

Booker Avenue Junior School

Booker Avenue, Liverpool, Merseyside L18 9SB

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2017

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- From their starting points, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, standards in these subjects, and in science, are at least in line with pupils of this age nationally.
- In other subjects, the school has limited information about pupils' progress. This is because assessments are at an early stage of development.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and interesting curriculum that extends beyond the school day. They talk enthusiastically about their learning in many subjects.
- Across the school, teaching is typically good. At times, teachers do not adapt work well enough to pupils' needs. Support staff make a useful contribution, but are not always used to best effect.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They work hard in lessons and behave well. The vast majority attend school regularly.
- Some potentially vulnerable pupils have low attendance. Improvements are evident, but attendance for some of this group is still not high enough.
- The school provides very good support for pupils who have social and emotional needs.
- Most parents value the school's work.
- The headteacher leads the school well. He has accurately identified the school's strengths and the most important areas for improvement.
- Since the headteacher's appointment, the impact of other senior leaders has improved. This has strengthened the school's capacity for further improvement.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic and committed. However, they do not have a sufficiently comprehensive overview of teaching and learning in their subjects.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is good. However, more information is needed to measure how well small-group teaching is helping pupils to catch up.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. However, more precise information is needed.
- Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. They respect people's differences and have a very good understanding of equality.
- There are good strategies to keep pupils safe. Pupils are confident that adults will listen to their concerns and act upon them.
- Governors provide good challenge and support for leaders. They manage finances well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed good-quality teaching by ensuring that:
 - teachers consistently match work well to pupils' needs, in particular those pupils who have low prior attainment and the most able
 - teachers make consistently good use of support staff throughout lessons.
- Improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities so that it at least equals the national average.
- Continue to improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the school has assessment information to show pupils' achievements in all of the subjects they study
 - further developing the roles of subject leaders in improving provision and outcomes in their subjects
 - measuring more precisely the impact of teaching in the small-group intervention programmes for English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors ensure that pupils receive a good standard of education that prepares them well for secondary school and life in modern Britain.
- The headteacher leads the school well. Since his appointment, the headteacher's commitment and sensitivity in managing change have gained him the respect of staff, governors, parents and the local authority. Strengths identified by the previous inspection have been maintained and some important improvements have occurred.
- Significantly, school leadership is more effectively distributed, resulting in stronger capacity for improvement. Training and support for senior leaders have ensured that they are more effective than previously.
- The coordinator for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities (SENCo) and the leaders for English and mathematics analyse pupils' achievements and regularly check on the quality of teaching and learning. They use their findings to identify actions for improvement and drive these forward. The new approach to teaching writing that was introduced last year is a pertinent example, as is the current work to improve reasoning skills in mathematics.
- There is a very rigorous process for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. This is linked closely to the more robust system of staff appraisal that has been implemented. The regular pupils' progress meetings between leaders and teachers are part of these processes, as are classroom observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Leaders accurately evaluate teaching as good. However, they recognise that some aspects could be more consistent. The most significant of these is the consistency with which teachers adapt work to pupils' different needs. Leaders have identified this and are implementing actions to improve things, including staff support and training.
- While the past year has seen a change to the way classes are organised for English and mathematics lessons, this is not the reason for the inconsistency in teaching. During previous inspections, when pupils were taught in classes organised by ability, similar inconsistencies have been identified. This remains an area for improvement. However, it is relative to the overall good quality of teaching that leaders have sustained.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development exceptionally well. There is an active commitment to teaching pupils to value diversity, and to recognise and celebrate what makes them and others unique. The school's key values are linked closely to the fundamental British values. Together, they are a central and an almost tangible part of the school's ethos.
- Very good provision is made to teach pupils how to stay healthy, both physically and mentally. To this end, the school's long and successful tradition in sport makes a valuable contribution. Now into its second year of operation, the nurture provision for pupils who have social and emotional needs is having a very positive impact on many levels.
- The school's aim to provide pupils with a broad and rich curriculum, with opportunities

for first-hand, practical and investigative experiences, continues to be met. Leaders and governors are planning to review curriculum organisation, not necessarily to change the current organisation, but to confirm that it is the most appropriate for the school's present situation.

