

# Pensby Primary School

Greenbank Drive, Pensby, Wirral, Merseyside CH61 5UE

## Inspection dates

28–29 March 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders have established a warm and welcoming learning environment.
- Senior leaders have a good understanding of the school’s priorities and have taken effective action to address some recent underachievement.
- Teaching and learning are good and improving because senior leaders make effective checks and provide useful training.
- Governors support senior leaders well and challenge them to make sure the school is effective.
- Pupils feel safe in school and say that their teachers ‘protect them’. They mostly behave well and have good manners.
- The majority of current pupils make good progress in a range of subjects.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their starting points and enjoy the interesting activities that teachers provide.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and appreciate the work that staff do to help their children learn well.
- Senior leaders have effective plans in place to secure improvement, but they do not have success measures that focus on the impact of their actions on pupils’ achievement.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics are not clear about how to assess and track pupils’ achievement precisely.
- Pupils sometimes misbehave when teachers do not plan demanding or interesting enough lessons.
- Progress is not consistently rapid enough in some respects, such as for the most able pupils.

## Full report

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

- Ensure that leadership and management become more effective by:
  - including precise success criteria in the school's action plans for improvement that evaluate the impact of actions taken with reference to pupils' achievement
  - developing the skills of leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics so that they have a firmer understanding of standards in their subjects across the school.
- Accelerate pupils' progress, and especially that of the most able pupils, further by:
  - ensuring that lessons are more consistently demanding and engaging to avoid lost learning time through occasional misbehaviour
  - more consistently providing work for the most able, especially in writing, that is challenging and deepens their knowledge.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have created a friendly and well-ordered environment, where pupils feel safe and welcome. There is a real sense that staff are keen to do their best for their pupils. In conversations with inspectors, pupils indicated that staff look after them well and make them feel safe, typically making comments such as, 'The teachers protect us.'
- Senior leaders have an honest approach to assessing their strengths and areas for improvement. They recognised that some pupils underachieved in the 2016 national tests and have addressed the reasons for this effectively. Consequently, pupils in almost all year groups across a wide range of subjects are making good and improving progress.
- Leaders have effective systems for monitoring the performance of teachers and the quality of teaching and learning. They set targets for staff that are related to pupils' achievement and to the main focuses of the school's improvement plan. They provide training and support to teachers to help them attain their targets and address areas for development. Leaders check on the quality of teaching and learning every half term, or sooner if they identify that more immediate improvements are required. Staff appreciate the training they receive and they were overwhelmingly positive in their responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Leaders use the primary school physical education and sports funding effectively. They provide extra swimming lessons using the school's pool and bring in a specialist coach to train staff and teach pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2. They provide opportunities for pupils to take part in sports competitions in cooperation with other schools in their local, informal federation. They also employ a member of staff to engage pupils in a variety of sports activities at lunchtime, thus increasing their enjoyment of sports and encouraging them to be more active.
- The school promotes fundamental British values well, and effectively supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils understand the basic working of democracy and appreciate how it features in aspects of school life, such as when they vote for school councillors. Staff keep a log of activities that relate to British values. Older pupils have the chance to show responsibility in their role as 'buddies' to Reception children. A daily prayer period provides opportunities to discuss moral issues. Pupils also understand tolerance and mutual respect through work in religious education. Visits to events, such as concerts by the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, contribute well to pupils' spiritual development.
- Senior leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding, using it to improve eligible pupils' development. For example, they provide tuition to small groups of pupils to help them catch up in English and mathematics. Across almost all year groups, the school's own assessment information and evidence in pupils' books indicate that the current cohort of pupils who are disadvantaged make good progress.
- Leaders make good use of the funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The special educational needs coordinator has a clear view of the needs of this group and carefully targets resources, such as teaching assistants or

speech and language support. As a result, these pupils are making good progress from their starting points.

