

The Grange Primary School

Stonyfield, Sefton, Bootle, Merseyside L30 0QS

Inspection dates

10–11 January 2018

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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. He is supported by effective senior leaders, highly knowledgeable governors and staff at every level. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work.
- Pupils feel very safe. The quality of care and support for all pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, is one of the strengths of the school.
- Staff are dedicated and conscientious. They are committed to improving their practice. Consequently, teaching is consistently good.
- Pupils in all classes make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Some make rapid progress from their starting points.
- Attendance for some pupils is improving, but remains below that of other pupils nationally.
- Actions to overcome a recent dip in reading standards across the school are beginning to prove successful.
- Improved progress is leading to diminishing differences in standards reached by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils elsewhere. However, there is more to do.
- Pupils supported by the school's specialist resource provision achieve well in their work. They also make the same great strides in their personal development that other pupils do.
- The Grange is a happy and harmonious school. Pupils behave well and make a positive contribution to all aspects of school life.
- The curriculum is lively and interesting. Pupils enjoy the wide range of topics that they study.
- Subject leaders play an active role in checking progress. They provide effective guidance for colleagues in the subjects they lead.
- Early years classes provide a nurturing and happy environment, where children make a good start to their education.
- Governors review the work of the school carefully. They hold leaders fully to account for all aspects of the school's work.
- At times, tasks provided in the mainstream classes, particularly in topic work, do not meet the learning needs of pupils working at levels below those expected for their age.
- Sometimes, progress slows when teachers do not move learning on quickly enough once concepts have been grasped.
- Children in the early years sometimes need more help from adults to make the best of the activities provided.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching, learning and assessment in order to improve progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers move learning on quickly once concepts have been grasped
 - adults in the early years consistently challenge children during independent play activities
 - work set in mainstream classes, particularly for pupils working on skills below levels set for their age, is well matched to their needs
 - gaps in learning between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally continue to diminish
 - teachers further embed the changes to improve pupils' reading skills.
- Further improve the attendance of the few pupils who do not attend school regularly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- All staff and governors have high aspirations for pupils at the Grange. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders and skilled governors, provides strong and determined leadership for the school. Since the previous inspection, they have collectively improved teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, pupils make at least good progress, and their personal development and welfare are outstanding.
- Staff morale is high because staff feel valued and supported. All members of staff apply the school's values and approaches consistently for the benefit of all pupils. The school is very well placed to continue to improve.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and helps inform priorities and plans for improvement. Senior leaders regularly and robustly check the quality of teaching. As a result, any weaknesses are quickly identified and tackled swiftly. Leaders know that there are some aspects of teaching that continue to need attention.
- Middle and subject leaders carry out regular checks on teaching and learning in the subjects or areas for which they have responsibility. Regular, high-quality training is provided. This has helped to improve teachers' subject knowledge and secure consistency across the school. For example, leaders at all levels are confident that the ongoing improvements in the teaching of reading are sustainable.
- Teacher assessments of pupil outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are rigorously checked to assure their accuracy. The school's tracking system provides increasingly precise information about pupil outcomes in these and other subjects. Senior leaders use this assessment information in their termly discussions with teachers about pupils' progress. Underperformance is identified, and additional support is put into place to bring pupils at risk of falling behind back on track.
- The assistant headteacher responsible for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities provides effective leadership for SEN provision in the mainstream classes and in the resource-based provision (ARIBs). The funding provided by the government to meet the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used effectively. Additional support provided for pupils is monitored regularly by school leaders and governors. Reviews with pupils, parents and professionals are based firmly around the needs of individuals.
- The curriculum is well planned. Subjects inspire pupils and offer them rich experiences that enhance academic progress and promote personal development. As well as focusing on reading, writing and mathematics, school leaders have ensured that pupils' learning in other subjects, including science and geography, has improved. Leaders know, however, that at times tasks set in topic-based subjects do not always match the learning needs of pupils working below the levels set for their age, and progress can slow as a result.
- Specialist teachers provide regular sessions in music and Spanish. The curriculum is further enriched by a good range of lunchtime and after-school clubs.

