

Lansbury Bridge School

Lansbury Avenue, Parr, St Helens WA9 1TB

Inspection dates 15–16 December 2015

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	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Strong leadership has led to rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress since the previous inspection in December 2014.
- Pupils' outcomes are strong. A good proportion of pupils learn well and reach the challenging targets set for them.
- Teaching is effective and is characterised by strong relationships between adults and pupils.
- Pupils' safety is paramount. Robust systems are in place to keep pupils as safe as possible in school.
- Governance is a strength of the school. Governors' mix of relevant experience and expertise combines well to ensure that the drive towards excellence is relentless.
- Pupils in the early years get off to a good start and make good progress because leadership and teaching are effective.
- Pupils' personal development is outstanding. As pupils grow up, they begin to develop into well-rounded young people capable of making a positive contribution to society.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. In lessons, pupils typically share ideas, support one another and respond well to adults' direction and requests.
- Leaders make effective use of the additional government funding received by the school to strengthen pupils' academic, personal and social development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small proportion of pupils could progress even more rapidly. Teachers do not always challenge the more-able pupils well enough to reach even higher standards.
- Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to bolster pupils' learning behaviour by challenging them to plan and think for themselves.
- Occasionally, pupils of all ages lose concentration because planned activities are not matched well enough to their specific needs or interests.
- Leaders' analysis of assessment information does not yet clearly identify the gains in learning made by the least-able pupils.
- Children in the early years do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their early literacy and mathematical skills.

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils' progress and behaviour are outstanding, by ensuring that:
 - teachers use their accurate understanding of pupils' previous learning to plan lessons which motivate and challenge all pupils, especially the most able, even when they are working alone
 - teachers focus on the quality of the engagement of pupils, so they increasingly take more responsibility for how and what they learn in class
 - children in the early years have more opportunities to access resources that develop their knowledge and understanding of numbers, letters, words and phrases, including when they play outside.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management of the school by ensuring that:
 - leaders at all levels, including governors, are precise in their evaluation of the impact of their actions, and of teaching on the progress of the least-able pupils
 - there is a robust appraisal system for evaluating the impact that teaching assistants have on the progress pupils make
 - the improvements made since the previous inspection are sustained.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leadership and management of the school has improved markedly since the previous inspection. The headteacher has a strong vision to improve the school to become outstanding. She is supported well by other senior leaders, middle leaders and the staff team as a whole. This, along with appropriate challenge from governors and the backing of parents, has resulted in a solid base from which to improve further.
- Improvements in the safety of pupils identified in the monitoring inspection in July 2015 have been embedded. All staff are trained appropriately in the safeguarding of children, including in how to identify and prevent radicalisation and extremism, and in the prevention of child sexual exploitation. Three senior leaders have been trained as designated senior leaders for safeguarding. Scrutiny of the school's records show that concerns are recorded methodically, leaders' actions are appropriate and referrals are made to external professionals when required.
- The safety of pupils, in school and while on off-site visits, has improved further because all adults have received refresher training in the management of challenging behaviour. Adults use effective strategies to reduce the risk associated with the management of challenging behaviour. They use their knowledge of pupils' specific needs expertly to intervene quickly in order to avoid the need for high-risk physical interventions. The school's records show that the number of serious incidents has fallen to less than half compared with a similar period last year.
- The school's single central record is robust. It is well organised and includes a record of who has completed statutory training in the safeguarding of children. The school systematically follows the local authority's guidance on the risk assessment of adults who work at the school. This is strong practice and ensures that pupils benefit quickly from the support of adults new to the school.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. They have devised an improvement plan which maps out appropriately the steps required to move the school further forward towards becoming outstanding. Key priorities identified in the action plan are linked closely to teachers' performance management targets and their professional development priorities. Leaders' records show that teachers are held routinely to account about improvements in their pupils' progress. However, systems to hold teaching assistants to account for their impact on pupils' learning are not yet robust enough to ensure that this group of staff has the maximum effect on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders' arrangements to measure and track the large majority of pupils' progress are strong. Leaders have an accurate understanding of how well most pupils progress, compared to their peers in other schools. Strong links with similar schools within the local authority and across the region have ensured that teachers' assessment information is robust. As a result, leaders evaluate rigorously the impact of their actions on pupils' learning. However, leaders recognise they need to do more to ensure that this system carefully measures the very small gains made by the least-able pupils in all their subjects.
- The leadership and management of teaching are strong. Systems to monitor and improve the quality of teaching are effective. Middle leaders play a key role in the improvement of teaching, often leading by example in order to hone teachers' skills. For example, middle leaders have modelled good practice in the use of more age-appropriate activities as a means of strengthening teaching. Records of follow-up observations show that teachers have acted on this guidance, which has resulted in improvements to pupils' progress.
- Leaders have been bold in their reorganisation of the school's year group and class system. By bringing pupils of similar ages together in specific areas of the school, leaders have ironed out the inequalities, such as in the rates of progress between different key stages, identified at the previous inspection. Pupils are now taught in age-appropriate settings and are flourishing in their new learning environment.
- The school's spending of government grants, such as the pupil premium funding, primary sports funding and the Year 7 catch-up funding, is effective in raising the achievement of pupils eligible for support. For example, additional speech and language therapy is provided to all pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. Assessment information shows that 85% of these pupils made at least good progress towards their specific communication targets. This is in line with their peers in school and is good use of additional public funds.
- The school's curriculum, including lunchtime and after-school clubs, provides a rich variety of experiences, which promote successfully pupils' academic, personal and social skills. Pupils' work, shown in displays around the school and in their books, is an apt record of how pupils are immersed in cultural heritage and

