

Leftwich Community Primary School

Old Hall Road, Leftwich, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 8DH

Inspection dates

30 September–1 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Since the previous inspection, the school's effectiveness has improved and is now good.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work exceptionally well together. Supported by a very able middle leadership team and staff, the headteacher has worked tirelessly to tackle the areas for improvement in the previous inspection report.
- Effective leadership has ensured that the early years has improved. Good teaching and effective care and support ensure that children make good progress from their starting point and are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Pupils' progress has accelerated and is now good in all key stages. As a result, standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 have risen. At the end of Year 6, standards are now well above average in reading and mathematics and broadly average in writing.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils, make consistently good progress across the school. There are no particular gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils with non-disadvantaged pupils in the school or nationally.
- The quality of teaching has improved. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils and ensure that learning is both interesting and engaging.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are very respectful towards each other and adults and say that they enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Attendance has improved, and is now above average.
- Parents are of the opinion that their children are exceptionally well cared for and are happy that they are making good progress and achieving well.
- Governors hold the school effectively to account, ensuring that it fulfils its aim to continually improve the quality of teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in writing, particularly in Key Stage 2, is not yet as good as in mathematics and reading. In some year groups, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to practise and apply their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Computing is not yet taught consistently well. Good practice in this subject is yet to be fully shared across the school.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to experience first-hand the cultural diversity of modern British society.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons across all year groups, as well as the teaching for small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised during lessons and separately with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors considered 45 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the school's own surveys of parents' views. A telephone conversation took place with the school's consultant and school improvement partner. Inspectors looked at 18 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- Various school documents were examined. These included the school's checks on the quality of teaching, reports to the governing body by the school's independent consultants and the local authority, development plans, data on pupils' progress, records of pupils' attendance, the school's review of its own performance, records of behaviour and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ben Cox

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is a smaller than average-sized primary school and almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding and pupils make even faster progress, particularly in writing in Key Stage 2 by:
 - ensuring pupils in all year groups have the widest possible opportunities to practise their writing skills in subjects other than in English
 - sharing the good practice that exists within the school among staff so that all staff teach computing well.
- Ensuring that leaders provide pupils with more first-hand experiences of the cultural diversity evident in modern Britain.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is exceptionally well- led and managed by a headteacher who is determined to ensure that the school continually improves. Together with middle leaders and governors, she has been careful to select high quality training and support for teachers and teaching assistants. This has helped to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection.
- The school is well known and respected within its community of schools for its innovative work. This is exemplified through its large format 'floor books' which capture photographic and written information on practical activities and experiments conducted by pupils. Similarly, 'interventions books' enable an immediate dialogue between teachers and teaching assistants on the skills that pupils have attained, and any gaps in their learning that need addressing.
- Staff morale is high. Teachers work well together and routinely share their ideas about teaching reading, writing and mathematics. However, more needs to be done to ensure that teachers' good practice and skills in teaching computing are shared across the school.
- Teachers appreciate the opportunities they have for professional development and training. They are regularly observed teaching and are assessed through checks on their performance, enabling middle leaders to establish how well they are doing and to support teachers in reaching their targets.
- Subject leaders responsible for English and mathematics are well informed and fully involved in improving the quality of teaching. They do this through monitoring the quality of work in pupils' books, analysing trends through pupil progress meetings and observing and supporting teachers.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils benefit from assemblies which focus on Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism, and explore moral and ethical issues through small-group discussions and classroom activities. Pupils are given many opportunities to visit museums and theatres and to perform in orchestras. They are well informed about life in modern Britain, but more could be done to help them to directly experience its cultural diversity.
- The school's plans for improvement, including its development plans and evaluations of its own performance, are very clearly linked together and have helped to tackle any weaknesses or areas for development head-on. However, still more needs to be done to improve the quality of pupils' writing, particularly in Key Stage 2 and to ensure that it is promoted well in subjects other than English in all year groups.
- The school receives light-touch support from the local authority which has most recently helped to identify training and development opportunities. Work to improve the school has been carried out more closely with independent consultants who have, for example, helped to strengthen the school's middle leadership team and improve the teaching of mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well. They have recently carried out a check on members' skills to identify any training needs and to assess the suitability of candidates who apply to be on the governing body. Governors have wholeheartedly supported the school's implementation of its improvement plans, and closely monitor levels of success. They are well aware that pupils' writing skills are improving, but know achievement is not as good as in reading and mathematics.
 - Governors know that teaching has improved because they spend time in school talking with teachers and pupils and receive regular reports on the pupils' progress. They are prepared to reward teachers for their success, but only after they have reached their targets.
 - Governors know that the additional support provided for disadvantaged pupils, in the form of small-group teaching activities, for example, is helping to improve their performance. They make sure that all pupils are able to fully participate in all aspects of school life.
 - Governors know that that the primary school sports fund is used very effectively, and that it is helping to improve the health and well-being of pupils through dance, netball and football for boys and girls, tag rugby and competitive supports. They ensure that it also provides opportunities for teachers to learn alongside professional coaches.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Parents, staff and governors agree. Pupils are polite, welcoming and inquisitive and enjoy coming to school. They say that one of the best things about their school is 'the