- The range of opportunities and experiences provided for pupils promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. New pupils, including those supported by the ARIBs, are welcomed into the school. Discrimination of any type is not tolerated. Pupils' understanding of different cultures and faiths is developed well. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively. Senior leaders and governors keep a careful check on the impact of this funding on disadvantaged pupils' academic and personal development. Pupils are encouraged to participate in all the school has to offer, such as after-school clubs and residential visits. Additional support is provided to help improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and attendance. As a result, attendance is improving and attainment gaps are diminishing, but there is more to do.
- The sports funding for primary schools is used successfully to promote pupils' well-being. Pupils understand the importance of keeping active and making healthy choices when they eat. The funding provides pupils with the opportunity to participate in a wide range of sports. The school is particularly proud of its success in many local competitions, including those for football, basketball and athletics.
- Leaders take seriously the need for good attendance and devote considerable school resources, including the time and effort of staff and leaders, to this issue. Absences are followed up rigorously. However, the proportion of pupils who find it difficult to attend school regularly is still much higher than that of most other schools. The school is highly inclusive and leaders are determined to ensure that all pupils attend regularly and make the best possible progress, given their abilities and starting points.
- Almost all parents are overwhelmingly positive about the care provided for their children and the education they receive.

Governance of the school

- The experienced chair of governors provides strong leadership of the governing body. Governors ensure, through regular training, that they keep their knowledge and skills up to date.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They gain regular first-hand views of the school's performance through focused visits to experience and observe school life.
- Governors ask probing questions about all aspects of the school's performance. This includes the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. They regularly review attendance and spending of additional funding like the pupil premium grant. Governors are aware that more work is needed to enable disadvantaged pupils to reach similar standards to those of other pupils nationally.
- Performance management of staff is rigorous. It is underpinned by targeted support and training.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Rigorous systems ensure that staff and volunteers are suitable people to work with children. Visitors to the school are checked thoroughly and made aware of the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Safeguarding training for staff and governors is comprehensive and up to date. Staff are vigilant about keeping children safe. They have a good understanding of what to do if they have concerns about a child's safety.
- There are effective systems to protect pupils at risk from harm. These include close links with social services and other professional agencies. Risk assessments, including those for school visits, are thorough and reflect clear attention to detail to maintain children's safety.
- The deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) provide effective leadership of safeguarding arrangements in the school. Absences are followed up quickly and rigorously to ensure pupils' safety. The school provides a range of information through its website to help parents keep their children safe online and to reinforce the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality.
- Detailed records of behaviour incidents, including any bullying, racist or prejudice-based behaviour are kept. Exclusions are infrequent and are managed in accordance with the school's behaviour policy. This diligence in adhering to school policies ensures that the focus on safeguarding is always a priority for the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders' clear focus on continuing to improve the quality of teaching is proving successful. Teaching, learning and assessment are typically good. This enables pupils to make good progress across the school.
- A common strength in all lessons is the strong teamwork of teachers and teaching assistants. This helps to create and sustain calm, purposeful learning environments that promote high expectations of behaviour. Support staff are well trained. Their effective deployment in the ARIBs and mainstream classes means that pupils work in ways that meet their particular academic and personal needs well.
- Pupils learn well when work is set at the right level to meet their needs. Throughout the school, teachers use their understanding of how well pupils are doing to provide activities that allow good progress to be made in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Reading is a key priority for the school. Teachers ensure that a warm, welcoming learning environment, with a high profile on reading, exists throughout the school. Pupils appreciate the range of books provided for them in class and in the popular and well-used 'rocket room' library. Many are developing a real love for books and read widely, regularly and with enjoyment. The increased focus on teaching reading in a systematic way is leading to rising standards, but progress is not as rapid as that in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers systematically develop pupils' writing and spelling, grammar and punctuation skills well. All teachers and teaching assistants take every opportunity to widen pupils'

vocabulary. Pupils' written work shows how much they enjoy weaving the new words they have learned into their writing.

