

Raeburn Primary School

Morland Avenue, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside CH62 6BD

Inspection dates

13–14 February 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	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have taken effective action to bring about necessary improvements.
- The curriculum is stimulating and varied, contributing well to pupils' good progress.
- Teaching is effective. Staff deepen pupils' learning well with skilful questioning.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe there.
- Governors have a secure understanding of the school's priorities. They provide effective support and challenge to senior leaders.
- The vast majority of parents have a positive view about the work of the school. They feel that their children develop well and that staff are approachable.
- The vast majority of current pupils make good progress across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Pupils' conduct around school is at least good and is sometimes excellent.
- Children in the early years make good progress. The proportion of children achieving a good level development by the end of the Reception Year is consistently above the national average.
- Subject leaders do not have a complete understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in their subject.
- Occasionally, teachers do not match some work for the most-able and less-able pupils to their abilities precisely enough. This leads to some misbehaviour and lost learning time.
- Sometimes pupils do not have the opportunity to apply their knowledge of science by working scientifically.
- In the early years, teachers do not consistently make the maximum use of resources to deepen pupils' learning and ensure that high proportions exceed expectations at the end of the Reception Year.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed the recent strategies for improvement in reading, writing, mathematics and phonics to ensure that pupils make increasingly rapid and sustained progress.
- Ensure that subject leaders have a full understanding of the quality of teaching and learning and of pupils' progress in their subject by developing a more systematic monitoring process.
- Make sure that teachers more consistently plan tasks that match the abilities of pupils and develop their skills effectively, so that:
 - they engage as many pupils as possible in their learning and avoid low-level misbehaviour caused by lack of attention
 - they challenge the most able to achieve highly, including in the early years, using all available resources to best effect
 - they provide support for less-able pupils successfully to complete their tasks
 - they ensure that pupils more regularly have opportunities in science to apply their knowledge by working scientifically.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders recognise that recent historical assessment information showed a decline in progress by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. There was also a dip in the proportion of pupils in Year 1 reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Leaders have quickly identified the causes and have put actions in place that focus sharply on bringing about rapid improvement. As a result, the large majority of current pupils make good progress in these subjects.
- There has been some turbulence in the senior leadership of the school this academic year, resulting in the temporary absence of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. During their absence, the acting senior leadership team steadied the ship and were successful in ensuring that there was no detrimental effect on pupils' learning and progress. The issues that resulted in senior leaders' absence have now been resolved and the leadership team has returned to its original structure.
- Subject leaders devise appropriate action plans for improvement and evaluate the progress information that teachers provide. However, they do not currently have a thorough understanding of the quality of teaching and learning and of pupils' progress in their subject because they do not have a systematic checking process in place. This is because the recent instability in leadership has hampered the development of their roles.
- Senior leaders have been honest and mostly accurate in their evaluation of the quality of education the school provides. Their plans for improvement include well-targeted actions, such as a more focused approach to developing essential reading skills, including inference and weekly activities to develop stronger skills in arithmetic. The positive impact of their actions is evident in the good progress that the large majority of pupils make. However, leaders recognise the need to embed their actions to secure increasingly substantial progress.
- The school's curriculum is broad, balanced and thoughtfully designed to engage pupils in learning. Staff organise activities that successfully stimulate pupils' interest, such as 'wow' days. These include events like a 'Roman Day' when studying the associated period in history. Pupils have the opportunity to dress in appropriate costume and taste food similar to that which ancient Romans used to eat. The curriculum contributes effectively to the good progress current pupils make across a range of subjects. Sometimes, however, pupils lack confidence in applying their scientific knowledge to planning investigations, for example because they do not have the opportunity to work scientifically.
- The school's actions to promote fundamental British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are effective. For example, teachers provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on moral issues on 'Thoughtful Thursday' each week, discussing questions such as, 'Would it be right to cheat in a test?' Leaders provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities that include tag rugby, film club, choir and fencing. Programmes of assemblies and lessons in personal social and health education and religious education contribute well to pupils' understanding of, for example, other faiths.