learning', and that they particularly like mathematics.

- Behaviour in class is good. Pupils abide by the rules and know that their teachers have high expectations of them. They respond quickly to staff instructions, even when they are very excited. This was the case during a whole-school 'Mad Science' assembly. Although pupils were very excited, it only took a few hand signals from teachers to attract and refocus their attention.
- Pupils are proud of their school and they take care of it. They behave sensibly, including at lunch and break times, and move around the school in an orderly and considerate way.
- Pupils wear their school uniform with pride, and take care when presenting their work. They like to work together, and are especially proud of their 'floor books' which record their practical and investigative tasks.
- On the very few occasions when pupils find it difficult to manage their own behaviour they are well supported and soon cooperate and join in with school activities.
- Attendance has improved considerably this year and is above average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they always feel safe and well cared for. This is because of the school's good system of care and support, the close links that various staff have with families and the community, and the consistency with which behaviour is managed.
- Pupils know what bullying is and say that it rarely happens. They have a good understanding of most forms of prejudice and know that people should not be treated differently because of where they are from or because of how they look. As a consequence, incidents of bullying, including name-calling, are rare.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of cyber-bullying. They know how to stay safe while using the internet and are fully aware that they should never share personal information with anyone online, or go onto websites which are not suitable for children.
- The school's behaviour logs show that very few pupils break the rules and that behaviour is typically good over time. Incidents of exclusions are very rare and pupils are always quickly reintegrated back into school after a period of absence.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes safe and unsafe situations. They acquire this through activities such as 'let's walk', 'let's bike', and first aid.
- Pupils learn about fire safety through, for example, 'smoke busters' in Year 5 and assemblies about fireworks.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and has been very effective in improving the standards attained by pupils across the school.
- Pupils learn in lively, stimulating and carefully thought-out classrooms, where they know how to find their learning targets. Number grids to help them with their calculations and 'interesting' words to extend their vocabulary.
- Teachers plan activities which engage and excite pupils of all abilities and challenge them to achieve to the very best of their ability. This is evident in teachers' planning and was demonstrated in a Year 5 English class. Here, pupils were fully engaged in different writing activities linked to the life of a female dare-devil who plunged over Niagara Falls in a wooden barrel. Pupils showed an exceptionally good knowledge of the story, and skilfully wrote about it using different forms of punctuation and adverbs. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to practice and further develop their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Teaching assistants are well-trained to deliver small-group activities to help to develop pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills. The 'Intervention books' that they use with teachers identify exactly what pupils have learned and serve as an immediate indicator to alert staff of an aspect of learning that a pupil still finds challenging, as well as areas where pupils are making most progress.
- The majority of pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their learning, especially in English and mathematics. This is because teachers' marking and feedback is of an exceptionally high quality. Teachers are skilled at providing written advice, allowing time for pupils to reflect on it, and then checking to see if they have improved their work as a result.
- Teaching is effective in helping pupils to understand how different subjects in the curriculum are linked together. This was evident in a challenging Year 2 geography class where pupils made rapid progress in their understanding of coordinates. Although they had never used coordinates before, they quickly grasped the idea and were able to locate different animals plotted on a grid system. Pupils understood well the importance of using the correct language in their discussions, and that mathematics played a big

part in their problem-solving.

