

# Tilston Parochial CofE Primary School

Church Road, Tilston, Malpas, Cheshire, SY14 7HB

**Inspection dates** 27–28 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress from their broadly average starting points and, by the end of Year 6, usually reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Girls' progress is particularly strong. In some year groups, girls' achievement is outstanding.
- Teaching overall is usually good. Some teaching in the school is outstanding.
- The feedback that pupils get about their work and progress is excellent. Pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do next. They value and respond to teachers' guidance in order to improve the quality of their work and extend their learning.
- Pupils are courteous and respectful. They look smart, work hard in lessons, show care for each other and maintain high standards of behaviour at all times. Their attitudes to learning are superb.
- Pupils feel valued and very safe at school because staff provide a high standard of care.
- Teaching and achievement have improved since the previous inspection because of the hardworking, well-informed and clear-sighted leadership provided by the headteacher and governors.
- All senior staff lead by example and set high standards for themselves and others.
- Staff embrace innovation. They plan many exciting activities, and involve pupils in decision making.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching over time is good, not outstanding.
- Boys' progress is not as fast as girls'.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, five of which were joint observations with the headteacher, and made several short visits to other lessons. In addition, the inspector observed an assembly, the school's before- and after-school care, and listened to pupils read.
- The inspector observed the school's procedures and pupils' behaviour at the beginning and the end of the school day, at lunch and break times, and at the after-school club.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, school leaders and governors. A telephone conversation with a local authority representative also took place.
- The inspector took account of 25 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). He also looked at the results of the school's own survey of parents' views, talked to parents at school, and considered the responses to the inspection staff questionnaire.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included information about pupils' progress, school improvement plans, and records of governing body meetings. The work in pupils' books and on display, records relating to the quality of teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Martin Pye, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Tilston Parochial CofE Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes: one Early Years class, one Key Stage 1 class and two Key Stage 2 classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is similar to that seen in most other schools. The proportion supported at school action is smaller than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, for children who are looked after by the local authority, and pupils whose parents are serving in the armed forces.
- Nursery age children attend on a part-time basis and join in many activities with the reception age children in the Early Years class.
- The school provides before- and after-school care and this was checked as part of this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