- Leaders use pupil premium funding effectively. Current eligible pupils make good progress from their starting points, thanks to well-targeted interventions. These include improving pupils' social and emotional health by providing support activities to individuals and small groups. Leaders also provide effective support to pupils to improve their English and mathematics skills.
- The school makes good use of the primary school physical education and sport premium. Teachers benefit from working with specialist coaches to enhance their skills in teaching physical education. Pupils enjoy taking part in a wide range of sports clubs, including multi-sports, fencing, 'zumba' dancing and archery, which contribute effectively to their physical well-being.
- Leaders make effective use of funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The leader for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities (SENCo) is secure in her knowledge and organises effective support for pupils. She is clear about the needs of specific pupils and their families. As a result, current pupils make rapid progress.
- Staff are positive about the training that leaders provide, which covers a range of areas from pupils' mental health to improving teaching in individual subjects. They also acknowledge that leaders do as much as possible to help teachers manage their workload.
- The vast majority of parents who spoke with the lead inspector or who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, were very positive about the quality of education the school provides. Typically, they said that their children feel safe in school and make good progress. Leaders are approachable and there is good communication between school and home.
- The local authority has provided useful support to the school during the recent period of uncertainty in senior leadership. The school's independently commissioned improvement adviser is effective and has a good understanding of the school's priorities.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a clear view of the current strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have successfully overseen the school's journey through an unstable period for its senior leadership, providing effective support.
- Governors are well trained in safeguarding and other areas, such as analysis of assessment information. They have a wide range of skills that enable them to carry out their duties effectively.
- Governors provide strong challenge and stringently hold leaders to account. Minutes of meetings show that they ask a range of searching questions about matters such as pupils' progress and strategies for managing bullying.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school record of required checks on members of staff is thorough and complies

with associated guidance.

- Staff have a good understanding of the school's procedures for reporting concerns about pupils. Records are detailed and the designated safeguarding lead keeps them in an orderly way. Swift action is taken in response to concerns, making referrals to other agencies on the infrequent occasions when these are necessary.
- The culture of safeguarding in the school is strong. Staff know their pupils well and give them the information they need to stay safe, for example when using the internet. Adults know well the various signs of abuse to which they must be alert. Pupils feel safe in school as a result.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have rightly focused on bringing about improvements in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics to ensure better progress by the end of Year 6. They have, for example, successfully introduced an approach to teaching reading that enables pupils to develop better understanding of skills such as inference and prediction. In mathematics, pupils effectively develop their knowledge of key aspects of arithmetic with weekly 'memory jogger' exercises that provide opportunities to improve pupils' knowledge and skills in arithmetic. In phonics, leaders have revised the groups in which pupils learn, in order to target their needs more precisely. Consequently, the vast majority of current pupils make good progress in these subjects.
- There are warm relationships between pupils and staff and almost all pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. This is because, in the vast majority of cases, staff set high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour.
- Teachers assess pupils well and intervene effectively when they need to correct misconceptions. They typically provide work that is demanding and are keen to help pupils to progress as quickly as possible. In Year 3, for example, pupils learn formal methods for multiplying two-digit numbers by one-digit numbers at an early point in the year. Occasionally, however, some most-able pupils do not do work that stretches them sufficiently and some less-able pupils do not receive enough support in their task. This leads to some loss of attention, with resulting lapses in behaviour and some loss of learning time.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills, as well as the spiritual, moral, social or cultural aspects of their learning. For instance, in key stage 2, adults asked pupils them to discuss how to solve a puzzle in mathematics with pupils nearby. Pupils responded by listening with respect and taking turns to speak. In Year 1, an activity room with displays related to Chinese New Year enables pupils to appreciate another culture.
- Staff effectively ask probing questions that encourage pupils to think for themselves and deepen their learning. For example, in an English lesson in key stage 2, the teacher asked pupils to think about ways to improve their writing, such as checking they have used advanced punctuation and features such as similes. However, teachers occasionally provide fewer opportunities in science for pupils to work scientifically by, for example, designing and carrying out experiments. This limits their ability to apply their scientific knowledge in a deeper way.

- Teachers regularly provide homework that is appropriate to the needs of the pupils and builds on skills they have learnt in class.
- Staff provide parents and carers with useful and accurate information about the progress their children are making. As well as formal parents' evenings, staff are available daily for informal discussions. Leaders also provide opportunities every half term for parents to come into class to see their children's work first hand.
- The teaching of phonics is effective and current pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills at a good rate. Sometimes, however, teachers miss an opportunity to move pupils on when they rapidly grasp the concept they are learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and, in the large majority of cases, use it well to plan work that stimulates pupils and captures their imaginations.

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 are willing to approach trusted adults to greet them or engage them in conversation.
- Leaders provide a range of activities that effectively support pupils' mental health, such as a programme of philosophy for children.
- Pupils feel safe in school and enjoy their time there. They say that all the adults who look after them are kind and that pupils trust them.
- Pupils know how to keep safe when they are online because adults have given them the information they need. They know, for instance, that they must not tell anyone their password.
- Bullying or name-calling is very rare and pupils say that they know that adults will deal effectively with any occurrences.
- Pupils enjoy a range of activities, such as clubs and sports, which contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The group of Year 6 pupils who spoke with a member of the inspection team said they sometimes feel that adults do not listen to them. However, other evidence shows that leaders provide opportunities for pupils to express themselves through, for example, the school council. They also provide older pupils with roles of responsibility, such as looking after younger pupils as 'buddies'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around school is good and sometimes exemplary. For example, they enter and leave assemblies in very good order.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average.