- Basic mathematical skills are taught effectively. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Tasks challenge pupils to reason and apply their understanding of basic skills when solving problems. In the mainstream Year 6 class, for example, pupils demonstrated great resilience as they tackled new work about sequences.
- Well-planned lessons make meaningful links between subjects and carefully build on what pupils already know and can do. Teachers question pupils carefully and skilfully use their good subject knowledge to check for misconceptions. They provide careful explanations to improve pupils' understanding. On occasions, however, progress can sometimes slow, for example, when pupils who have grasped the concepts being taught have to wait for others to catch up before teachers move learning on. At times, progress also slows when topic work activities set for pupils working below the level expected for their age are too difficult or not explained well enough.
- Sports funding has been used to employ specialist coaching to develop pupils' skills and increase teachers' expertise in this area. Teaching and learning in physical education lessons are of high quality and have led to greater participation in a wider range of school clubs and competitive sports. In several lessons that took place during the inspection, pupils of all ages sensibly took up well-practised yoga positions that allowed them the opportunity to relax, following very active physical education (PE) lessons.
- Pupils supported by the ARIBs provision benefit hugely from learning sessions carefully tailored to meet their individual needs. Early years and key stage 1 pupils, for example, worked together happily, as they carefully rolled out their gingerbread men dough.
- Much of the additional funding received by the school, including the pupil premium grant, is used to provide well-planned extra adult support for disadvantaged pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' personal and emotional development is very well supported because adults know pupils so well. As a result, staff promptly identify and secure additional support for pupils, drawing on the well-established partnerships with appropriate external agencies, when necessary.
- Pupils reported that bullying does not happen often and they trust the adults to swiftly deal with any issues that do occur.
- Pupils play a full role in the life of the school. The elected school councillors participate in the decision-making process and consider their opinions are valued. The eco-committee is proactive in helping fellow pupils understand the importance of caring for the environment. Year 6 pupils take their role as buddies for younger children seriously. Pupils are committed fundraisers. The 'Santa dash' held in the autumn term, for example, was greatly enjoyed by all and contributed to the school's fundraising for charity.

- Pupils learn how to achieve a healthy lifestyle. They understand the benefits of making healthy food choices and the positive impact of exercise. Many participate in the activities provided at lunchtime, in which they are helped by 'playground pals', who make sure that all who wish to be included are. PE lessons are very active sessions in which pupils work hard.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe and avoid risks both in school and in the local community. Older pupils who act as digital leaders, for example, play an important role in helping other pupils understand how to use the internet and mobile technology safely. The school helps pupils think of ways of managing risks they may face beyond the school gate. They learn about harmful substances like drugs and tobacco and the dangers of radicalisation. Recently, local police officers visited the school to explain the dangers that can be caused by scrambler bikes.
- Developing independence and encouraging pupils to be aspirational are an important part of the school's work. Pupils set termly 'golden goals', which are displayed on the 'going for gold tree' in the assembly hall.
- After-school and lunchtime clubs are plentiful and well attended. The school participates in the Children's University programme, which builds aspirations and self-esteem. The annual graduation ceremony is held at Edge Hill University.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils show great respect for each other and the adults who care for them. This makes a strong contribution towards this happy, warm and welcoming school community.
- Pupils are proud of their school. Many commented on how much they enjoy the way their lessons are arranged into topics and they display positive attitudes to their work. They particularly like practical lessons such as science and design technology in which they can plan what they are going to do and then make it happen.
- Pupils said that they feel safe and know there is always an adult ready to listen to them. Pupils in mainstream classes and those supported in the ARIBs get on well together as they move around the corridors in a sensible way. Pupils of different ages play well together on the two well-equipped playgrounds.
- Pupils think that behaviour is good around the school. Most respond well to the high expectations for behaviour set by the staff. School records show that any incidents of low-level misbehaviour are tackled promptly and robustly, and parents are kept informed. The number of incidents has reduced over time.
- School rules are clear and understood by all. Pupils said that adults apply sanctions and use the reward system fairly. A few pupils need help from adults to manage their behaviour. This is done sensitively and in a caring and extremely professional manner.
- The breakfast club gets the day off to a good start. Pupils of different ages chat and play happily together while others take the opportunity to complete their homework.
- Attendance is close to average and continues to improve due to the concerted efforts of pupils, parents and staff. However, the low attendance of a small minority of pupils has a noticeable impact on the school's attendance figures overall and the progress of

