

# Mendell Primary School

Allport Lane, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside CH62 7HN

## Inspection dates

8–9 November 2016

| Overall effectiveness                        | Requires improvement        |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Good</b>                 |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b>                 |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Though some improvements have been secured, leaders and governors have not ensured that the quality of teaching and pupils' progress have improved to be consistently good.
- Pupils' progress is not consistently good throughout the school. Progress is slower in key stage 1 than in key stage 2.
- The quality of teaching is variable. At times, activities provided are not closely matched to pupils' abilities and skills, with the result that progress slows.
- On occasion, teachers' expectations for pupils' learning are not high enough and activities lack challenge for the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.
- Several middle leaders are new to their roles, and as such middle leadership is not yet established.
- Some teachers do not follow the school's marking and feedback policy consistently. This means that pupils are not routinely clear about their next steps in learning.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching do not consistently focus closely on the progress of pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- The acting headteacher has a clear vision and commitment to improvement.
- Pupils behave well around school and in lessons. Pupils are proud of their school and feel safe.
- Children get off to a good start in early years. They make good progress from their starting points.
- Governance has improved and now provides a good level of support and challenge to leaders.

## Full report

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

- Improve leadership and management by:
  - developing the roles of middle leaders to play a full part in improving the quality of teaching and outcomes
  - ensuring that the monitoring of teaching has a clearer focus on the progress that pupils make
  - ensuring that the school's marking and feedback policy is consistently implemented.
- Improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils, particularly in key stage 1, by:
  - ensuring that expectations for learning for the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are sufficiently high
  - making sure that teachers use their knowledge of what pupils know and can do to provide activities which are closely matched to pupils' different needs and abilities.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced a number changes to staff and leadership. This has hindered the speed and consistency of improvement. For example, there have been improvements to pupils' progress in writing, but progress in mathematics in 2016 showed a decline. The quality of teaching and outcomes, while improving, are still not consistently good.
- Due to changes in staffing and leadership, many middle leaders are new to their roles. They have an accurate view of the priorities for improving the school and are keen to bring about improvement. However, it is too early to see the impact of their work.
- The senior leaders have clear arrangements in place to ensure that the quality of teaching is monitored. This is leading to improvements in teaching. At times, observations of teaching lack a clear focus on the progress that pupils are making so that points for development do not as clearly identify how this can be improved.
- Staff value the training they receive, which has a positive effect on the quality of their teaching and pupils' learning. Staff training in the teaching of writing has led to improvements in pupils' progress and attainment. Recent staff training in the teaching of mathematics is beginning to impact on improving progress, particularly in key stage 2.
- The acting headteacher has an accurate understanding of the school's performance, and clear plans are in place to address inconsistencies in pupils' progress and attainment. Staff morale is high and staff recognise the higher expectation and direction provided, which is helping to improve their practice.
- Leaders have recently introduced a robust system for checking the progress and attainment of pupils in each year group. They regularly check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, giving appropriate challenge and support where the standard of teaching falls below expectations. Consequently, inconsistencies are being addressed and, although at an early stage, the evidence in pupils' books shows that they are making better progress as a result.
- Leaders have developed the curriculum to ensure that it is more closely related to pupils' interests. As a result, pupils are generally well engaged in their learning and progress is improving. Pupils learn from studying a broad range of subjects, including extra-curricular activities such as drama, art, cookery and multi-sports. The mathematics curriculum has been recently adapted as leaders realised that it was not promoting good progress, particularly in problem-solving. This is improving progress in mathematics, which is stronger in key stage 2 than key stage 1.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through assemblies, and through a whole-school focus on issues such as respect and fairness. Pupils learn about other faiths and beliefs and show a growing understanding of the importance of respect for others.
- Leaders ensure that the physical education and sports premium funding is used well. Specialist sports coaches provide support to staff, and provide a wide range of after-school sports clubs. As a result, participation in these clubs has risen.