- Pupils play well together at playtime and lunchtime. They choose to play games, such as football, without incident, or they socialise in groups, holding conversations and enjoying each other's company.
- The majority of pupils' behaviour in class is good. Sometimes, however, small numbers of pupils misbehave, though this is usually when the work they are doing does not appropriately match their needs. In most cases, teachers have effective methods to manage pupils' behaviour and serious incidents of poor behaviour are very rare.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school's assessment information and evidence from pupils' work show that the large majority of current pupils make good progress across a variety of subjects, including mathematics and English. They are well prepared for the next stage of their learning. They acquire appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding at a good rate. For example, in Year 6 in English, pupils make credible attempts to write in a Shakespearian style in the character of Lady Macbeth, using phrases like '...he has arranged to stay at my abode'. In mathematics, pupils solve problems involving algebra, grappling with equations of a level of complexity that suits their ability.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. Teachers and support staff assist them well with carefully planned activities. The SENCo keeps a close track of the effectiveness of interventions and adjusts them as necessary to meet the needs of the pupils.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. Leaders provide extra support for both their emotional and their academic needs. They check pupils' progress carefully and adapt activities in English and mathematics to suit pupils' needs and ensure maximum effectiveness.
- Overall, the progress of the most able is good. Occasionally, however, their learning slows because teachers do not give them work that sufficiently stretches them.
- Pupils read with a fluency that is appropriate to their age and stage of development. They show good comprehension through expressiveness in their voice. Less-able readers use their knowledge of phonics well to read unfamiliar words, although, just occasionally, they sound out words that should be familiar to them. Pupils have access to a wide range of texts of different types. They benefit from the focused reading strategy that leaders have recently introduced.
- Leaders acted quickly and effectively to address the dip in progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2017. They have also addressed the disappointing result in the phonics screening check in Year 1. They recognise that they need to continue to establish the effectiveness of their strategies to secure sustained and substantial progress. Evidence from pupils' books and the school's assessment information shows that high proportions of pupils are on track to reach the expected standard and beyond by the end of the current school year.
- In a range of subjects other than English and mathematics, almost all pupils make good progress. In the majority of cases, it is clear that teachers plan work that focuses on pupils acquiring the necessary skills that match their age and stage of development. For example, they learn about location in geography and about chronology in history.

In science, however, there is occasionally a lack of opportunities for pupils to work scientifically. This results in pupils lacking confidence in, for instance, applying their scientific knowledge in more practical ways.

Early years provision

Good

- The school's assessment information shows that most children enter Reception with skills and abilities that are typical for children of their age. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is consistently above the national average. This represents an overall picture of good progress and the large majority of children are well prepared for Year 1.
- The leader of the early years is capable and knows the children well. There is an efficient system for tracking their progress. Careful analysis of assessment information identifies children's gaps in learning. This enables staff to act swiftly to ensure that children receive the right support to help them catch up.
- Those who are disadvantaged make good progress. This is because staff provide extra support, such as booster sessions in reading, writing and mathematics, or place children in specific phonics groups to address any related learning issues.
- Children are very familiar with the daily routines for learning and for using resources, both indoors and outdoors. They show from their good behaviour that they feel safe. They demonstrate growing independence as they gather their own equipment for activities, such as writing.
- Staff make parents welcome in school and involve them closely in their children's learning. For example, they give parents regular opportunities to add comments to their children's learning records, both in school and at home. This gives them a good understanding of their children's progress.
- Staff look after the children very well and ensure that all welfare requirements are met. Safeguarding is effective and the statutory policies and procedures in key stage 1 and key stage 2 apply to the early years provision.
- Teaching is effective and staff have high expectations of children's learning and behaviour. Actions are firmly rooted in their accurate assessment of children's starting points and progress. Staff plan mainly interesting lessons and teach them well. Children typically set to work with enthusiasm and commitment and see tasks through to the end. Teachers also provide children with exciting resources, such as an astronomical telescope. However, they do not consistently make the maximum use of them to stimulate children's interest and provide challenge in their learning, especially for the most able. This is reflected in the fact that the proportion of children exceeding the early learning goals is often below the national average in a range of areas of learning, including reading, writing and mathematics.

School details

Unique reference number	105020
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10044835
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glyn Jones
Headteacher	Jennifer Green
Telephone number	0151 327 2215
Website	www.raeburn.wirral.sch.uk
Email address	schooloffice@raeburn.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 November 2012

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for their SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for 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 with the headteacher. 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, assessment information, minutes of meetings of the governing body and records connected with the safeguarding of children.
- Inspectors had discussions with various stakeholders, including the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, other members of staff, the chair and other members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, the school’s independently commissioned improvement adviser, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and analysed pupils’ work in a range of subjects. They also looked at the work of children in the early years.
- The lead inspector evaluated 209 responses received through Parent View, Ofsted’s online survey, during the inspection. There were no other survey responses.

Inspection team

Mark Quinn, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Ann Dimeck	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Gill	Ofsted Inspector
Tina Cleugh	Ofsted Inspector
Eithne Proffitt	Ofsted Inspector

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