

Knowsley Lane Primary School

Astley Road, Huyton, Liverpool, Merseyside L36 8DB

Inspection dates

28–29 September 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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Although improving, the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good. Consequently, pupils' progress in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects is uneven across the school.
- Outcomes, particularly in key stage 2, are below those expected for their age. Pupils, especially the most able, do not make rapid enough progress.
- The work set by teachers is sometimes too easy. It does not provide enough challenge to enable pupils, including the most able, to use reasoning and learn at greater depth so that they can achieve as well as they can.
- Although diminishing, differences remain between the standards reached by disadvantaged pupils in the school and other pupils nationally.
- Leaders' focus on attendance has led to improvements from previous low levels. Nevertheless, some pupils still do not attend school regularly.
- Subject leaders, many of whom are new to their roles, are not yet fully involved in checking pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.
- School plans identify the correct priorities but targets and timescales are not sharp enough. As a result, checks by leaders and governors on the impact of the school's actions lack rigour at times.
- Senior leaders and governors' judgements of the quality of teaching and the accuracy of teachers' assessments are too positive.

The school has the following strengths

- Progress rates are improving. Standards in key stage 1 and the early years have risen to be in line with the national average.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and stay well focused on their work.
- Pupils feel happy and safe in school. They are kind and cooperate well with each other and school staff. Parents hold positive views about the way the school cares for their children.
- Early years provision is led well. Good teaching ensures that the youngest children settle quickly and enjoy learning.
- The teaching of phonics is good.
- Teachers provide activities that engage pupils' interests. Specialist teaching of physical education, music and Spanish develop pupils' skills in these areas well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and the accuracy of assessment to further increase pupils' progress and raise attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects by:
 - ensuring that all pupils, and especially the most able, are consistently challenged in all areas of their learning
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to reason and learn at greater depth in all subjects
 - ensuring that differences between disadvantaged pupils in the school, including the most able, and other pupils nationally continue to diminish.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - providing greater opportunities for staff to share and learn from the best practice that exists in the school
 - making sure that senior leaders work with subject leaders to secure the accuracy of assessments in all subjects and develop appropriate methods to record these outcomes
 - developing the role of subject leaders to ensure that they contribute more significantly to improving the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that school targets are measurable so that leaders and governors can swiftly and rigorously check the impact of leaders' actions on the school's performance
 - ensuring that the local governing board holds school leaders to account robustly.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management are not yet good because pupil outcomes require improvement and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is uneven across the school.
- The senior leadership team demonstrates a clear determination to improve outcomes for pupils. In the two years since the academy opened, improvements have been made in early years and key stage 1, where outcomes are now good. However, the most able pupils are not consistently challenged across the school. Although there is some evidence of improvement in key stage 2, progress is not yet consistently good across all classes. Standards at the end of Year 6 are still too low.
- School priorities are clearly set out in school action plans. However, at times, these targets are not measurable. As a result, it is difficult for senior leaders and governors to monitor precisely the impact of the school's work.
- Senior leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching and the information gained is used to provide training and support to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching. Leaders are planning to provide more opportunities to share the effective practice that exists in the school.
- Teachers' assessment of the progress made by pupils are at times over generous and judgements about the quality of teaching are sometimes too positive. This provides a too positive picture of the quality of teaching over time and the school's performance.
- Staff turnover has been high and a large number of new teaching staff have joined the school since September 2014. A significant proportion of these staff were newly qualified teachers. Staff told inspectors that they feel well supported by senior leaders and morale is high. Staff value the professional development opportunities provided by the multi-academy trust.
- Teachers' performance targets are linked to school priorities and are regularly reviewed and monitored. Teachers' pay awards are firmly linked to pupil outcomes.
- The pupil premium funding has been spent wisely to support pupils academically and to break down barriers to learning. Although improving, leaders recognise that there is more work to do to fully remove differences between standards reached by disadvantaged pupils in the school and other pupils nationally.
- The roles of subject leaders, including those of the foundation subjects are still to be developed further. Checks on the progress made by pupils in the foundation subjects are not yet fully tracked.
- Senior leaders ensure that the sports premium is used to good effect. Funds are used to employ specialist coaches who deliver high-quality physical education across the school. Training to develop staff skills, increased access to competitions and a wider range of sports are achieved through deployment of this funding.
- The new curriculum is taught through a range of topics with a global dimension and discrete lessons. The school's values are embedded in all aspects of the curriculum and successfully promote British values. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A wide range of experiences, including visitors and trips, further enrich the curriculum. Specialist teaching of music and Spanish offer pupils

opportunities they might not otherwise have had. For example, during the inspection Year 5 pupils were preparing to take their grade 1 exam in the clarinet.