diversity, British values and an appreciation of the views of others. Pupils are prepared well for their next steps and for life in modern Britain, because the school's work is steeped in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

- A very high proportion of pupils move on to suitable placements when they leave Lansbury Bridge. This success is often bolstered by pupils' experience gained while on alternative placement during Key Stage 4. Pupils develop a range of life skills and vocational skills, for example in construction, in a selection of local schools and colleges. Pupils receive good advice and guidance from independent advisors. Consequently, pupils' choice of post-16 placement is well informed and successful.
- Leaders have made excellent use of the support of the local authority. Local authority and independent consultants, along with a national leader of governance, have provided the school with both challenge and guidance. As a result, leaders have been effective in remaining on track with their improvement plans.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is a strength of the school. The collective experience and expertise of the governing body has been bolstered as a result of the judicious recruitment of new governors. The governing body has ensured that effective systems are in place to safeguard pupils, manage challenging behaviour safely and check the suitability of all adults who carry out work at the school.
 - Governors are informed well about the impact of the school's work. They have an accurate understanding of pupils' progress and can gauge for themselves the impact of leaders' actions on pupils' learning and personal development. Governors use their deep knowledge to question and challenge leaders about progress in all aspects of the school's work. For example, records of governing body meetings show that governors discuss frequently topics such as pupil progress information, the support offered by leaders to teachers implementing the new assessment system, and the use of the school's additional funding.
 - Governors play an active role in the determination of teachers' and the headteacher's pay. As a result of their thorough grasp of how the quality of teaching impacts on pupils' outcomes, they have an informed understanding of the way leaders administer the school's performance management systems.
 - Following the previous inspection, governors acted swiftly to appoint a named governor with responsibility for safeguarding. This governor has suitable experience and has undertaken appropriate training. The named governor makes regular and frequent visits to school in order to check the school's safeguarding procedures. As a result of the named governor's actions, all governors are well informed about the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The strong progress reported at the previous monitoring inspection has been maintained. Leaders' records of their monitoring of teaching, along with reports provided by external consultants, show that there is no inadequate teaching. This view is corroborated by inspectors' observations and by evidence of pupils' good progress in a range of subjects.
- Leaders have increased the amount of time that pupils have for learning. By restructuring the school into age-appropriate areas, leaders have reduced the need for pupils to travel unnecessarily around the school. Furthermore, the stress experienced by many pupils during lesson changeover has also been reduced. This has led to a calmer start to most lessons. The combination of these consequences has contributed significantly to improvements in pupils' progress.
- Teachers' assessments of what the large majority of pupils know and can do are accurate. Links with other schools have provided leaders and some teachers with the opportunity to check the accuracy of their assessments with colleagues elsewhere. This, along with the sharing of good practice already in the school, has resulted in a more precise understanding of pupils' abilities. The accurate information is used by teachers to plan lessons which are typically well matched to pupils' specific needs. However, when teaching is less effective, work does not meet the needs of pupils, particularly those who are most able; on these occasions pupils lose interest and make less progress than they could.
- Teachers' feedback to pupils follows closely the school's policy and contributes well to improvements in pupils' learning. Verbal and written acknowledgement of pupils' success and failure help the pupils understand what they have done well and how they can improve next time. In a very small number of

instances, teachers do not sufficiently challenge the most-able pupils to deepen their learning.