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

- In order to raise standards further, especially for boys, improve the quality of teaching to outstanding, by:
  - making sure teaching always builds carefully on what pupils already know so that the work they are given is not too hard
  - giving all staff the chance to observe and learn from teachers' excellent questioning that routinely happens in some classes
  - checking that explanations are only as long or as short as they need to be so that pupils get the guidance they need in order to learn and make progress, but are not kept back when they are ready to get on with their work
  - further strengthening the partnerships with other schools in order to share and learn from good practice, widen the influence of leadership, and provide even more opportunities for pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils do well at Tilston Primary School. From starting points that are broadly in line with age-related expectations when they first start school, pupils make good progress and usually reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are above average by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. Over time, the progress made by girls has been particularly strong.
- Most children start in nursery with knowledge and skills that are in line with those typical for their age. Children's progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and they are well prepared for their start in Year 1.
- This good progress continues across Key Stage 1 and pupils reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are just above average.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils do well in both classes. The small numbers in each year group mean that one pupil can have a significant impact on test statistics; either pushing results very high or causing them to dip. In 2013, for example, this factor caused the mathematics results at the end of Year 6 to dip to average, after being well above average for the two previous years. Attainment in English, however, has been consistently above average for the past three years.
- Pupils' current work and attainment shows that there is good achievement in all year groups. The current Year 6 pupils are already working at above average standards in both English and mathematics.
- The small number of pupils in each year group also makes it difficult to carry out a meaningful analysis of the achievement of different groups of pupils. The analysis of the in-school gaps between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils, for example, does not identify any particular trend or pattern because the pupil numbers are too small. However, it is clear that both groups of pupils make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Examining the data for boys and girls, however, indicates that girls' achievement over time tends to be stronger than that of the boys. This is not the case in every year group but, taking all pupils into account, including those who have recently left and those currently in school, it can be concluded that, while the boys make good progress, the girls sometimes make outstanding progress.
- Achievement in reading is strong for all groups of pupils. In the most recent Year 1 phonic screening check (a check on pupils' knowledge and understanding of letters and the sounds they make), nearly all the pupils exceeded the standard expected for their age. Across the school, pupils have many opportunities to read and explore books; they regularly read for pleasure and for research purposes, and enjoy the stories that their teachers read to them.
- At the time of the last inspection, the school was advised to provide more challenge for the most able pupils. This recommendation has been followed up with rigour. The high level of work now being successfully tackled by the brightest pupils is impressive.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given bespoke support and this helps them to make good progress as they move through the school.
- In all classes, pupils achieve good, and sometimes excellent, standards in many different subjects. Teachers often link subjects together in clever ways in order to get the best from pupils and there is no doubt that all have equal opportunity to succeed.
- In addition, the recently received primary school sport funding has been put to good use to provide expert tuition for staff and pupils and to make sure that a range of different competitive sports and team games, including netball, rugby, athletics and cross-county running, happen regularly.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Pupils' achievement is good because teaching is good. The quality of teaching in the Years 5 and 6 class is outstanding.
- A key factor that has helped to improve the quality and impact of teaching since the previous inspection is the attention that school leaders give to pupils' work and progress. Teachers' marking is excellent. Regular, and often detailed written comments focus on strengths and areas for development and prompt pupils to reflect, respond and improve their work. A whole-school system is implemented with effective consistency; letting pupils know exactly how well they are doing and challenging them to do even better.
- Pupils also check their own and each other's work and are clearly very used to doing this. Older pupils, in particular, display a mature ability to provide and receive constructive advice. They are quick to identify and praise excellence, and equally quick to learn from it in order to improve their own work.
- Reflective, evaluative routines also shine out as a feature of teaching. In an upper Key Stage 2 lesson, for example, pupils' literacy work about a character from local folklore was used to inspire a mathematical challenge based on shape. The teacher gave pupils just the right amount of guidance to fire their thinking; she asked them well-crafted questions to check their understanding and then, through the school's *'think, pair, share'* routine prompted them to generate ideas, identify and consider problems; and then to explain, discuss and refine their plans. Consequently, pupils were able to apply their skills in order to find solutions and all made rapid progress.
- While staff have been able to observe teaching across this school and in others, more could be done to share and learn from the most effective practice, especially questioning skills, in order to improve teaching further; not just in this school, but in other schools, too.
- While teaching usually provides pupils with sufficient guidance, just occasionally, pupils do not get the explanations that they need. Sometimes, when explanations are too complicated or too brief, or do not build carefully on earlier teaching, a few pupils get stuck because they are not sure what to do. At other times, brighter pupils do not speed ahead in their learning because unnecessary explanations hold them back when they are ready to get going.
- In all classes, staff and pupils embrace innovation. Handheld technology is routinely used to good effect and there are many thoughtful, but often simple, everyday routines and devices that make pupils stop and think hard about their learning.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. This outstanding behaviour, as seen at the time of the previous inspection, has been maintained and, according to the pupils, has got even better.
- Pupils' attitudes to school, to learning, and to others are superb. In lessons, they want to learn, show keen interest and always do their best. They do all they can to help and support each other's learning and well-being.
- Pupils are smart, tidy, polite and helpful. They respond well to the high expectations of adults and also take a lead by being good role models for others.
- Pupils move around the school building with a purposeful calmness and, while playtimes are lively and busy, all look out for each other and conflict of any type is rare. When disagreements or upsets do occur, the pupils often manage to sort things out themselves and older pupils are quick to help, if needs be.
- Pupils who attend the before- and after-school club maintain the high standard of behaviour seen during the school day and make good use of the time and activities available to them. Older pupils frequently use this time to get on with their homework.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils' safety is given the highest priority. Supervision levels are high, procedures are robust, and expectations are clear. The school's systems for managing risk are well informed and sensible. Pupils are very well

cared for by staff; their individual needs are known and their talents are nurtured.