- School clubs are currently suspended while ongoing building work is completed. Pupils report that clubs are popular and offer a range of interesting activities.
- The daily breakfast club is well attended. This provision helps the pupils who attend make a happy and prompt start to the school day.
- The vast majority of parents are happy with most aspects of the school's work. They commented that communication with the school has improved. The school's text system is said to be particularly helpful. Many referred to the numerous improvements being made to the school building and its grounds. They are pleased with the attractive learning environment provided for their children.
- The schools in the SS Simon and Jude CE Academy Trust support each other by sharing training and exchanging effective practice including that of leadership.

Governance of the school

- Following the key stage 2 outcomes in 2016 the directors of the SS Simon and Jude CE Academy Trust commissioned a review of the school's work in the week prior to the inspection. Outcomes of that review will be used to drive improvements in leadership and management. Governors are aware that they have not done enough to challenge school leaders over the progress of pupils and the quality of teaching.
- The school is in the process of adopting a number of the SS Simon and Jude CE Academy Trust policies and procedures. Some of these are at an early stage of implementation and senior leaders are aware that they need to ensure that statutory policies are ratified by the governing body as soon as possible. The school's record keeping arrangements were also being reviewed by senior leaders at the time of the inspection.
- The governing body receives detailed reports from senior leaders about the school's performance. Arrangements to gather first-hand views of the work of the school and systems to report these back to the full governing body are at an early stage.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff ensure that pupils are kept safe. They have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and of the procedures to follow should they be concerned about a pupils' welfare. The school site is secure and identity of visitors is closely checked.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent across the school and within different subjects. Over time, teaching does not provide enough challenge, especially for the most able.
- In key stage 2, teachers carefully plan work to close gaps in learning caused by previous weaknesses in teaching. However, at times not enough thought is given to providing suitable activities to challenge pupils. This means that the most able pupils, in particular, are sometimes required to work through tasks which they have already mastered. Opportunities to deepen learning in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects are sometimes missed.
- New arrangements to enable teachers to check how well pupils are doing in reading,

writing and mathematics are in place. However, checks on other subjects such as science and art are not yet to be fully implemented. Leaders are aware that teachers' assessments are not yet fully accurate and can provide too positive a view of standards and pupils' progress.

- The learning environment is bright and informative. Resources are of good quality and classroom displays reflect the balanced curriculum that is being delivered across the school.
- Warm and respectful relationships exist among staff and pupils. Pupils work well collaboratively.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed. They are an asset to the school and work closely with teachers to support learning, including that of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Staff follow the school's policy and the quality of marking is good overall. Achievements are celebrated and next steps in learning are provided to help pupils improve their work. Pupils are encouraged to say how well they think they have done at the end of each lesson.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They like the new school library and new guided reading sessions which take place each day. Many told inspectors that they enjoyed reading a range of books.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The vast majority of parents agreed that their children are cared for well. Staff are approachable if parents have any concerns. This is particularly the case in the early years, where staff were felt to go out of their way to make new pupils feel welcome, happy and settled.
- Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe both in school and within their local community. The curriculum helps pupils understand how to be physically healthy. They know the importance of eating healthily and the need to be physically active. There are a number of opportunities to study different faiths and cultures including visits to places of worship. This leads to pupils being tolerant and respectful towards others.
- Pupils have a good awareness of the different types of bullying including online bullying, name-calling and physical bullying. They say bullying is rare and school records support this view. Pupils trust the adults to deal with any incidents promptly and fairly.
- Pupils make a good contribution to the life of the school and enjoy taking on responsible roles such as student council members.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They concentrate well and show good levels of perseverance, even when work is sometimes too easy.
- Pupils are polite and considerate of others. They are keen to tell visitors about the changes made to their schooling. Pupils talk about the positive aspects of their new school including the new name of the academy. They are aware that their school is one

of three in the multi-academy trust and that stable staffing is now in place. They have noted the improvements in behaviour.

