are strong. However, a small minority expressed concerns, during the inspection, about the quality of leadership and teaching at the school. While the inspection team could find no evidence to support their views, senior leaders and governors have plans in place to address these concerns by strengthening the communication links with parents further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The school benefits from a highly skilled and committed governing body. They have a clear overview of school performance and set the strategic direction robustly for the headteacher and senior leaders to

follow. Through regular visits to school and meetings with leaders, they have a very strong impact on school improvement. They use their strong knowledge of published data and current school tracking data, which show how well pupils are achieving to question and challenge the headteacher and subject leaders about how well they are helping pupils to learn.

- Governors recognise the impact of the spending for additional grants such as the sports and pupils premium funds. They carry out their safeguarding responsibilities meticulously. Governors know much about the quality of teaching in school and manage the performance of staff well. Teachers' performance is shared with the governing body by the headteacher governing body, together with an explanation of improvements that have taken place. Underperformance is not tolerated and good teaching is rewarded well by governors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils consistently display a deep thirst for learning, whether they are being taught in whole-class or small-group situations.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour makes a strong contribution to their good achievement. For instance, a group of gifted and talented pupils joined pupils from a neighbouring school in a philosophy session to consider the deeper meaning and understanding of social and moral actions.
- Pupils are polite, well-mannered and respectful towards others around school. Their behaviour is impeccable whether in lessons, on the playground, or when walking within the school building.
- Pupils are extremely caring towards each other. The strong buddy system has older pupils supporting the younger ones very effectively.
- Pupils appreciate being house captains, school councillors or librarians. They take their responsibilities very seriously. This prepares them for their future lives very effectively. There are no concerns expressed by parents, staff or pupils about behaviour or safety in the school.
- Pupils' excellent conduct is reflected in the school's effective strategies to promote high standards of behaviour. Breaks and lunchtimes are orderly and the pupils move around the site exceptionally well. They ensure that others are safe and enjoying themselves.
- They have an excellent understanding of different types of bullying. They know that, on the rare occasions when bullying occurs in school, it is dealt with rapidly and to their satisfaction when they report it to adults. These instances are rare because the focus on respecting the views of others is central to the school curriculum.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils are taught extremely well about dangers in society and how to keep themselves safe in school and in the wider community. Much emphasis is placed in school on ensuring that pupils know how to stay safe when using the Internet and social media. As a result, pupils are highly aware of what they should do in circumstances when they may be at risk.
- The pupils the inspectors spoke to thoroughly enjoy all that the school has to offer. They are very keen to say they feel very safe and well cared for. They say how much they benefit from the exciting range of clubs including sports, art and music or in taking part in competitions against other schools. This contributes extremely well to their physical development, resilience and personal well-being.
- The school undertakes and maintains a robust record of all pre-employment checks on staff members and those who volunteer to work in school with pupils.
- The school site is kept very secure and pupils are able to move around the grounds in the knowledge that they are very safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Despite the staffing disruptions since the last inspection, strong teaching over time enables pupils to make

good progress in their learning.

