

Poulton Lancelyn Primary School

Venables Drive, Spital, Wirral, CH63 9LY

Inspection dates 14–15 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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 and development.
- In 2014, standards attained by pupils in reading and writing were above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Progress this year in mathematics has improved after a dip in achievement in 2014. This is because of the clear focus of school leaders on ensuring that pupils learn well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in their learning. This is due to the effective support from teaching assistants which is focused well on their achieving as well as other pupils.
- Pupils say there are very few incidents of bullying. Any very occasional occurrences are resolved well when brought to the attention of the adults in school.
- The early years provision is led well. Children make a good start to their learning in school.
- On the playground pupils play nicely together and care well for each other, ensuring that their playmates are enjoying their breaks. Pupils' behaviour is good.
- Pupils are kept safe in school. They report they feel secure in school because staff work hard to care well for them. This view is shared by the majority of parents.
- School leaders and managers have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of school. They share a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further.
- The tenacious headteacher is ably supported by a strong senior leadership team and governing body whose members hold school leaders robustly to account. Together they have improved teaching and achievement well.
- The school continues to improve because of leaders' strongly focused strategic direction and vision for the future.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in mathematics is not as strong as in reading and writing, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- A minority of teachers have insufficiently strong subject knowledge in mathematics to enable pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding sufficiently so as to master their use and application of mathematical skills.
- A few teachers occasionally mark pupils' work in mathematics correct when it is incorrect, giving pupils the impression they are achieving better than they are. Teachers occasionally accept messy work, instead of insisting it is of the highest standard.
- The newly appointed leader of mathematics has not yet had sufficient opportunity to impact fully on improving the teaching of mathematics across the whole school.

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. The lead inspector met with two representatives of the local authority.
- 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 1 and Year 2 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 102 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the nine responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire and two letters from parents.

Inspection team

Declan McCauley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Saeeda Ishaq	Additional Inspector
Pamela Davenport	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well below the national average although a few have particularly complex learning needs.
- 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.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching in mathematics to improve pupils' mathematical achievement further so that it matches or exceeds that in reading and writing throughout the school, by:
 - improving the achievement of groups of pupils, such as those who are disadvantaged
 - accelerating the impact the subject leader has on pupils' achievement
 - rapidly increasing teachers' subject knowledge to help pupils master their use of mathematical skills
 - ensuring that all teachers mark pupils' work incorrect if it is incorrect and expect only the highest standards of presentation from pupils.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers have collectively established an effective climate of high expectation for learning, where pupils can flourish in their education. The headteacher determinedly ensures that pupils are encouraged to learn well in a caring, exciting and stimulating environment.
- Senior leaders support the headteacher well in her quest to ensure that pupils get the best out of their time in school. High standards of behaviour are expected by school leaders and staff at all times, which makes a strong contribution to pupils' good learning.
- Middle leaders with subject responsibilities are generally effective in their role. Teaching has been successfully improved since the previous inspection by school leaders and those with responsibility for subjects such as English. The leadership of literacy in school is particularly strong and has resulted in high levels of attainment in writing.
- Since being appointed in September 2014, the leader of mathematics has put much in place to improve mathematics. School data show that improvements are taking place with a vast improvement in the proportions of pupils predicted to attain Level 4 and Level 5 at the end of Year 6 this year, following a dip in mathematics attainment 2014. It is, however, too early to see the wider impact of the actions taken throughout all other year groups where the quality of teaching remains slightly variable in mathematics.
- The early years team is led effectively, helping children make a good start to their education. The leadership of special educational needs is strong; ensuring that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well, which can be seen in the latest school progress data.
- School data show the small amount of pupil premium given to the school is used well and is improving disadvantaged pupils' progress.
- 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 high quality. Pupils have many opportunities to study exciting and interesting topics which help them to learn well. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were encouraged to select from one of three learning tasks which would challenge them highly. Pupils were then observed excitedly endeavouring to solve the challenges which probed their understanding of mathematical reasoning well.
- The curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. As a rights respecting school, there are a number of charters which promote British values well; pupils are expected to show mutual respect at all times around school and respect the rights of others, both pupils and adults alike. Pupils learn well about important British milestones such as Victory in Europe (VE) Day and the importance of the roles played by the monarchy and members of the royal family in society. These activities help them to understand their cultural roots well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is promoted well throughout the curriculum.
- The school meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils. Arrangements for keeping pupils safe are effective. The school is based on a large site, which is managed well. Staff training in child protection procedures is thorough.
- Support from the local authority is proportionate to the needs of the school.
- 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 offered to pupils. The success of school teams in local competitions has improved well since the additional funding has been made available to the school.
- A small minority of parents expressed concerns during the inspection about the leadership of the headteacher in discussion with an inspector, but the inspection team could find no evidence to support their views.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear overview of school performance and set the strategic direction robustly for the headteacher and senior leaders to navigate. Members of the governing body have a strong knowledge of published data and current school tracking data which show how well pupils are achieving. They use this knowledge well to question the headteacher and subject leaders forensically about how well they are helping pupils to learn.
 - Governors know much about the quality of teaching in school and manage the performance of staff well. Teachers are given performance ratings by the headteacher each half term and general information is then shared with the governing body about improvements which have taken place. Underperformance is not tolerated and good teaching is rewarded well by governors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and respectful towards others around school. Breaks and lunchtimes are orderly and the large number of pupils move around the site well. They ensure that others are safe and enjoying themselves.
- Pupils wear their bright and distinctive uniforms with pride. Many display the same sense of pride in their work in classrooms.
- Pupils' behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning. Attitudes to learning in lessons are strong. Those pupils who have a wide range of complex learning needs are supported well in their learning. Skilled teaching assistants and teachers ensure that pupils do not disrupt the learning of others.
- Pupils have a good 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 of the focus on friendship and respecting the views of others, which underpins the school curriculum.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are taught well about the 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 know what they should do in circumstances when they may be at risk.
- 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 large grounds in the knowledge that they are safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Strong teaching over time enables pupils to achieve well in their learning. Children make good progress in the early years because of effective teaching. As pupils progress through school, high quality teaching challenges them well, helping them to reach high standards, particularly in reading and writing.
- Pupils are encouraged well to try their hardest in lessons which helps them to be successful in their learning. Pupils are enthusiastic to learn and participate well in learning tasks during lessons. One pupil spoke of learning about the different types of sugars in drinks during a science lesson and was able to explain clearly which drinks were healthier and which were unhealthy.
- Pupils' learning is assessed regularly in lessons and they are given increased challenge 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 and writing are taught well, although teaching is occasionally slightly less strong in mathematics.
- Teachers are very knowledgeable about reading and writing, but less so mathematics. This is reflected in the current school data which show progress in mathematics to be slightly less strong in a few year groups. Now and then, teachers mark mathematics work correct when it is incorrect, so pupils get a false impression of how well they are achieving.
- Teachers occasionally accept work from pupils which is untidy when they are capable of producing a higher standard of presentation. Much has been put in place to address these minor weaknesses, but it is too soon to see the impact of these initiatives.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well because of effective teaching throughout school. From starting points typical for their age, children make strong progress with many entering Year 1 at a good level of development, well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in their learning; this is

