

Lister Junior School

Green Lane, Liverpool, Merseyside L13 7DT

Inspection dates 10–11 March 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and other senior leaders have been successful in bringing about significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, and in outcomes for pupils since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is now good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they very effectively help pupils to overcome any misconceptions that they may have.
- By the time pupils leave Year 6, the standards that they reach are typically well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. This is because pupils make consistently good progress from their different starting points.
- The school's work to improve attendance is having an increasing impact, and the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is decreasing.
- Pupils are happy and they behave well. They feel safe and well cared for. Most of the parents spoken to, and the very large majority responding to Parent View and the school's own questionnaires, agree.
- Pupils work hard and display positive attitudes to learning because lessons are well planned and engaging.
- Senior leaders' work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and knowledge of British values is good. As a result, pupils show each other respect and appreciate values such as tolerance and respect.
- Governors know the school well and are providing an effective balance of support and challenge to school leaders in order to secure further improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing are not as high as in reading and mathematics because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills at greater length or in a range of subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils' spelling is not as accurate as their use of grammar and punctuation because the teaching of spelling is not consistently effective.
- Leaders, including governors, are unable to check accurately on the impact of their actions, because improvement plans lack precise measures of success.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that improvement plans can be effectively monitored and reviewed, in order that leaders at all levels can more accurately check on the impact of their work.
- Improve outcomes for pupils in writing, so that more pupils make better than the expected amount of progress, by:
 - ensuring that teachers give pupils more opportunities to write at length and across a range of subjects
 - ensuring that spelling is taught systematically and consistently throughout the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors used the outcomes of the previous inspection to clearly establish a direction for the school, and as a result of their actions the school has improved significantly. Leaders have been successful in improving the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, and this has led to a rise in pupils' attainment and rates of progress.
- Senior leaders responsible for English and mathematics play a key role in improving the quality of teaching and learning. They do this by making regular checks on the quality of work in pupils' books and monitoring the progress that all groups of pupils are making throughout the year. As a result, they have a clear and accurate view of both strengths and areas for improvement in their subjects.
- The systems to check on teachers' performance are followed rigorously. Challenging targets are set for staff that are linked to whole-school priorities and pupils' progress. Staff appreciate the opportunities that they have to develop their practice through access to a good range of professional development opportunities.
- While leaders' views of the school's strengths and weaknesses are accurate, plans for improvement do not contain clear and measurable targets that would enable their impact to be more accurately assessed. As a result, there is a lack of clarity over which initiatives within the school are having the most positive impact and could be used to further accelerate improvement.
- Through improvements in teaching, almost all pupils are making the progress they should, and in mathematics and reading the number of pupils making better than the expected amount of progress is above average. Leaders have successfully made changes to previous practice that have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils. For example, the school's approach to teaching phonics was completely reviewed following the last inspection, and strategies now in place are ensuring that younger pupils use phonics more confidently in both their reading and writing.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to provide additional help and support. Additional staff provide well-targeted support for pupils who need it, so they catch up with their classmates. Initiatives such as the 'Rainbow Group' ensure that the school provides a calm and nurturing environment to support vulnerable pupils' learning. This is typical of the school's clear and effective commitment to providing all pupils with equal opportunities to succeed.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of interesting learning opportunities, which are enhanced by visitors coming into school and various educational trips, including residential visits for the older pupils. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities on offer, including sport and art, which provide pupils with further opportunities to develop new skills.
- Provision for pupils' social, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The school teaches pupils effectively about fundamental British values such as democracy, and pupils can talk about the methods of choosing their own school councillors through a process of hustings and an election.
- Leaders make good use of the additional physical education (PE) and sports funding. Pupils' levels of participation have increased as a result of the wide range of activities on offer both within and after school. Pupils say that they enjoy trying out different sports, such as 'ultimate frisbee'. The school has a significant tradition of sporting success, and pupils enjoy representing the school in competitions with other schools.
- The very large majority of parents who spoke to inspectors were very supportive of the school and the improvements that they had seen. This view was echoed by most of the responses to the online Parent View survey, and the school's own survey of parents. Parents were particularly happy with the progress their children were making and the quality of information they received from the school. One parent's comment, 'I feel I know just what my child is doing well at and what needs improvement', was typical of the views of many other parents.
- Since the last inspection, the local authority has supported the school effectively. The level of support is now much reduced because the local authority recognises the improvements that have been made across the school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The quality of governance is good. Changes to the way that governing body meetings are organised have helped to ensure that governors are now more effectively involved in checking on how well the school is performing and holding senior leaders to account.

