

# Overleigh St Mary's CE Primary School

Old Wrexham Road, Handbridge, Chester, Cheshire, CH4 7HS

**Inspection dates** 13–14 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement requires improvement. Although pupils reach standards above and often significantly above those expected nationally by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make better progress in some classes than in others.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement because its quality varies too much between classes, especially in Key Stage 2. In some classes it is good and occasionally better but in others it is weaker.
- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders, including governors, have not made sure that teaching is at least consistently good across the school and that all pupils achieve well. This is because systems for checking on and improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress have not been rigorous enough and the school has had too generous a view of its own performance.
- Governors have not been rigorous enough in their checking on the school's work and asking why some pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium, have not been achieving as well as they should, especially in Key Stage 2.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children are given a good start to their learning in the Reception classes.
- Attainment has improved in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 to above average.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel safe. They say staff 'are caring and helpful' and they really like the wide range of clubs, trips that 'keep us entertained'.
- High quality relationships support pupils' good behaviour in and out of lessons well. Pupils are eager to learn and proud of their school.
- The senior leadership team, well led by the recently appointed headteacher, are fully committed to improving the school, and teamwork and staff morale are strong.
- The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- There is good support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 teachers covering 27 lessons, listened to pupils reading and scrutinised pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a wide range of documents including the school's improvement plans, monitoring files, minutes of the governing body meetings, data on pupils' past and current progress, and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of the 43 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own surveys of parental views.

## Inspection team

Chris Maloney, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jennifer Platt	Additional Inspector
Maria McGarry	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. The number of pupils on roll has reduced significantly since the last inspection as the school moved to two classes in each year group following the reorganisation of local schools.
- A below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children from service families.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The recently appointed headteacher started at the school in September 2012. There have been significant changes in membership of the governing body since the last inspection.

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

- To improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - reducing the amount of time teachers spend on explanations so that pupils have enough time to get on with their work
  - giving pupils enough information on how to improve their work and providing time for them to respond to advice given
  - ensuring all teachers provide pupils with work that gets the best out of them so they make the best possible progress in all lessons
  - reducing the number of worksheets so that pupils have more opportunities to work things out for themselves and explain in writing how they solve problems.
- Accelerate pupils' progress by:
  - increasing the proportion of pupils who exceed expected progress and so raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, especially in Key Stage 2
  - ensuring pupils improve their problem-solving skills in mathematics
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to develop their writing and spelling skills
  - ensuring all pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work
  - improving the achievement of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium so that they make the best possible progress.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that actions planned by the school's leaders make it clear how they will improve the progress of all pupils
  - checking the quality of teaching more closely and making sure teachers know precisely how to improve
  - developing the role of subject leaders so that they can support senior leaders in regularly checking on the progress of pupils so that prompt actions are taken when any are not achieving as well as they should
  - ensuring that the governing body is fully informed so that it can more effectively check on the quality of the school's work and the rate of pupils' progress, particularly those known to be eligible for the pupil premium.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children enter the Reception classes with skills that are typical for their age. They settle quickly due to the stimulating environment, well-established routines and caring and skilled staff. As a result, children do well in all areas of their learning, especially in their reading and writing and enter Year 1 with skills and abilities above those typically found for children of their age.
- Most pupils continue to do well in Key Stage 1 so that they usually leave Year 2 with standards significantly above those expected for their age in reading and writing, and above those expectations in mathematics. There was a dip in pupils' attainment in reading and writing in 2012 to above average. However, some pupils do not do as well as they should in this key stage, especially in writing and mathematics, because the work they are set does not enable pupils to make the best possible progress.
- Although by the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards generally significantly above those expected nationally in reading and writing and above expectations in mathematics, their progress varies within class and from one class to another, which means that pupils' achievement requires improvement overall. Inconsistent progress, in Key Stage 2 particularly, results in weaknesses in the ability of some pupils to solve mathematical problems, make the best use of data or write sentences that fully explain their ideas clearly and at length. There are also weaknesses in pupils' presentation skills and spelling.
- Pupils generally do well in their reading because the sounds that letters make are well taught, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Pupils' reading skills develop systematically in Key Stage 2. This is particularly helpful for those pupils who join the school with English as an additional language who achieve well.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar and sometimes better than other pupils in school because their individual needs are identified early and effectively met through support specifically for them.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium do not do as well as others in school because their progress has not been checked closely or steps taken quickly enough to support them when they are at risk of falling behind.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is good and occasionally better in some year groups. However, it is not consistently good enough across the school resulting in pupils not always doing as well as they should. Therefore, the overall quality of teaching requires improvement.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge. There are strengths evident in all lessons. These include very positive relationships, which boost pupils' self-confidence, and the use of skilled teaching assistants to support the learning of those pupils with special educational needs. In the best teaching seen, teachers plan work that is pitched at the level to meet the full range of pupils' abilities, helping them to learn quickly and build up their skills. Such lessons involve creative, practical learning activities, often in pairs and groups that keep pupils interested and wanting to learn.
- In an example of the best teaching, Year 6 pupils produced high quality writing as a result of the teacher's high expectations, skilled teaching that built on prior learning about the 'Blitz' and the effects of the war on families, and by the class teacher acting as a journalist. The teacher was also quick to check on pupils' understanding, so that they could improve their writing, and also used very effective praise and rewards to encourage pupils to produce their best work.
- Where teaching is less effective, teachers spend too much time explaining work and pupils are asked to complete tasks that are too easy or too hard. In these lessons, not all pupils make the best possible progress. In addition, some teachers' overuse of worksheets limits pupils' progress.