- The need for good attendance has a high profile that can be seen through the regular communication with parents and various pupils' rewards. Attendance levels, although still low in 2015, improved on the previous year and continue to do so this term. Fewer pupils are now regularly absent and leaders and the learning mentor continue to work with the families of pupils who find it difficult to attend school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because progress is too variable across the school. Too few pupils make consistently good progress across a range of subjects including, reading, writing and mathematics. Over time, standards at the end of Year 6 are well below the national average.
- Published data in 2015 shows that the percentage of pupils making the progress expected of them by the end of Year 6 was below average in reading. The proportion making better than expected progress was also below average in reading and also in mathematics. Progress in writing was good.
- In 2016, progress at the end of Year 6 was broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, progress in mathematics was stronger than that of writing and, in particular, that of reading.
- From observing teaching and learning and looking at examples of pupils' work from the current and past academic years, inspectors agree that some pockets of good progress exist in a range of subjects across key stage 2. However, current progress is too variable. This is because expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough. Although teachers plan work to close learning gaps caused by earlier weaknesses in teaching, the work set does not challenge pupils, particularly the most able, to do as well as they can.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils attending the school is high. Published data shows that in 2015, Year 6 pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding made similar progress to other pupils nationally. Disadvantaged pupils in the school reached standards above those of their peers in reading, writing and mathematics but below those of other pupils nationally.
- The early years provides a firm start to children's school life. From starting points that are below and sometimes significantly below those typical for their age, children make good progress. The number of children reaching a good level of development has increased year on year and is now close to the national average. Children are increasingly well prepared for their move into Year 1.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. The number of pupils meeting the expected standard in Year 1 and Year 2 has risen from below average levels and is now in line with the national average.
- The most recent test scores show that pupils at the end of key stage 1 achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. This reflects good progress from pupils' starting points.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make the progress expected of them from their individual starting points because their needs are identified quickly and good levels of support are put in place.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership and management of early years are good. Leaders have an accurate overview of the strengths and areas that need to be developed within the provision.
- Children share warm relationships with each other and the school staff. New children, including the high proportion who join the school in the Reception Year, settle quickly. This is due to effective transition arrangements and the swift identification of children's individual needs.
- Children are safe and cared for well in a secure and stimulating environment. Statutory welfare requirements are met.
- Adults help children learn clear and simple routines from the beginning of their time in school. This includes routines for putting things away when tidying up. Good use is made of praise for children showing good attitudes to learning, including turn-taking and good listening and joining in with sessions led by adults.
- Children are encouraged to be independent learners from the start. For example, children wash their hands and help themselves to a snack at the appropriate time.
- Activities provided are fun and cover all areas of learning. The newly refurbished outdoor area is particularly popular with children and staff. This attractive, well-designed space provides a wide range of activities that promote children's physical development as they travel over the equipment provided. They take turns readily and play happily together as they improve their balance and agility.
- Staff model the correct language and conversation flows freely as children play and explore the world around them. As a result, children's language skills, many of which are behind those typical for their age when they join the setting, are developing well.
- Children make good progress in their learning, including those who are disadvantaged. However, leaders are aware that a few of the most able children should make more rapid progress.
- Parents are highly positive about the school. Workshops such as the one taking place during the inspection are well attended. Parents work alongside their children, developing the skills to help their child's learning at home.

School details

Unique reference number	141205
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10022812

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	252
Appropriate authority	The local governing body
Chair	Roy Swanwick
Principal	Cathryn Antwis
Executive Principal	Simon Bramwell
Telephone number	0151 556 9999
Website	www.knowsleylane.knowsley.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@knowsleylane.knowsley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is similar in size to most other primary schools. It opened in September 2014 and is part of the SS Simon and Jude CE Academy Trust, which is also known as the Vantage Academy Trust. When the predecessor school, Longview Community Primary School, was last inspected it was judged to require improvement.
- Children attend the Nursery part time and attend Reception full time. A number of children move to other settings at the end of the Nursery year. At least half of the pupils in Reception join the school from other or no early years settings.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is high. It is almost three times the national average.
- Since opening, the school has experienced significant staffing changes. Nearly half of the teaching staff are new to the school. The executive principal and principal took up their posts around the time of the opening of the academy. The majority of subject leaders are new to their roles, some as recently as September 2016.
- The governing body provides a breakfast club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school meets the government's floor standards in 2015. These 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. They observed learning in classes, one jointly with the principal, and when pupils learned in small groups.
- The 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. Inspectors talked to pupils about the books they have enjoyed and those that they are currently reading. Inspectors took note of displays around the school and the learning taking place outdoors.
- 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 three groups of pupils.
- An inspector met with the vice chair of the local governing body who is also a director of the SS Simon and Jude CE Academy Trust.
- Inspectors met with members of school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day and during the parent workshop being held during the inspection. They took account of five responses to Parent View and the school's most recent surveys of pupils' and parents' views. Thirteen returns to the staff questionnaire completed during the inspection were considered.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including information about pupils' progress, school improvement and external views of the school. Inspectors 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
Keith Wright	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Dimeck	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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email 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.

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, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016