

Sandbrook Primary School

Stavordale Road, Moreton, Wirral CH49 9PS

Inspection dates

19–20 January 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Significant staffing turbulence has affected leaders' ability to improve the quality of teaching quickly enough since the previous inspection.
- There continues to be instability in staffing. The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good.
- Leaders and governors have not been successful in ensuring that the progress of pupils in Key Stage 2 has been as good as elsewhere in the school.
- Pupils do not make as much progress in writing as in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils have limited chances to apply their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Leaders and governors' vision for the school is not yet fully shared with all parents and staff. Some parents express concerns about the impact of the many staff changes which have taken place.
- Teaching does not ensure that the most-able pupils in Key Stage 2 achieve as well as they could.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is determined, relentless and fully committed in her drive for sustained school improvement.
- Leaders have brought about improvements to the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' acquisition of the sounds that letters represent is good, due to improvements made in the teaching of phonics.
- Pupils behave well and show good progress in their personal development.
- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception class. They are well prepared to start Year 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress so that it is consistently good in Key Stage 2 and improve pupils' achievement in writing by:
 - challenging the most-able pupils sufficiently so that they can make better progress and achieve to the best of their ability
 - ensuring that expectations of pupils in their written work are consistently high and that tasks are closely aligned to pupils' skills and abilities
 - making sure that pupils are given sufficient opportunities to apply their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - actions to improve teaching are implemented swiftly and monitored robustly so that there is consistently high-quality teaching
 - the clear vision for the school's improvement is shared with all staff and parents, so that all can work more closely together to promote pupils' good outcomes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

requires improvement

- Although improvements have been made since the previous inspection, leaders have not established consistently good teaching and learning across the school. The pace of change has been slowed due to past and ongoing staffing turbulence, making it difficult for leaders to establish a culture where all pupils can flourish academically.
- The headteacher, deputy, governors and other leaders provide a determined leadership team. They have a clear vision for 'team Sandbrook' to provide the best possible education for pupils and prepare them well for their next stage of education. Although this vision is shared by most staff, a minority hold a negative view of the school leadership. This hinders school leaders in their goal to promote improvement through a shared vision.
- Several parents who spoke with inspectors expressed concerns about the numerous staff changes and the impact of them on their child's education. Of the 38 responses to Parent View, over half lacked confidence in the leadership of the school. Leaders communicate with parents in a range of ways, but more remains to be done to ensure that parents are reassured and supportive of the school's vision.
- The leadership team have brought about improvements to the quality of teaching, particularly at Key Stage 1. There are clearly established systems for monitoring the quality of teaching, and teachers have targets for improvements. However, action to monitor and improve teaching has not had sufficient impact in ensuring that the quality of teaching throughout the school is consistently good.
- A dedicated senior leadership team has become established since the last inspection. Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of provision and have plans to address key issues.
- Leadership of special educational needs and early years provision is effective. Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs are supported well to make good progress. Despite the early years leader's current absence, children continue to make good progress overall.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of subjects. These are enhanced by visits in the locality, such as to a local supermarket to promote understanding of where food comes from. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are covered appropriately but there are not enough chances for pupils to apply their writing skills in subjects other than English. Pupils take part in a range of extra-curricular activities, including gymnastics, art and craft, and drama, which broaden their experiences and contribute positively to their all-round development.
- The curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn to respect and value one another and learn about different faiths and cultural differences. The school ensures pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Sports funding has been used well to increase pupils' participation in sporting competitions and provide a wider range of after school sports clubs, in order to promote pupils' health and enjoyment of exercise.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively. Leaders effectively track the progress of those pupils who are disadvantaged, and the gap between their achievement and that of others is narrowing.
- The local authority has provided light touch support to the school for the last year, therefore recent impact has been limited.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very supportive of the headteacher and clearly share the vision of 'team Sandbrook'. They are fully committed to ensuring that the school continues to improve and provides the best possible education for pupils.
 - Governors are well informed and have a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
 - Governors provide challenge to the headteacher and have a good awareness of the school's information about pupil progress.
 - The governing body checks the finances of the school, and links teachers' performance to pay.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff undertake regular training to update their knowledge of child protection procedures. Rigorous policies and procedures are in place to ensure that pupils are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good. Across Key Stage 2, teaching requires improvement as the progress pupils are making is variable. This is hindered by current and past instability in staffing. Despite teaching being good in Key Stage 1, inconsistencies across Key Stage 2 lead to the overall quality of teaching across the school, requiring improvement.
- At Key Stage 2, teaching provides insufficient challenge for the most able. Although there are some examples of challenge, teachers do not always make best use of assessments of pupils' learning to provide tasks that challenge pupils. As a result, in Key Stage 2, the more-able pupils do not attain as well as they could.
- Teachers plan lessons that interest the pupils. However, in writing, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough and at times tasks are not matched closely enough to pupils' skills and understanding. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in a range of subjects and, as a result, progress in writing is not as good as it is in reading.
- Early reading skills are taught well. Phonics is taught systematically and improvements to teaching have led to an increase in the percentage of pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics check.
- Where learning is strongest, teachers use questioning well to establish what pupils know and to challenge them to think harder. Pupils therefore make better progress, as expectations about what they can achieve are high and the work provides a good level of challenge. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson as part of a problem-solving activity, pupils were challenged to explain why multiplication was the inverse of division.
- Teaching assistants provide a good contribution to pupils' learning. They have positive relationships with pupils and support them well in their learning.