- Mathematics is taught well across the school. Teachers are highly skilled at asking questions and deepening pupils' knowledge of, for example, different calculation methods. Teachers across Key Stage 1 and 2 usually know when to provide support for pupils who may be finding mathematics difficult and when to encourage them to find solutions by themselves or with a classmate.
- Most teachers are confident and skilled in teaching all aspects of computing, including programming. However, computing is not yet taught consistently well. Good practice in this subject is yet to be fully shared across the school.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Since the previous inspection, standards across the school have risen. Pupils' progress has accelerated and is now good in all key stages.
- Unvalidated results from national tests in Year 6 in 2014 show that standards of attainment have greatly improved and are now well above average in mathematics and reading and broadly average in writing. This reflects good progress from their previously starting points at the end of Year 2. School data and inspection evidence shows that current progress through Key Stage 2 is good, although slower in writing. Pupils currently in Year 6 are making exceptionally good progress and are on target to attain well above average standards in all subjects by the time they leave the school.
- In 2013, standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 dipped and were broadly average in reading, writing and in mathematics. Teacher assessments in 2014 show that standards are now average in writing and are very high in reading. Inspection evidence shows that pupils across Key Stage 1 are making good progress in all subjects.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained, and work effectively to boost the progress of whole classes and small groups. Work with Key Stage 1 parents has also helped through the dialogue teachers have with them through pupils' 'challenge books'.
- The school's strong promotion of reading ensures that standards of reading are exceptionally high. Pupils enjoy reading books from a wide range of authors and in different styles and do so regularly. The results of the Year 1 check on pupils' skills in phonics (linking letters and sounds) in 2014 results were higher than in 2013 and above national averages. Those pupils in Year 2 whose phonic skills are not as good as they should be at the end of Year 1 have been well supported and are now back on track.
- Pupils achieve well in writing, although progress through Key Stage 2 is variable. In order to speed up progress, leaders have quickly enlisted the support of writing specialist. They are now providing more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills across the various curriculum subjects. Although this has helped Year 2 and Year 6 pupils to make rapid progress, in other year groups opportunities for pupils to practise their skills are not as good.
- Disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium achieve well. In Year 6 in 2013, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing, and mathematics overall was about one term behind their classmates, and about a term ahead of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Inspection evidence and school data shows that there are no significant gaps in any other year groups. The school's on-going review of achievement of different groups of pupils ensures that equality of opportunity is promoted well.
- Pupils with disabilities or special educational needs are exceptionally well cared for and achieve well. A strong bond exists between school and parents and there are very effective working relationships with specialist, and special schools. These pupils make at least good progress across different year groups, often from very low starting points.
- The most able pupils are challenged to think hard in lessons and they demonstrate a maturity that helps them to make the most of their learning opportunities. The higher proportions of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment at the end of Year 2 and 6 compared to 2013, particularly in reading and mathematics, are indicative of the school's success at meeting the learning needs of the brightest pupils.

The early years provision is good

- Children join the Reception class with skills and abilities that are below those typically expected for their age. They get off to a good start and benefit from good teaching and well-targeted care and support from well trained teachers and teaching assistants. Children quickly settle into routines and know, for example, to put their wellingtons on before playing on the grassed area. The majority reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year and are well prepared for learning in Year 1.

- The leadership and management of the early years are good, as is provision and teaching.
- Staff work well together to plan tasks and activities which interest and engage all children. Their strong relationship with parents and their good training enables them to accurately assess children's skills and abilities and support them well. Teachers and teaching assistants are always at hand to help and intervene in learning when it is necessary. This was illustrated well when a teaching assistant helped children to count apples and to recognise and name different shapes, including circles and squares.
- Children are happy to work together and find out new things in their well resourced and well thought-out indoor and outdoor learning areas. Fenced-off areas enable children to move freely between activities outside of the classroom where they enjoy deciding on their own learning. All children take full advantage of the different Reception class areas and enjoy getting involved in riding scooters, digging, and playing musical instruments. As a result, children behave well, are very positive about their teachers and say that they 'love school'.
- Children access a wide and varied curriculum. This is shown through displays of painting, reading and construction activities and role play areas focusing on developing children's number skills and recognition of letters.

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	111137
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	452028

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Hewitson
Headteacher	Claire Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	17 December 2013
Telephone number	01606 42849
Fax number	n/a
Email address	admin@leftwichprimary.cheshire.sch.uk

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