- The local authority provides effective support. There has been a low level of intervention based on the historical performance of the school. The disappointing results of the national tests in 2016 triggered discussions about how the school would tackle the issues raised, but the progress that leaders have made has been sufficiently strong for the local authority to maintain a 'light touch' approach.
- The school is part of an informal federation with other schools in the area. Leaders share resources, training and expertise, and this has resulted in the good and improving standard of education that the school provides.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and have a positive view of the work of staff and leaders. They appreciate the range of extra-curricular activities available and regard staff as friendly and approachable. They say that leaders manage transition between different year groups well, so that their children know what to expect and are able to begin each new year in a good frame of mind. They typically describe the school as 'fantastic' and 'excellent', and know that their children are safe and teachers look after them well.
- Leaders have created useful action plans to secure improvements, based on their analysis of published assessment information. These contain well-focused actions, but some of the criteria against which leaders measure success are not precise and do not focus on the impact of actions on pupils' achievement.
- Senior leaders provide an appropriately balanced and broad curriculum which is enhanced with a range of extra-curricular activities, including clubs ranging from taekwondo to gardening. They have recently changed their approach to teaching subjects other than English and mathematics, moving from planning in topics to teaching discrete subjects. Leaders in these subjects are aware of the knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils need to acquire, but they do not have a strong understanding of how to assess and track precisely pupils' achievement across all subjects.
- The school's website contains some omissions of essential information. School leaders are aware of these and have undertaken to amend them.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and understand the main focuses for improvement.
- Governors challenge and support leaders well, asking probing question about issues such as finance or the school's effectiveness.
- Governors receive appropriate safeguarding training and have a useful range of skills and experiences, including work connected with safeguarding in the police. They have a broad view of safeguarding, including taking action to reduce risks for members of staff during periods when they work alone on the premises, such as at parents' evenings.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- Senior leaders have thorough systems in place for checking on the suitability of staff. There are strong security systems in place that ensure that visitors are checked before they enter the premises and understand the expectations around safeguarding while they are on the site.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and understand the risks associated with, for instance, the internet. Staff are knowledgeable about signs of abuse and are thoroughly familiar with the school's reporting procedures.

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

**Good**

- Teachers establish positive relationships with their pupils and expect good behaviour. Pupils respond well to their teachers, and their good attitudes to learning contribute strongly to the good progress they make, especially in English and mathematics.
- In the large majority of cases, teachers plan lessons well and make sure that pupils acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need. They ensure that pupils remain on task and they retain their interest well. For example, in mathematics, teachers regularly challenge pupils, including the most able and those who are disadvantaged, by asking questions in written feedback that encourage pupils to explain their reasoning.
- Teachers deploy teaching assistants effectively. Teaching assistants work with pupils who have identified needs or they support groups of pupils who are less able. They ask apt questions, challenging appropriately and allowing pupils to formulate their own responses.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to use their English and mathematics skills in other subjects. For instance, in Year 6, pupils write reports about Mayan culture in history. In science in Year 4, pupils write summaries of investigations about sound. There is evidence of pupils using their mathematical skills in science, for example, when presenting measurements from experiments, and also in design and technology, where pupils measure materials in order to make items such as model ski slopes.
- Teachers adhere closely to the school's marking and feedback policy, offering opportunities for pupils to respond and to improve their work. This contributes to the overall good progress that current pupils make.
- Staff provide regular homework and make use of class pages on the school's website to inform parents. Pupils respond well and parents say that their children enjoy it. Teachers provide support in school if any pupils have difficulties with homework.
- Teachers do not consistently plan work that engages pupils well or demands enough of them, especially in English. On these occasions, pupils, especially the most able, lose concentration and misbehave, losing valuable learning time.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Pupils are confident and articulate. They showed a willingness to share their thoughts and their work with inspectors.
- They know about different types of bullying, including homophobic and racist. They say that bullying rarely happens, but that teachers tackle any problems effectively.
- Pupils develop a sense of responsibility through, for example, their roles as school councillors, and through the system of 'buddies', which encourages Year 6 pupils to look after and work with Reception children.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They understand the potential dangers of the internet and teachers give them opportunities to learn how to stay safe.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are courteous and show good manners towards adults. Their conduct around school is good and they respond to teachers' instructions well.
- Pupils understand the school's behaviour policy and say that it works well. Pupils behave well in class most of the time, but a few pupils lose learning time because of occasional misbehaviour, which demonstrates a lack of self-discipline.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average.
- Pupils' conduct in the school's breakfast club and is good. Staff manage them well and keep them safe.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- The large majority of current pupils make good progress from their starting points in a variety of subjects, including mathematics and English, and pupils effectively acquire the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills. In writing in Year 6, for example, pupils show good development of more advanced sentence structure and adopt an engaging style, using phrasing such as, 'an incident that happened some five years ago, so terrifying I still remember it today'.
- Pupils in Year 1 make good progress in phonics. A large majority of them meet the required standard in the phonics screening check each year and the current year group is progressing well. Pupils who retake the test in Year 2 also achieve well, with usually all of them reaching the required standard.
- In the national tests up to 2015, achievement across the school presented a positive picture. By contrast, the results in 2016 highlighted some issues, which leaders have been quick to tackle. As a result of more robust monitoring by senior leaders, leading to improved teaching, progress in mathematics and reading, especially in key stage 2, is now good. In mathematics, for example, pupils in most classes make rapid progress and develop strong reasoning and problem-solving skills because of the revised teaching methods that leaders have introduced. Leaders recognise, however, that there is scope for even faster progress.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged make good progress. Evidence from pupils' work and from the school's own assessment information indicates that the vast majority of these

pupils make expected or better progress from their starting points. This has come about because of the support that leaders have provided for pupils who need to improve their English and mathematics skills.