the pupils concerned. The work of the family liaison officer is paying dividends. The 'walking bus', for example, has helped more pupils arrive each day and on time.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced some variability in pupils' progress. However, in recent years, due to stronger leadership and better use of assessment, progress has improved consistently. Across the school, pupils now make at least good progress from their starting points, given their individual needs.
- Published outcomes appear low as a quarter of the pupils taking end of key stage 2 national assessments are taught in the ARIBs for pupils who have various complex learning difficulties. Results for pupils taught in mainstream classes, when separated out, are average in writing and mathematics and spelling, grammar and punctuation. However, the proportion reaching the expected outcome in reading dipped to below average in 2017.
- In the key stage 1 mainstream classes, the proportion of pupils reaching the standards expected for their age are similar to the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- The school's tracking system and the quality of pupils' work show that most pupils currently in the school make at least good progress in all subjects. Progress in writing and mathematics is currently stronger than that in reading. However, due to the well-focused actions taken by leaders, progress in reading continues to improve, but there is more to do.
- The school's strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity ensures that all pupils achieve well. This is especially evident in the progress made by pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including pupils attending the ARIBs. Those able to reach or exceed the levels expected for their age do so. For others who have significant needs, the small progress steps they make demonstrate excellent achievement.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils, including those in the care of the local authority, is tracked very closely. As for other pupils in the school, leaders set individual targets for reading, writing and mathematics and understand precisely how well these pupils are doing. Disadvantaged pupils make at least good progress from their starting points. This group made faster progress than other pupils in the school in 2017. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, continues to improve. However, some gaps remain between this group and other pupils nationally but are diminishing as a result of the increased progress rates.
- The proportion of pupils in the mainstream classes reaching the national standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is broadly average.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children start Nursery with knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. Communication and language skills, self-help and social development are particularly

low for the majority of children when they enter the school. An above-average proportion of children have SEN and/or disabilities when they start school.

- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has improved significantly since the previous inspection but remains slightly below the national average. However, this represents good progress for all pupils from their starting points and given their individual needs. The majority of children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Differences between the achievement of disadvantaged children and that of others in the school are still too wide but are beginning to diminish due to targeted support for individuals in this group.
- Leadership of the early years is good. Children's needs are quickly identified when they join the Nursery or Reception classes. A close eye is kept on how well children are doing, and extra support is provided for those children whose progress may be slowing. A strong and effective early years team is in place. All adults play their part in making sure that children are nurtured and safe.
- Teaching is effective and staff make language development a priority. Children benefit greatly from personalised support, including speech therapy. Adults interact well with children, modelling language and encouraging children to explain what they are doing and communicate with others. However, sometimes adults miss the opportunity to move children's learning on when they learn independently.
- Adults observe children carefully and build on their interests using questions to fire their imagination and curiosity. A child's visit to the opticians sparked children's imagination. In response to the children's interest in this visit, staff provided them with materials to make their own glasses, which they did with great enjoyment and increasing dexterity.
- A clear emphasis is placed on developing children's social skills. During the inspection, Nursery children were helped by adults to work together to build a sturdy house for the 'three little pigs'. Children behaved well and took turns as they worked together.
- Parents commented positively on the care their children receive and how they come to school happily and settle well.
- Welfare requirements are met effectively. Safeguarding has a high profile. All staff are vigilant in ensuring children's health, safety and emotional and physical well-being.

School details

Unique reference number	104859
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10037755

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carole Holt
Headteacher	Daniel Hains
Telephone number	01519 247917
Website	www.thegrangeprimary.com
Email address	admin.grange@schools.sefton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than the average-size primary school. More boys than girls attend the school.
- Children attend the Nursery class part time. Timings of sessions are flexible. There is one Reception class, which the children attend full time. Not all children who attend Nursery gain a place in the over-subscribed Reception class.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. This comprises six small classes (ARIBs) attached to the school for 53 pupils who have complex learning needs including autistic spectrum disorder, speech and language and social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Pupils are educated both within their base and sometimes in the mainstream classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and few pupils speak English as an additional language.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is high, with over half the pupils in this group.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is very high.
- The proportion of pupils in the care of the local authority is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan is very high. Nearly 20% of pupils who attend the school have an EHC plan or statement.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced a number of staffing changes. A number of teachers have left the school due to retirement or promotion. Seven members of the teaching staff have joined the school. Two members of the teaching staff are currently on extended absence due to maternity leave entitlement.
- The school provides a breakfast club for its pupils.
- 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.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. Learning was observed in all classes and in small groups, some jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and talked to them about their work. They listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of reading skills. Pupils talked to inspectors about the books they have enjoyed and those that they are currently reading.
- The inspectors talked with pupils informally as they played at breaktimes, visited the dining hall at lunchtime and observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around school. They met formally with four groups of pupils including two pupils who showed an inspector around school.
- An inspector met with the chair and vice chair of the governing body and three other governors.
- An inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with middle and subject leaders and other members of school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They took account of 15 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, 30 responses to the staff questionnaire, 12 responses to the pupil questionnaire and the school's most recent surveys of pupils' and parents' views.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents, including information about pupils' progress, school improvement plans, information about teachers' performance and external views of the school. They reviewed the contents of the school's website and scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding completed by school staff.

Inspection team

Lyn Pender, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Gill	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Beard	Ofsted Inspector

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