- The teaching of communication skills is strong in all areas of the school. Teachers and other adults use well their understanding of each pupil's preferred method of communication so that pupils grow in confidence during their time at the school.
- Improvements in the teaching of reading, seen at the previous inspection, have been embedded. Pupils have access to appropriate reading materials in all classrooms. Dedicated reading areas, including the improved library area, have raised the profile of reading across the school. Pupils from Years 6 and 7, who read to inspectors, enjoy reading; they were able to decipher hard words by sounding them out or through recall. Some pupils did not always understand the meaning of words they could read; this limits the progress of a few of the most-able pupils.
- The effective communication between teachers, teaching assistants and other specialist staff, such as therapists and welfare assistants, ensures a consistent approach to the meeting of pupils' specific needs. In turn, pupils' progress is often good in all areas of the school. For example, pupils respond and develop equally well in the playground, while taking part in physical education, at lunchtimes and in therapy sessions, because all adults demonstrate similarly high expectations.
- Parents spoken to, along with the large majority of those who responded to the online survey, said that their children were taught well and that they receive appropriate information about their child's progress. They agreed that communication between the school and parents is strong and that it helps them to support their children's progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Adults at the school are unrelenting in their efforts to ensure that these pupils benefit from similar experiences to their peers in mainstream schools. Records in school show a vast array of visits, visitors and activities, including football, fashion, drama and gymnastics clubs. During the inspection, every pupil took part in one of two Christmas productions and a whole-school Christmas lunch. The impact of such a variety of experiences in preparing pupils for their next steps is exceptional.
- The personal development and welfare of pupils who attend alternative placements in local schools and colleges is strong. The adults who support pupils in their alternative placements ensure that providers are acutely aware of pupils' specific needs. As a result, pupils benefit from experiences which are well matched to their interests and ability.
- Pupils are proud to attend Lansbury Bridge School and they take pride in everything they do at the school. There is an air of calm around the school because of the care, tolerance and respect with which pupils treat one another, adults and visitors to the school. Parents agree that pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils' views are sought by leaders and other adults on a frequent basis. Pupils are encouraged to speak out and put their point of view forward. They have an appropriate understanding of democracy, exemplified by elections in which pupils voted to appoint a head boy and a head girl, and a student leadership team.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the difference between right and wrong. As they move through the school, pupils broaden their understanding of how Britain is governed. Visits to a local police station are helping groups of pupils to develop an appropriate understanding of the rule of law in England.
- Pupils are frequently given responsibilities commensurate with their ability. Adults sensitively provide support so that pupils can experience, safely, independence similar to that of their peers elsewhere. For example, one pupil was observed taking a note to the school office. This pupil was followed at a safe distance by a teaching assistant so that the pupil experienced taking responsibility for his own behaviour. These actions contribute well to the development of pupils' excellent social skills.
- Pupils are safe in school. They and their parents also feel that this is the case. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Older pupils receive lessons in how to keep themselves safe online, in sex and relationships education, and in the dangers of smoking and the misuse of drugs.
- Leaders' records of behaviour incidents show that bullying incidents are rare. Incidents of bullying reported since the previous inspection were one-off incidents resulting from the falling out of pupils. Nevertheless, adults take appropriate action and make accurate records, which can be used to pinpoint patterns of bullying at an early stage.
- Leaders take prompt and effective action when they identify issues which could be a threat to the welfare

of pupils. For example, governors' scrutiny of the school's accident log showed a pattern of injury linked to a door in a specific area of the school. Swift action by the site manager to alter the door resulted in a significant reduction in the number of injuries to pupils in this area of the school.