- The curriculum has long been seen as one of the school's most successful features. The extensive range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, educational visitors and visits, including residential, remains strong. Pupils and parents speak highly about the learning experiences provided, which enhance pupils' enjoyment and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In some other respects, information about the impact of the curriculum is limited. Apart from English, mathematics and science, there is no information to show how well pupils achieve in different subjects. However, leaders have begun to address this issue.
- Improving assessment is an action point for subject leaders that sits within a wider priority to improve their leadership role. Over time, these enthusiastic and committed leaders have introduced some good practice and are not without insight to strengths and areas for improvement in their subjects. They welcome the opportunities that are now being provided to further their professional development and to make a more strategic contribution to the school's improvement.
- Leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding to improve disadvantaged pupils' attainment and personal development. Until recently, the impact of spending to improve the low attendance of disadvantaged pupils, some of whom have SEN and/or disabilities, has not been evaluated rigorously enough. This year, there is a sharper focus on checking the impact of all aspects of pupil premium funding spending.
- Most parents who responded to the online survey expressed extremely positive views about the school and would recommend it to others. While a minority of parents had some concerns about behaviour and aspects of communication, inspectors found no evidence of weakness in these areas.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a secure overview of the school's effectiveness and priorities for improvement.
- Governors monitor the school's budget carefully, including the pupil premium and the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport. They ask pertinent questions about the difference this money makes to pupils' outcomes and staff development.
- Governors receive comprehensive information from the headteacher and other leaders about the school's work. The training on interpreting performance data they have undertaken supports governors in asking probing questions about pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Some governors hold specific responsibilities for safeguarding, special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils. Further links between governors and subject leaders are being planned.
- The response to the governors' survey of parents' satisfaction with the information they receive at parents' evenings was highly positive. Governors and the headteacher are currently considering further ways to improve communication with parents.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Since the headteacher's appointment, significant improvements have been made to secure the school premises.
- Rigorous checks are carried out to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children. All staff have received safeguarding training and are aware of their responsibilities.
- Staff are vigilant in referring any concerns about pupils' safety to the school's designated safeguarding leader. These are dealt with quickly and, where necessary, specialist support is sought from professional agencies. If this is not promptly forthcoming, the leader is persistent in pursuing matters to ensure pupils' safety. Record-keeping in relation to safeguarding concerns is good. Should pupils have an accident, this is logged and parents are informed.
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe when using the internet. The school's website also provides parents with helpful information about how they can help keep their children safe, including when using modern technology. There are good procedures to prevent and deal with any bullying.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is typically good, with strengths in all year groups. Teachers' good subject knowledge contributes well to pupils' learning and progress.
- Teachers provide clear explanations and demonstrations of new ideas and vocabulary. They use questioning skilfully to check pupils' understanding. In mathematics, for example, teachers expect pupils to explain their thinking and strategies for solving problems. Pupils are required to explain and prove the accuracy of their answers.
- The teaching of reading and writing is also characterised by teachers' typically high expectations. Staff training in the new approach to teaching writing is working very effectively. Pupils are enthusiastic about writing and pay good attention in lessons.
- Teachers are successful in fostering pupils' enjoyment of reading. They provide good opportunities for pupils to read challenging texts to build stamina and increase understanding. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught well in English lessons and reinforced in other subjects.
- Teachers forge good relationships with pupils. For the most part, they use lesson time productively to move learning on and provide useful, ongoing feedback to pupils to increase their understanding. Teachers include pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities well in lessons and ensure that they receive additional help to support their learning.
- Within this typically good picture of teaching there are some inconsistencies. These are not linked to specific subjects, classes or year groups, rather the consistency with which teachers adapt work to pupils' needs. Where this occurs, it is generally the lower attainers whose learning is most affected. Occasionally, the most able pupils' learning is also affected. In each case, pupils' attention and behaviour invariably slip.
- Teachers make mostly good use of teaching support staff. At times, however, these staff are not used effectively enough in all parts of lessons, particularly at the start. Pupils benefit from the English and mathematics catch-up programmes led by support staff. However, leaders recognise that the precise impact of these interventions is not

sufficiently clear. This has already been identified as an area for improvement.