- Children achieve well in the early years because of effective teaching. As pupils progress through school, good quality teaching challenges them well, helping them to reach high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave in Year 6.
- Pupils are encouraged to try to achieve their best in lessons, which helps them to be successful in their learning. Pupils are exceedingly enthusiastic to learn and participate fully either individually or when working with their classmates in learning tasks during lessons.
- Pupils' learning is assessed regularly and they are given increased challenges to help them achieve even more, when it is appropriate. There is a supportive and positive climate for learning in the school and pupils respond well to this.
- Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to good learning for pupils in lessons and when working with pupils in small groups or on individual support programmes. The additional activities which pupils undertake with teaching assistants ensure that they do not fall behind in their learning.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught well. Teachers are knowledgeable about these subjects and skilfully prepare lessons that enable pupils to apply what they have learned to new learning situations. For instance, in a mathematics lesson, pupils were converting imperial measures found in recipes used in the 1940s era into metric measures, using their prior understanding of the basic mathematical rules of multiplication and addition to solve the problems.
- Teaching is not outstanding because not all teachers consistently follow the school policy for marking pupils' work, so, on occasion, pupils get a false understanding of how well they are achieving or what they can do next to achieve more highly. As a result, pupils in some year group do not achieve as well as they could in reading, writing or mathematics.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well because of the overall good teaching throughout school.
- From starting points typical for their age, children make strong progress, with many who are now entering Year 1 at a good level of development, well prepared for the next stage in their education. Through Year 1 to Year 6, pupils continue to make good progress in their learning; this is reflected in the latest school data.
- Achievement is not outstanding because, in some year groups, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. This is because checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning have not been rigorously carried out by senior and subject leaders. Consequently, work in pupils' books shows that some pupils have not achieved as well as they could.
- Pupils' progress in 2014 was stronger in mathematics than in reading and writing by the end of Year 6. The differences between the progress pupils made in reading and writing and mathematics in 2014 has been addressed well by the school and the proportion of pupils whose work shows that they are on track to attain Level 4 and Level 5 at the end of Year 6 has improved from 2014, because of the successful focus of school leaders on providing additional tuition as required.
- In 2014, there was a very small proportion of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 and it is not possible to make a reliable comparison with the attainment and progress of other pupils in school, or nationally.
- The latest school data show there are no disadvantaged pupils in the current Year 6 class. The very small proportion of disadvantaged pupils in other classes in the school make the same good progress as their classmates.
- The most able pupils achieve well. In 2014 at the end of Year 2, the most-able pupils attained above average standards in reading and writing and well above average standards in mathematics. Similarly, at the end of Year 6, the most able pupils attained well above average standards in mathematics and above average standards in reading and writing. Challenging lessons such as in philosophy and problem solving enable the most able pupils to extend their critical thinking and increase their mastery of, for example, mathematics.
- Those pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The latest school data show that they are making good progress in their learning because their needs are met thoroughly by the skilled team of teaching assistants.

Early years provision**is good**

- Early years provision is effective. From starting school with knowledge and skills typical for their age, children make good gains in their learning and development because of effective teaching. They are supported well in their learning in the bright and stimulating indoors early years classroom.
- In 2014, around three quarters of children left Reception well prepared for the next stage of their education in Year 1. This year, leaders are confident that the majority of children will reach a good level of development at the end of Reception, based on their current progress towards achieving their learning goals.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Children participate excitedly in a wide range of adult-led and child-directed learning, which promotes their strong development effectively. For instance, a group of children who investigated the effect of crayon, when painted over, were encouraged by the teaching assistant to persevere when their investigation did not produce an outcome. They are able to sustain concentration and are praised for their successes.
- Adults have high expectations of the children. The highest standards of behaviour are insisted upon and children respond promptly to adult instructions. The indoor and outdoor learning areas are safe for children to explore as part of their learning.
- Early years staff make effective use of the early years indoor and outdoor classrooms. The school has clear plans in place to improve the outdoor provision so that children can further improve their investigative and exploratory skills.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding. Children confidently share, work and play happily and co-operatively together. They are extremely keen to learn and are proud to show off their work, for instance, through showing an inspector the silhouette puppets they made and using them to share a story with their friends.
- Staff ensure that children's safety is given the highest priority. They keep the early years resources and grounds extremely safe and teach children how to avoid risk.
- The early years is led well. There is a strong sense of adults working together to ensure the best possible outcomes for all children. Adults are in constant communication with parents. Children's work is taken home for parents to see. The early years staff hold workshops, such as in reading, to help parents support their children's learning.
- Adults communicate with parents regularly through an 'open-door' policy at the beginning and end of the school day. Furthermore, the very strong links with the pre-school ensure that children settle quickly when they begin school.

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	105034
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	461589

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	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Leaver
Headteacher	Mark Whitehill
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2011
Telephone number	0151 342 3772
Fax number	0151 342 8124
Email address	schooloffice@gayton.wirral.sch.uk

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