reflected in the latest school data. Progress in 2014 was stronger in reading and writing than in mathematics, where standards dipped at the end of Year 6.

- The dip in mathematics standards in 2014 has been addressed well by the school and the proportion of pupils predicted to attain Level 4 and Level 5 at the end of Year 6 has rocketed from 2014, because of the successful focus of school leaders on reversing the dip. The dip in 2014 was caused by slight weaknesses in teaching which are being addressed by the school, although pupils' progress in mathematics remains slightly variable.
- 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 the small numbers of disadvantaged pupils are now making better progress than previously, although it is not yet consistently strong enough in mathematics across the whole school.
- The most-able pupils achieve well. In 2014 at the end of Year 2, the most able pupils attained well above average standards in writing, above average standards in reading and average standards in mathematics. Similarly, at the end of Year 6 the most-able pupils attained well above average standards in writing, above average standards in reading, but below average standards in mathematics because of the dip.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well in school. The latest school data show that they are making good progress in their learning because their needs are met well by the skilled team of teaching assistants.

The early years provision

is good

- Early years provision is effective. From starting school with knowledge and skills typical for their age, children make rapid gains in their learning and development because of effective teaching. They are supported well in their learning and development in the bright, vibrant and stimulating early years classrooms and outdoor areas.
- The early years is led well by the skilled and highly focused assistant headteacher. There is a strong sense of all adults working as a finely tuned team to ensure the best possible outcomes for all children.
- In 2014, around three quarters of children left Reception well prepared for the next stage of their education in Year 1. This year school confidently predicts virtually all children will reach a good level of development at the end of Reception.
- 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. On a bug hunt, children had to decide if they would carry out research on one of the creatures they found using the internet or create a drawing of it. Activities such as this help children to learn well in this setting.
- The staff team have high expectations of the children. The highest standards of behaviour are insisted upon and children respond well to adult instructions. The indoor and outdoor learning areas are safe for children to explore as part of their learning.

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	105031
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	461744

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	394
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Prideaux
Headteacher	Beverley Greathead
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2012
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