- Pupils of all ages are adamant that bullying does not happen. They have a very good understanding of different types of bullying and explain that if it ever did occur, then they would stop it. The pupils are confident that they could probably manage to do this by themselves because no one would accept such behaviour. However, they also say that any adult in the school would help them, if this proved necessary.
- Pupils' suggestions about how to improve teaching and learning, or an aspect of school life, make a very real difference because the adults listen, respond and engage them in many of the school's decision-making processes. The children's committee, for example, demonstrates an impressive track record of bringing about change for the better and committee members say that the adults trust them to take the lead and to act responsibly. Consequently, pupils develop positive and optimistic attitudes and display high levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- Attendance overtime is broadly average, although this year the attendance rate so far is higher than the figures for previous years. Generally speaking, pupils rarely miss school without good reason but records show that a few families do sometimes break this rule.
- Records confirm that there have been no pupil exclusions for at least three years.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- Teaching has improved, achievement has risen, and pupils' behaviour is still of the highest standard because of outstanding leadership and management.
- The headteacher is hard working, efficient and well organised. His vision for the school to be a place where all achieve the highest possible standards within a caring and supportive environment is apparent to all. He is prepared to make tough decisions when necessary and his systems for checking, and improving, the performance of staff and pupils are thorough and ambitious.
- The leadership structure in the school is very effective. Senior staff demonstrate high standards in their own practice and have a detailed understanding of what is happening in the school. They can analyse reasons for successes so far and readily embrace change in order to drive forward further improvements. Leaders at all levels lead by example, setting high standards for themselves and others.
- The curriculum offers pupils a breadth and depth of study across a range of subjects and staff often make connections between learning in different subject areas. Leaders, staff and pupils plan many extra activities that add interest and excitement to learning. Recently, for example, pupils organised a 'maths challenge' day and, during this inspection, Key Stage 2 pupils took part in a hockey tournament at the local secondary school. The benefits brought by such events and regular educational trips, including a residential visit, shine out clearly from many colourful displays, project work and through the enthusiastic descriptions offered by pupils.
- In recent times, the school has forged stronger links with other local schools. Sports activities with other schools happen on a frequent basis. In addition, staff have worked with staff from other schools to share practice and training and to help them agree on the criteria for judging standards of pupils' work.
- Leaders are confident that these links have helped to improve practice and increase opportunities for pupils. Inspection findings endorse this view. Nevertheless, it is also clear that this partnership work is still at a relatively early stage of development and that greater use could be made of these links; not only to build further on current work but also to widen the view and influence of the school's leadership.
- Parents express overwhelmingly positive views about the school; 96% of parents who responded to the online questionnaire stated that they would recommend this school to other parents. In their responses to the staff questionnaire, all strongly agreed that the school is well led and managed and that they fully understood the school's aims and ambitions.
- Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided regular support to the school and this has been helpful in raising standards. The local authority has confidence that the current

school leadership has the ability to raise standards even higher.

■ Safeguarding procedures meet current statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has an excellent understanding of its role and puts the different skills of different governors to good use. Consequently, it discharges its duties efficiently and effectively.
- Governors know how well the school is doing because they check its performance regularly. Individual governors meet with staff and all governors receive termly updates about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Their involvement in the staff appraisal processes is as it should be and they ask all the right questions in order to get the information that they need. They make sure that any decisions about pay are properly informed and documented.
- Governors provide a healthy mix of hands-on help, constructive challenge, and strategic forward planning. They hold leaders and staff to account for the outcomes of their work and put the needs of pupils as the key driver for all that they do.
- Governors have a full understanding of the school's finances and, through their analysis of data and regular reports from the headteacher, they know about the impact of specific funding such as 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>	111284
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	430957

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>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	106
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tom Stephenson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Harley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01829 250204
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