- Most pupils read well, with a fluency appropriate to their age. They enjoy reading and most can name their favourite authors. Most-able readers show good understanding through their well-judged use of intonation, and through answering questions correctly about the meanings of words or phrases. Less-able pupils make good use of their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words.
- Although the majority of current pupils make good progress across a range of subjects, this sometimes slows in writing. In Year 3, for example, pupils acquire the appropriate knowledge and understanding, but there are fewer opportunities to apply their skills independently than in other year groups. There has, however, been recent staffing instability in this year group, which has contributed to the variability in progress.
- While teachers provide work that challenges the most able pupils appropriately, particularly in mathematics, they do so inconsistently. In writing, for instance, teachers sometimes limit the progress that most-able pupils could make by structuring work in such a way that pupils miss opportunities to refine and extend the range of their writing skills.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Leadership of the early years is effective. The leader and her team understand the strengths and areas for development in provision, and constantly work to improve the experience that children have in the setting. They promptly identify children who need extra support when they enter the provision and plan accordingly, addressing needs, including toilet training, and speech and language issues.
- Overall, children enter the early years with skills that are below those that are typical for their age. By the time they leave the Reception Year, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is close to the national average. This represents good progress from children's starting points and ensures that a majority of them are ready for Year 1.
- Leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding to ensure that they remove children's barriers to their learning. Disadvantaged children make good progress because leaders provide support for them if they fall behind in their learning, such as to enhance their speech and language development.
- Teachers plan exciting activities for children and they provide good opportunities for exploring and learning. For example, in the Reception class, children showed a good level of interest in measuring bean plants they had grown. The outdoor environment is imaginatively planned and contains equipment that allows children to explore and take risks.
- Safeguarding is effective and there are no breaches of the statutory welfare requirements. Children show through their behaviour that they are happy in the setting and feel safe. They are confident and content to talk to each other, adults and visitors. They behave well and listen carefully to adults.

- Leaders have a strong partnership with parents. They hold meetings with them before their children start in the early years and they are happy for parents to come into school with their children to see that they settle into routines at the beginning of the school year. They provide regular updates on children's progress through the school's new online communication system, which has improved parents' ability to support their child's development.
- The school provides a 'wraparound club' for children who are of nursery age. Parents can choose to pay for extra care outside the usual part-time Nursery class hours. Leaders provide appropriate resources for the children in this club and it is safe and well organised.
- While the early years setting contains many resources that support learning well, there is less emphasis on promoting reading by, for example, providing a wide choice of books that are readily accessible and inviting for children.



## School details

Unique reference number	135497
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10024215

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Spencer
Headteacher	Kathryn Brown
Telephone number	0151 348 4145
Website	<a href="http://www.pensbyprimaryschool.org">www.pensbyprimaryschool.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:schooloffice@pensby-primary.wirral.sch.uk">schooloffice@pensby-primary.wirral.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	10–11 October 2012

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about when it will review its pupil premium strategy for 2016/17, the content of the curriculum or the effectiveness of its provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders are aware of these omissions and have undertaken to rectify them.
- The school is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support in school for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding is close to the national average.

- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school operates a breakfast club, an after-school club and, for younger children, a 'wraparound club'.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations of learning in all year groups. Some of these were joint observations including the headteacher and the lead inspector. The headteacher was also present at inspection team meetings.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school’s self-evaluation summary, action plans for school improvement, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, minutes of meetings of the governing body and records connected with the safeguarding of children.
- Inspectors held discussions with various stakeholders, including the headteacher and other senior leaders, subject leaders, other members of staff, governors, a representative from the local authority, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and analysed pupils’ work in writing and mathematics, as well as their work in other subjects. They also looked at the work of children in the early years.
- The lead inspector evaluated 48 responses received through Parent View, Ofsted’s online survey, and 28 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no other survey responses.

## Inspection team

Mark Quinn, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Ann Dimeck	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Howard	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Holmes	Ofsted Inspector

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

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