

Tushingam-with-Grindley CofE Primary School

Tushingam-With-Grindley, Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 4QS

Inspection dates 29–30 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1, ready to start more formal learning, performing at levels above those expected for their age.
- Pupils make good progress. Over time the achievement of pupils is often better than that found nationally.
- Teachers in this small school know the pupils very well they review progress regularly and take swift action if any pupil is not making the expected or better progress.
- Behaviour is outstanding, not only in lessons, where no time is lost to learning as a result of bad behaviour, but also in the playground and around school. Pupils and their parents say this is a very safe school.
- The headteacher is well respected by the whole school community. She has high expectations and gives good support to staff to help them do their best for their pupils.
- The governing body has a core of very experienced and effective governors. They have a detailed understanding of the school and hold leaders to account very effectively.
- The professional development of all staff is very important. Teachers are supported in developing their skills and, as a result, standards of teaching and learning have improved over time.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics, so pupils' achievement is not so good in this area.
- Pupils do not always have time to make corrections or additions and so the final quality of their work is sometimes not as good as it could be.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons and attended a whole-school assembly.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other members of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of parents were gathered from the 38 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and from the school's most recent questionnaire of parents' views.
- A meeting was held with a group of pupils and the inspector spoke to as many pupils as possible during the period of the inspection to gain their views.
- Staff had the opportunity to complete their own questionnaire and the inspector spoke to as many staff as possible in order to hear their opinions.
- Pupils' work was looked at during lessons and a more detailed review of a sample of work from each class was undertaken to check the quality of work and progress over time, along with detailed case studies of two pupils. The inspector also listened to some pupils reading.
- A range of documents was looked at, including evidence of the progress being made by pupils, teachers' planning and marking, the school's own self-evaluation and improvement planning, and a range of policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average sized primary school.
- Virtually all the pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is well below the national average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, who are in the care of the local authority, or who have a parent in the armed services.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- The small numbers of pupils mean there are mixed-age classes throughout the school, with Nursery and Reception, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 making the four classes.
- The headteacher started at the school in September 2011, since the previous inspection. There have also been significant recent changes to the membership of the governing body.
- In 2013, two of the three teachers who teach classes in Years 1 to 6 were away from school on maternity leave and have subsequently returned.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that standards in writing are as good as those in reading and mathematics by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write at length
 - developing a whole-school approach to writing
 - extending opportunities for writing in all subjects and topics.
- Ensure that pupils have time to make corrections or improvements so that their finished work is of the best possible standard.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- With year groups having only 10 to 15 pupils it is difficult to measure the progress of groups in terms of percentages that compare the school with others. When one pupil makes up 10% of a group, it can appear that there are big swings in attainment from year to year. A more effective measure is to look at the progress of every individual over time from their individual starting points. When this is done it can be seen that a high proportion of pupils are making expected or better progress from their individual starting points in different subjects, including English and mathematics, and throughout the school.
- In the Nursery and Reception class the children make very strong progress after starting school with skill levels broadly in line with those expected for their age. Although there is a wide span in the children's overall level of skills, many start Year 1 with skill levels above those generally found nationally.
- In the 2013 Year 1 screening check in phonics (the understanding of letters and the sounds they make) the outcome was below the national expectation. This was a group in which two-thirds of the 15 pupils were boys, whose reading skills are generally below those of girls at this age. The school has sought to address this by purchasing new reading materials that are seen as more 'boy-friendly'. The tracking of progress is showing that boys are now developing their reading skills more quickly.
- Reading features strongly throughout the school and from the start in the Early Years Foundation Stage phonics are taught well, which helps prepare for reading. For most, the progress made from their starting points is good.
- Good progress from individual starting points is maintained throughout the school and by the end of Year 6 pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education. Over time a high proportion reach the expected levels in the national tests, particularly in reading and mathematics, although the overall picture can be grossly distorted by the very small numbers in each year group. Current standards in writing are not so high as in reading and mathematics.
- The most able receive good encouragement, including through links with the specialist facilities available at the high school, to help them make the most of the talents. Such links are developing and are already providing additional support that is promoting the good progress of the most able.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive excellent support and make good progress. The gap between their performance and that of others narrows over time. Success is often reflected in the fact that pupils who were on the special needs register make such good progress that their names are later removed.
- Some year groups have a high proportion of pupils who need additional help and this can lead to a dip in the overall standards achieved in tests. However, the school's careful tracking shows that individual pupils make good progress. Nearly all are on track to reach expected levels by the time they leave for secondary school. This represents good progress.
- The school uses the pupil premium well to support the small number of pupils entitled to the extra funding. Tracking evidence shows that they make equally good progress as, and achieve similar standards to, their peers.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The teaching of mathematics, reading and writing is at least good over time. As a result most pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well over time in all areas of learning. The school has identified the need to raise standards in writing to match those in reading and mathematics. It has taken steps to improve teaching in this area but it is still too early to judge the impact.
- Writing has been weaker than other subjects. The teaching of writing has not always provided

enough opportunities for pupils to write at length in English or across the whole range of subjects and topics that are taught. The school is now seeking to adopt a whole-school approach to address this but this is not yet well established.