- In the nurture class, teaching is especially effective in building pupils' self-esteem and confidence and improving their behaviour to enable more effective learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) makes a significant contribution to pupils' good outcomes.
- Pupils learn to value and respect diversity and have a sharp understanding of equality. In discussions, many used the phrase 'all different, all equal' to illustrate their understanding.
- Pupils are very clear that prejudice-based language and behaviour are wrong and are equipped to challenge this.
- In a variety of lessons, pupils learn about different cultures, religions and relationships. They are taught about the achievements of notable men and women, throughout history and today, who have campaigned for equality and conquered adversity.
- Teachers capitalise on opportunities to reiterate the school's values and fundamental British values. In a history lesson, for example, pupils explored the concept of democracy in relation to the forms of government of Athens and Sparta.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are very aware of the school's high expectations of their behaviour, think they are fair and try hard to live up to them.
- In lessons, pupils listen with interest because they are keen to learn and the teaching usually engages them. They take pride in their work and present it neatly. When required, they work cooperatively, and readily offer help if their classmates are stuck.
- Lapses in behaviour are mostly the result of work not being matched well enough to pupils' needs. When work is too difficult, too easy or does not inspire pupils, they lose concentration, make less effort or misbehave.
- In the dining hall, on the playground and when moving around the school, pupils behave sensibly and show consideration for others. They are extremely polite to visitors, while at the same time being friendly and candid in sharing their views.
- Pupils demonstrate maturity in their understanding and tolerance of pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour. They do not let this influence their view of the overall standards of the majority. As one pupil said, 'Every kid has their ups and downs.'
- In discussions with inspectors, most pupils were of the view that behaviour is at least good. The large pupils' survey, which was recently undertaken by the school, reflects a consistently positive picture of behaviour by pupils in all classes.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They could explain the difference between

bullying and general misbehaviour. They considered that bullying is rare and were confident in saying that if it happens, teachers deal with it fairly.

- The school gives clear and regular messages to pupils and parents about the importance of good attendance. Most pupils attend regularly and overall attendance is above average.
- By comparison, the attendance of a relatively small number of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is low. This has been the case for the last three years. Work with the local authority education welfare officer appears to have stemmed this trend. However, attendance for these groups of pupils is still below average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The most recent (2017) end of key stage 2 test results for reading indicate that pupils did not make the progress that might have been expected, given their prior attainment. The year before, a similar picture of decline in progress was evident in writing.
- During the inspection, inspectors investigated these issues. From the school's rigorous assessments of pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3, and regularly in each year group thereafter, they make good progress in reading and writing from their prior attainment. This is also the case in mathematics. Robust strategies are in place to assure the accuracy of these assessments.
- Nationally, pupils are now expected to reach much higher standards than when the school was last inspected. Although there was a slight dip in reading standards this year, pupils' attainment was in line with the higher standards that are now expected. In writing and mathematics, standards were above the national averages.
- Pupils are skilled readers. The strong focus that has been given to developing pupils' enjoyment of reading and comprehension skills is supporting their good achievement. The new approach to teaching writing has enthused pupils. Workbooks show good progress. Pupils write competently in a range of styles and with good application of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Pupils are competent mathematicians. They particularly enjoy solving problems and using hand-held technology for the reasoning challenges teachers set to strengthen this aspect of mathematics.
- While there are some differences in boys' and girls' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics, these are not significant. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities also make good progress in these subjects.
- There are some good opportunities for pupils to practise and develop reading and writing skills in other subjects and to use technology.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils attain above average standards in science. The extent to which they make strong progress in other subjects is not known. This is because work in books is too patchy and there is no assessment information.

School details

Unique reference number	104522
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10037774

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	358
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Edwards
Headteacher	Richard Thompson
Telephone number	01517 242941
Website	www.bookeravenue-junior.com
Email address	bookerj-ao@bookeravenue-jun.liverpool.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 December 2012

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the content of the modern foreign language curriculum followed in each academic year on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is just above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and/or progress by the end of Year 6 in reading,

writing and mathematics.

- The current headteacher took up his appointment in September 2014.
- Since the school's last inspection, the school has established a nurture provision for up to 10 pupils who have social, emotional and educational needs (the Haven). Each morning, pupils are taught English and mathematics in this provision. They rejoin their year group classes in the afternoons.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each class, checked pupils' books and listened to some pupils read. They considered the school's assessment information about current pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation. This included leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness and plans for improvement, safeguarding information, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and information about teachers' performance.
- Three formal discussions were held with pupils. Inspectors spoke with other pupils informally in lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors held discussions with the school's senior and subject leaders. The lead inspector had a discussion with two governors and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors considered 53 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View, including 34 written responses. They took account of 127 parent responses to a school survey about parental satisfaction with information provided at parents' evenings.
- There were no responses to the online staff or pupils' surveys. Inspectors considered 338 responses to a pupils' survey undertaken by the school earlier this year. Governors have not formally canvassed staff views.

Inspection team

Margot D'Arcy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Stevens	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Rigby	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.

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