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 enjoy their time in school and are well looked after.
- The school is successfully embedding a whole-school focus on promoting pupils' self belief, tolerance, resilience and perseverance. Pupils respond positively to this approach, as shown by their level of confidence and attitudes to learning.
- Pupils show respect for each other's views and understand the importance of treating others equally, without prejudice.
- Pupils enjoy their roles of responsibility in school. School council members are positive about their part in helping to improve the school. Pupils learn about the democratic process by voting for these post holders, which helps to develop their understanding of British values.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They have a good knowledge of issues such as internet safety. They show a good understanding of different types of bullying. They say that bullying is rare, but if it happens, they are confident that staff will deal with it effectively. A typical comment from pupils was, 'Teachers help us if we are upset, we know who to go to'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils are familiar with the school's approach to managing behaviour and know what is expected of them. They behave well in class, cooperating together and sharing ideas. On occasion, pupils' behaviour becomes restless when learning does not fully engage them.
- School leaders have worked hard to improve low attendance and the high level of persistent absence. Current information shows that attendance has risen to broadly average levels, and the number of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced significantly.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because current progress in Key Stage 2 is not consistently good, particularly in writing. Instability of staffing has contributed to variation in progress in Key Stage 2, and some pupils have made slow progress this year. Attainment in writing in Year 6 is affected by a legacy of weak teaching, so there is a wide gap to be closed.
- In Key Stage 2, some pupils are making good progress, particularly in mathematics and reading, but this is not consistent across classes and year groups. Progress in mathematics and reading exceeds that in writing. Fewer pupils than average attained higher levels in mathematics in 2015 and not enough current pupils are attaining highly at present.
- From below average skill levels on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress. In 2015, an above average proportion of children attained a good level of development by the end of Reception class.
- Pupils make good progress overall in Key Stage 1. Attainment has risen since the previous inspection to be in line with the national average. Attainment in phonics has risen to be in line with national figures in 2015. Few pupils attained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015, but more are predicted to attain highly in 2016.
- Leaders' actions to improve the progress of those pupils who are disadvantaged are working well; the gap between these pupils' achievement and that of others is narrowing over time.
- Pupils with disabilities or special educational needs are supported to make good progress from their various starting points.

Early years provision

is good

- Provision in the early years has improved since the previous inspection due to effective leadership. Children enter Nursery with skills which are typically below those expected. Children catch up well, make good progress and are well prepared for the transfer to Year 1. In 2014 and 2015, the proportion of pupils attaining a good level of development was higher than the national average.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. Despite recent staffing changes due to the absence of the early years leader, children are settled and are making good progress from their starting points. Children enjoy taking part in a range of 'Funky fingers' activities designed to develop their fine motor skills. They engage well with different staff members as they, for example, thread ribbon, fasten buttons and manipulate pegs. Staff effectively encourage children to think and to express their ideas, asking them to 'Tell me what you have done'.
- Children are familiar with the routines of Nursery and Reception class. They behave well as they sit and listen attentively to staff's instructions. They cooperate well and show curiosity as they explore whether different objects float or sink. Staff question children well in water play, asking 'how many containers do you need to fill this?'
- Staff assess children's learning regularly, and use this information to inform planning for their next steps. Most children are on track to reach a good level of development by the end of their time in Reception class.
- Children show a strong sense of security in school and staff make sure that they are kept safe.
- The indoor environment is appropriately welcoming, and outdoors provides a range of equipment for children to use. However, the outdoor environment is not stimulating or attractively resourced. Which limits the quality of children's learning through outdoor play. Leaders are aware of this and plan to make improvements.

School details

Unique reference number	105003
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10002183

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Vida Wilson
Headteacher	Claire Temple
Telephone number	01516773231
Website	www.sandbrookprimary.eschools.co.uk
Email address	schooloffice@sandbrook.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 March 2014

Information about this school

- Sandbrook is a smaller than average primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. Pupil premium is the additional government funding used to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- In 2015, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been significant staffing changes since the previous inspection. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2014 and another senior leader was appointed in September 2015. A significant number of teachers have left the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the school. One observation was carried out jointly with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing body and three other governors, the headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors also held a meeting with a representative from the local authority and the school's extended schools improvement associate.
- 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 38 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 16 parents who expressed their views via text message to Ofsted. Inspectors also spoke with a number of parents as they delivered their children to school.
- Inspectors also took account of the 13 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the online pupils' questionnaire to consider.

Inspection team

Elaine White, Lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Barbara Dutton	Ofsted Inspector
Jennifer Platt	Ofsted Inspector

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