- The close checking of pupils' progress and regular pupil progress meetings between the headteacher and each teacher keep a sharp focus on individuals. When progress is not as expected, immediate steps are put into place and a range of effective, extra programmes and additional group sessions are available. The very effective special educational needs coordinator takes care to measure the impact of such extra help to ensure it is effective. As a result, pupils make good progress.
- The strong relationships between teachers and teaching assistants support pupils, including those who receive the pupil premium, in making good progress. Teaching assistants work alongside teachers and play active roles in supporting pupils, measuring progress and seeking to ensure that pupils are able to do their best.
- The careful allocation of the pupil premium provides additional teaching assistant time that allows them to work effectively with specific pupils. Similarly, additional funding for specific pupils with special educational needs, some of which are complex, allows these pupils to make good progress. It is for this reason that some parents seek places for their children at the school, with nearly three quarters of them living outside the immediate area.
- From the Early Years Foundation Stage expectations of all pupils' attainment are high and work is carefully planned to ensure all can achieve well. This reflects a commitment to equality of opportunity. Pupils, irrespective of their academic ability, learn well and progress is not hindered by mixed-age classes.
- Pupils enjoy their learning very much and there is a really positive climate for learning throughout the school. Pupils are proud of their achievements and it is a sign of the extremely positive relationships that they are prepared to 'have a go' because they know their thoughts will be taken seriously.
- The sharpness of teachers' skills in questioning leads to pupils not only understanding their work but also being able to extend and discuss their ideas. In many classes a 'buzz of learning' reflects the active contribution that pupils make to their learning.
- Teachers mark work regularly and the school policy is nearly always reflected in comments that praise good work but include 'next steps' for making it even better. However, they do not always provide enough time for pupils to make corrections or improvements to make their work the best of which they are capable.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Right through the school, from the youngest to the oldest, pupils are committed and enthusiastic learners. They enjoy coming to school very much and show extremely positive attitudes to learning. Because they enjoy their learning so much and teachers are skilled at helping pupils to learn, no time is lost in lessons to poor behaviour.
- Attendance has improved and is high. Pupils are rightly very proud of their school. A very striking feature of playtime is the extremely positive way in which pupils get on with each other. Boys play happily with girls, the older pupils with the younger. Play-buddies organise group activities and the high-quality play equipment is used extensively, while at the same time pupils realise the value of sharing and taking turns.
- This is a powerful illustration of the extremely effective promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is also seen in the strong commitment to the Christian principles that underpin this church school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. This view is shared strongly by parents and pupils. Pupils insist that because everyone gets on so well bullying is not an issue. At the same time they have learned about bullying in its different forms, including cyber-bullying. They also have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in different situations.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school that supports the progress it has made since the last inspection. There are high expectations and aspirations for pupils and staff. She is well supported by the assistant headteacher, who takes responsibility for the very effective Early Years Foundation Stage.
- In a school that has only four classes all teachers have an element of responsibility for subject leadership. Teachers undertake such management tasks effectively with commitment and dedication. Throughout the school there is a positive sense of teamwork that encompasses all the adults who work in the school.
- Careful monitoring of teaching, planning and marking gives the headteacher an accurate view of the quality of teaching. This fits into the system for managing teachers' performance and setting challenging annual objectives for developing their practice. The process is fully in line with the requirements to link any teacher's pay award with their performance.
- The process also helps the school to meet its priorities for development, identified through a rigorous process of self-evaluation. This has helped the school to identify the comparative weakness in writing and a structure for addressing it.
- The range of subjects and topics, and the care taken to ensure that work matches pupils' different abilities, support good progress. This includes those who benefit from the pupil premium, and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The fact that pupils with a range of disabilities and special needs are full members of the school community reflects the commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The additional financial support given to promote sport has been used effectively. Pupils' active participation has increased through the creation of a local network of small schools competitions and tournaments. Teachers' expertise is also being developed by specialist teachers who are increasing the confidence and expertise of staff.
- Links with parents are very strong. This is an increasingly popular school and in 2013 there were appeals for places because the admission number had been reached. Similarly positive links with a range of other professions are effective, particularly in supporting pupils with additional needs. The local authority provides 'light touch' support to a school it rightly judges as being effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Despite significant changes in the composition of the governing body over the past year it retains the ability to carry out all its statutory duties, including those for safeguarding, effectively. Individual governors take specific roles in monitoring key subject areas and meeting with the teachers who are responsible. The governing body has received training from the local authority that helps it carry out its duties, including training in being able to understand the data on pupils' progress. Members hold leaders to account for this, and compare the performance of their school with that of others. They set challenging annual performance targets for the headteacher and understand the requirements that link teachers' pay with their performance, having adapted the authority's model teacher pay policy to fit the school's needs. They also understand the process for dealing with any inadequate teaching and have clear expectations that teachers on the upper pay scale will undertake additional responsibilities. Governors bring a range of relevant expertise. It enables them to monitor finances effectively and to have a clear view not only of how the pupil premium is allocated but also of the effectiveness in raising achievement in English and mathematics. It is clear that governors are committed to the school and are proud of its achievements.

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

Unique reference number	111285
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	444005

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jannine Davies
Headteacher	Kath Shephard
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2011
Telephone number	01948 820360
Fax number	01948 820451
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