- Leaders have made effective use of the pupils' premium spending to provide specialist teaching support to pupils, and to fund extra-curricular activities and trips. As a result, differences in achievement have diminished with other pupils nationally, particularly in key stage 2.
- The additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used appropriately to ensure that pupils receive support to meet their needs. The work of the recently appointed special educational needs coordinator is beginning to have an impact on improving outcomes for this group.
- Parents speak positively of the school. Most of those who spoke with inspectors or responded to Parent View or by text to Ofsted reported that their children are safe and happy, and that they felt well informed about their children's progress.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are ambitious for the school. They have taken steps to improve their effectiveness since the previous inspection. They are rigorous in their scrutiny of school information, and provide a good level of support and challenge to leaders.
- Governors have clear and accurate view of the quality of teaching in the school. They know the procedures for staff appraisal and ensure that pay awards are only given where staff targets are met.
- Governors keep a close eye on school performance and are quick to ask questions where there is evidence of slower progress or decline. They have an accurate understanding of the school's areas for improvement.
- The governing body ensures that the school meets the requirements for safeguarding.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have established a culture where staff work well together to promote pupil's safety and welfare. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child. They receive training, which is regularly updated to ensure that they have a good awareness of how to keep pupils safe.
- Clear communication between outside agencies, parents and staff ensure that children are kept safe.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good throughout the school. Since the previous inspection, the teaching of writing has improved. The teaching of mathematics has not been as effective but is now showing improvement.
- Where learning is slower, activities are not well matched to the needs and abilities of pupils. This means that, at times, work is too hard or too easy for pupils, or does not build on what they already know and can do. For example, some pupils in key stage 1 were unable to complete their mathematical problem-solving tasks, as they were not secure in the skills they needed to apply to solve the problem. At these times, pupils' progress slows.
- At times, staff's expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve are not high

enough. Activities do not provide enough challenge, and on these occasions, the most able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

- Staff establish positive relationships with pupils, which helps to promote good attitudes to learning and enhances progress.
- Most teachers follow the school's marking and feedback policy well, and as a result pupils are clear about their next steps in learning. Pupils learn to reflect on their own progress and how it could be improved. However, in some classes the policy is not followed as well, resulting in some pupils being unclear about how to improve their learning.
- The teaching of mathematics is now improving as a result of staff training to further develop their skills. As a result, pupils' progress is improving, particularly in key stage 2.
- The teaching of writing provides a range of opportunities for pupils to write and develop skills. This has improved since the last inspection and continues to improve, but is not yet consistently good throughout the school.
- Pupils' reading skills are generally well taught. The teaching of phonics has become more systematic. Pupils in key stage 1 respond well to the daily sessions to improve their knowledge of letter sounds. They use this knowledge to read unfamiliar words.
- The school recognises that pupils' love of reading is less well developed and are taking steps to address this. The introduction of a broader range of books in key stage 1 is helping to develop pupils' enthusiasm for reading and understanding of books.
- Parents and pupils say that homework is used effectively to help them learn.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils respond well to the school's work to promote a culture of respect. Pupils have positive relationships with each other, and show respectful attitudes toward those who may be different from them.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy their responsibilities as school council, eco group and rights-respecting group members. Older pupils report that they are learning to be playground buddies, helping younger pupils to be happy and occupied at breaktimes.
- Pupils have a good awareness of safety, including how to stay safe online. They are familiar with the different types of bullying and say that the instances of bullying are rare. They are confident that staff will deal with any issues or concerns.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and behave well both in lessons and around the school.
- Staff effectively manage the behaviour of pupils who find managing their own behaviour difficult. These pupils show good progress in their behaviour over time.