- The school's systems and procedures to care for pupils who require additional welfare support are strong. From the moment pupils arrive at school in the morning to the time they leave in the evening, adults are devoted to their well-being. Pupils are undeniably happy in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils, including those who attend alternative provision, is good. The large majority of parents who responded to the online survey, along with all those spoken to, agree that this is the case.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, as is their attendance at school. Although absence levels are above the average of those in all other schools nationally, higher levels of absence are often linked to the medical needs of a significant proportion of pupils. Support is given by the school to those who are absent for long periods. However, the school does not yet have a system to track and monitor the impact of this action on this group of pupils.
- In a small proportion of lessons, a few pupils can become distracted. This is because teachers do not ensure that activities are interesting or appropriate enough to engage pupils when they are left for short periods of time to work on their own.
- Teachers do not encourage pupils to demonstrate outstanding behaviour frequently enough during lessons. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to allow pupils to manage their own behaviour for learning. As a result, pupils are compliant and conduct themselves well, but do not deepen their learning through, for example, exploring subject matter and finding solutions to problems for themselves.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Since the previous inspection, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has improved and is now good. Current pupils have progressed well, particularly since the restructuring of the school to age-appropriate teaching areas.
- Evidence in pupils' workbooks and files, on display in corridors and in classrooms, and in teachers' and leaders' records, shows that pupils of all ages progress rapidly in a range of different subjects, including art, history, music and physical education.
- Assessment information shows that no groups, for example those eligible for free school meals or looked after children, perform less well or better than others in the school. The proportion of pupils making the expected rate of progress in English and mathematics, based on their various starting points, compares favourably to that of other pupils nationally.
- A good proportion of pupils who are identified by the school as being the most able gain a selection of relevant academic and vocational qualifications, some to GCSE level. This is an indication of good progress for these pupils. However, inspection evidence shows that opportunities to provide an appropriate level of challenge for these pupils is sometimes missed. Consequently, they are not making as much progress as they could across the school.
- The vast majority of pupils who leave school at the end of Key Stage 4 secure places in local schools and colleges. Pupils are prepared well for this transition and have a high rate of success in their new placements.
- The group of pupils identified by the school as being least able have some success in developing in their early literacy and numeracy skills. However, the school's system to evaluate precisely the progress made by this group of pupils across all their subjects is not sufficiently refined to enable a secure judgement on the quality of their progress.

The early years provision

is good

- Without a doubt, the move of the early years provision into the Bridge building in September 2015 has been positive. Every opportunity is taken to immerse pupils in learning experiences. Children enter a lovely learning area with interactive displays, soft play areas and dedicated learning spaces. They benefit from a safe outdoor area, which ensures learning can be continuous, inside and out.

- Leadership of the early years provision is good. Leaders and other adults make good use of their partnerships with parents, particularly in identifying children's specific needs. Teachers use this information well to plan learning activities which provide appropriate learning experiences in a range of contexts. Good teaching and the resilience built through a variety of experiences prepare pupils effectively for their transition into Year 1.
- Adults build strong relationships with children because routines are established quickly and effectively. As a result, many children in this area of the school begin to develop their early communication and language skills effectively. Some, including those eligible for additional grants, receive extra specialist support. As a result, these children also begin to make good progress in areas of learning such as their understanding of the world, communication and language and their physical development.
- Children are safe and cared for well in this area of the school. The building and outdoor play area is secure. Systems to keep children safe and record concerns are to the same standard as those in the rest of the school.
- Leaders are yet to secure children's outstanding progress because more still needs to be done to bring the quality of teaching and resources, such as the outdoor provision, up to the very highest standard. For example, by ensuring that children have greater opportunities to experience appropriate forms of numbers, letters, words and phrases, including when they play outside.
- On a few occasions, teachers do not match learning activities well enough to children's specific needs or interests, for example when a child is left for a very short period to learn by themselves. Learning slows because children's attention wanes when they are not given an activity which stimulates them effectively.

School details

Unique reference number	134865
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10004122

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	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Christine Tyler
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Grecic
Telephone number	01744 678579
Website	www.lansburybridge.st-helens.sch.uk
Email address	Jane.grecic@sthelens.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 December 2014

Information about this school

- The school provides education for pupils with a range of special educational needs, including moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, physical disabilities and sensory impairments. A large proportion of pupils also have autistic spectrum conditions.
- All of the pupils attending the school have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- Education is provided for children in the early years on a full- or part-time basis, depending on their readiness for full-time school. Children in the early years are taught in three groups, separate from the Key Stage 1 pupils.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those pupils who are looked after by the local authority.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and most are boys.
- The school uses Mill Green Special School, Penkford School and two local colleges, Carmel College and St Helens College, as alternative placements for Year 11 pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Since the last inspection, monitoring inspections to assess the school's progress towards the removal of special measures were carried out in March 2015 and July 2015.
- The inspection was carried out with half a day's notice.
- The inspection team observed several part-lessons, two of which were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school and observed all aspects of the school's work, including the school's two Christmas productions and the whole-school Christmas meal. They looked at pupils' work and at the school's records of their progress.
- The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, staff, pupils, parents and a range of other professionals. They also considered the responses by 15 parents on the online questionnaire Parent View.

Inspection team

Drew Crawshaw, lead inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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