in presenting their work well, with accurate spelling and in logically explaining how they solve mathematical problems.

- Although the quality of marking has begun to improve in recent weeks, particularly in writing, it often lacks specific pointers on how pupils can improve their work, such as through reference to their targets for improvement, in order to help them make faster progress. Even when the advice given is good, progress is often limited by teachers not providing opportunities quickly enough for pupils to respond to the guidance given.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils are courteous, well mannered, sensible and helpful. They get on well with each other and with all the adults. A typical pupil view is, 'I like this school because it is fun and all the adults keep us safe and care for us.'
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and are eager to learn. This is shown by their attendance which is above average and their good behaviour both in lessons and around school. Pupils say that behaviour is at its best and they learn most when they do exciting work, have opportunities to work with others and when activities test their abilities. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare and teachers and support staff manage behaviour well because they understand and follow the school systems for rewards and sanctions. However, when teaching is not good some pupils do not always pay attention to the teacher and their interest wanes.
- A strong feature of the school is the inclusive ethos and how well all pupils get on, support each other and welcome those from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. Pupils quickly make friends and enjoy the many clubs that take place before and after school and during lunchtime, such as a variety of sports clubs, orchestra, street dance and learning French.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of responsibilities they can take, such as being a school monitor, helping with younger children or being a member of the Eco Team who help make sure the school saves energy, and have been instrumental in the school having its own rain water storage system.
- Pupils show a good understanding of the various forms that bullying may take, including name-calling, cyber-bullying and bullying as a result of prejudice. However, pupils are confident that on the rare occasions bullying takes place, staff in school deal with it effectively and quickly. Pupils report they feel safe and understand how to keep safe. Older pupils know a great deal about staying safe on the internet. Parents agree that their children feel safe.
- Inspectors agree with the overwhelming view of parents that behaviour is good.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders, including governors, have not ensured that the achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching are consistently good across the school.
- The recently appointed headteacher has quickly gained a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that need to improve. Staff morale is high because the new leadership team has ensured that all who work in the school know how they can help to make the school more successful.
- Although school plans are focused on improving pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, their effectiveness has not been checked rigorously enough. Furthermore, the planned actions are not precise enough to bring about the improvements required. The school's judgements of its own performance have been historically too generous, resulting in leaders having too rosy a view about how well all pupils are learning across the school and how effective teaching has been.
- The progress of different groups of pupils across the school has not been checked closely or

often enough. This has resulted in underachievement being missed, for example, that of pupils supported by the pupil premium and uneven progress being made, especially in Key Stage 2.

- Teaching is observed regularly but the outcomes have not been linked robustly enough to pupil progress as part of performance management. This has resulted in teachers not being held fully to account for whether all pupils in their class are making the best possible progress.
- The leadership of special educational needs within the school is strong and the coordinator tracks pupils' progress closely to ensure they are being given the support they need to achieve as well and sometimes better than other pupils in school.
- Subject leaders are keen and enthusiastic but their role is underdeveloped as they have not been aware of the progress being made by pupils in each year group so have not been able to help where it is most needed.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and is enriched with art and drama, clubs, visits and visitors. Years 5 and 6 enjoy residential visits to France and Conway. The school also benefits from links with schools in France, China, Belize and Kenya and its impressive work on helping pupils understanding of how to help the environment through its Eco Team.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory guidance. The school ensures that rigorous checks are made on all staff and visitors so that pupils are kept safe.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and would recommend it to another parent. However, a small number did not agree.
- The local authority has provided light touch support since the last inspection although its view of the quality of the school was more positive than that found by inspectors.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - There have been significant changes in the membership of the governing body since the last inspection. New members have been successfully integrated and plans drawn up to improve the effectiveness of the governing body. Governors are enthusiastic and supportive of the school and determined to help it succeed. Although they ensure performance management is in place, they are not fully involved in monitoring the impact of this on pupils' achievement. Until quite recently, governors have not been robust enough in checking on the work of the school, the quality of teaching and the progress of different groups of pupils across the school, especially those eligible for the pupil premium.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111290
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	403145

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	421
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Dawson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anthony Hadfield
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 February 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01244 981700
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