- On occasion, where teaching does not effectively meet their needs, pupils' attention wavers, they become distracted and some low-level disruption occurs.
- Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. Few pupils are persistently absent. The school's recent attempts to improve punctuality are paying dividends. Pupils are enthusiastic to be at school on time in response to the school's reward system for consistent punctuality.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- In recent years, outcomes for pupils have been variable. Pupils do not yet make consistently good progress across a range of subjects. Progress is improving, but is weaker in key stage 1 than in the rest of the school.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable. Not enough pupils reach the higher scores of attainment at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- At the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment has been significantly lower than the national average for several years. Although not directly comparable, the provisional 2016 results show that pupils in key stage 1 attained below average scores. This does not represent good progress from their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. Some pupils are therefore not well prepared for the transition to key stage 2.
- In key stage 2, national information in 2015 indicated that pupils made good progress in reading and mathematics, but weaker progress in writing. They reached broadly average standards by the end of key stage 2.
- The provisional 2016 information shows that in key stage 2 pupils made significantly less progress than other pupils nationally in mathematics. Progress in writing and reading was similar to that of other pupils nationally.
- The school acted swiftly last term to address the weaker progress in mathematics. Work in pupils' books and school information indicates that progress is improving in mathematics, but is not yet consistently good. Progress in reading and writing is good in some year groups, but this is not consistent across the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils often make better progress than other pupils nationally, particularly in key stage 2. As a result, differences between the attainment of these pupils and others are diminishing. However, these differences are not diminishing as quickly in key stage 1.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive a positive level of support. Systems for monitoring pupils' progress and the provision of support have improved since the appointment of a new special educational needs coordinator. As a result, the weaker progress made by these pupils in writing in 2016 is being addressed and progress overall is accelerating.

### Early years provision

### Good

- Children join the school Nursery and Reception classes with varying levels of skills and abilities. As a result of good teaching, they make good progress. The majority attain a

good level of development by the end of their time in Reception class and are well prepared for Year 1.

- Children thrive in the stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments provided. They show interest and enthusiasm as they write shopping lists in the role play area, and make marks as they design a vehicle.
- Children show independence and increasing concentration as they choose their own activities and engage well. Children develop a love of reading, as they enjoy sharing books together in the outdoor tent. They show an understanding of, and interest in, word recognition, calling to staff that they have found a 'tricky word' in one of the books.
- Staff provide a broad range of activities which relate to children's interests and develop their learning well. They question children effectively to promote mathematical learning, for example encouraging them to identify the longest and shortest toy snakes, and questioning them to think what comes after 3, or what is 'one more'.
- Staff establish positive, warm relationship with children. As a result, children grow in confidence and self-esteem. When learning to balance on plastic cups, they persevere well, telling staff, 'I'm doing it' when they succeed.
- The leadership of early years has changed recently. The acting headteacher and new early years leader have a good understanding of the provision and plans for further improvement.
- Children's behaviour shows that they feel safe in school. They are familiar with routines and access use resources and equipment safely.
- Parents are actively engaged in their children's learning. They contribute to assessments and are encouraged to share their views and to develop their children's learning at home. This has a positive impact on children's good progress.

## School details

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 105017   |
| Local authority         | Wirral   |
| Inspection number       | 10019791 |

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

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of school                      | Primary  |
| School category                     | Maintained   |
| Age range of pupils                 | 3 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 168  |
| Appropriate authority               | The governing body   |
| Chair                               | Mr Barry Dawson  |
| Acting Headteacher                  | Emily Morris   |
| Telephone number                    | 01513 341432   |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.mendell.wirral.sch.uk">www.mendell.wirral.sch.uk</a>                   |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:schooloffice@mendell.wirral.sch.uk">schooloffice@mendell.wirral.sch.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | 5–6 November 2014  |

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a smaller than average primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils who have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans is below the national average.
- In 2015, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The acting headteacher, who was previously the deputy headteacher, took up post in October 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning throughout the school. Two observations were carried out jointly with the acting headteacher. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the chair of the governing body and three other governors, the acting headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors also held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information produced by the school, including information on pupils' progress and attainment, behaviour and attendance, procedures for safeguarding and the school's own evaluation of its work. They considered reports to the governing body, minutes of their meetings and the school's plans for further improvement.
- Inspectors considered the 35 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 36 parents who expressed their views via text message to Ofsted.
- Inspectors also took account of the 12 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire to consider.

## Inspection team

Elaine White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Cole Andrew

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2016