- Governors know that the quality of teaching has improved and that outcomes for pupils are now good because they regularly come into school to find out for themselves. They ensure that teachers’ pay progression is closely linked to their targets and that consistently good teaching is rewarded.
- Governors check the use of pupil premium funding and know that this is effective because disadvantaged pupils achieve well in comparison with other pupils nationally, while the number of disadvantaged pupils who are regularly absent from school is falling.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that all necessary policies and procedures are in place, and that staff and governors receive regular training to ensure that their knowledge of safeguarding issues is up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. It has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants have benefited from well-planned professional development opportunities that have helped them to develop their subject knowledge.
- Good relationships exist between staff and pupils. Teachers have high expectations and encourage pupils to challenge themselves. They skilfully ask questions to check how well pupils are doing and provide good support to tackle any misconceptions that pupils may have.
- Teachers know their pupils well and so ensure that the work that they set is well matched to the next steps in pupils’ learning that they have identified. Resources are used effectively to engage pupils’ interest and support their learning.
- Reading is improving as a result of effective teaching, and from improvements to the school’s approach to teaching phonics (letters and the sounds that they make). As a result, younger pupils are becoming increasingly confident at tackling unfamiliar words and phrases while older pupils are developing a real enjoyment of books and love of reading. Pupils are challenged to read regularly at home, which the large majority of pupils now do.
- The teaching of writing is good. Pupils are able to write with increasing effect in a range of different styles, and are using increasingly adventurous word choices and sophisticated sentence construction. Where pupils have produced longer pieces of writing these are of a good quality. However, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to further practise and develop their writing skills by writing at length or within other areas of the curriculum.
- The school correctly identified the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling as an area in need of improvement, and subsequent improvements in teaching have led to a rise in attainment in the grammar, punctuation and spelling tests at the end of Year 6. However, pupils’ spelling is not yet as consistently accurate as their use of grammar and punctuation. Although teachers are making sure that inaccuracies in spelling are corrected, pupils often make similar mistakes again, such as in not recognising that many past tense verbs end in ‘-ed’. This is because the teaching of spelling is not sufficiently structured for pupils to confidently recognise common spelling patterns and use them in their writing.
- In mathematics, teachers ensure that pupils learn new concepts well and benefit from having the opportunity to try them out in the context of solving real-life problems. Teachers use questioning effectively to encourage pupils to explain the reasoning behind their answers, and their secure subject knowledge ensures that they are able to provide clear explanations and support to help move pupils’ learning on.
- All teachers follow the school’s marking and feedback policy, and their marking is positive and constructive. Pupils respond well to the teachers’ advice and say that this helps them to understand how to improve their work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They understand how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet, because this is addressed well through the curriculum. They know about different forms of bullying, including bullying using racist or homophobic language, but say that bullying in school is very rare and any incidents that occur are always quickly dealt with by members of staff.

- The school very effectively celebrates pupils' different cultural and religious heritage, as shown by attractive displays throughout the school. Tolerance and respect for others is promoted through well-planned activities, such as role play activities designed to increase pupils' understanding of the challenges faced by refugees.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. The school is working hard to promote and encourage good attendance, and the number of pupils who miss school regularly is reducing.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is reflected in their conduct around school and on the playground, where they play and get on well together. Pupils display good manners, speaking politely to adults and holding doors open for visitors.
- Pupils say that behaviour in school is good, and that instances of poor behaviour are unusual. They are confident that their teachers will deal with any problems that do occur. One pupil summed up the views of many of her classmates in saying that 'Every time you need a teacher they are always there for you.'
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour well. All staff are familiar with the behaviour policy and pupils fully understand the school's system of rewards and sanctions.
- Pupils show good attitudes to learning and were keen to speak to inspectors about the work that they were doing. They are clearly proud of their school, and this could be seen in the way in which they take on roles with responsibility and take care of their school environment.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Outcomes for pupils are good. By the end of Key Stage 2, outcomes in reading and mathematics are significantly above average, and in writing they are typically above average compared with other schools nationally. More-able pupils produce work of a high standard as a result of teachers' high expectations and effective teaching. As a result, by the time they leave Year 6 pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The proportion of pupils making at least the expected amount of progress is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading and mathematics the proportions of pupils making more than the expected amount of progress are also above average, while in writing the proportion is in line with the average figure nationally.
- This good progress and attainment is matched by pupils currently in the school. The very large majority of pupils read accurately, show good mathematical skills that they can use to solve real-life problems and are able to write to good effect in a number of different styles, although their spelling is not as consistently accurate as their use of grammar and punctuation.
- The school's new assessment system carefully monitors pupils' progress towards the expectations for the end of each year group, and teachers and leaders use this information to plan different activities for pupils and support any in danger of falling behind their peers.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress and any gaps between their achievement and that of other pupils in the school are closing. Their attainment is in line with other pupils nationally in both reading and mathematics, but is one term behind that of other pupils in writing.
- Those pupils with disability or with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress from their individual starting points. This is because their progress and attainment are carefully monitored by the special educational needs coordinator, who ensures that this leads to additional provision being in place to support their learning where needed.

School details

Unique reference number	104554
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10002226

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Butler
Headteacher	Simon King
Telephone number	0151 228 4196
Website	www.thelifecloud.net/schools/ListerJuniorSchool
Email address	listerdrivej-ao@listerdrive-jun.liverpool.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 November 2013

Information about this school

- Lister Junior School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils with disability and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school shares the site with Lister Infant School, which is inspected separately.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised.
- Informal meetings were held with parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors took account of a small number of responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the school's own parent questionnaire.
- Inspectors met with a small group of governors. Meetings were also held with school leaders responsible for English and mathematics and those responsible for provision for pupils with disability and those with special educational needs.
- A meeting took place with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' progress, the school's reviews of its own performance and checks on the quality of teaching, development plans, safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

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