

School report

Meadow Community Primary School



Dolphin Crescent, Great Sutton, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH66 4SZ

Inspection dates 6–7 May 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher’s outstanding leadership and the excellent support of senior and middle leaders, staff and governors, have led to strong improvements in all aspects of the school’s work.
- Excellent practice is shared, so that middle leadership is constantly improving and driving the school forward. The school is impressive in developing its leaders.
- Teaching has improved. It has an outstanding impact on pupils’ achievement. Staff know pupils well individually and regularly check on the progress they are making. They make sure that all pupils of all ages and abilities are taught very well in reading, writing and mathematics. This helps pupils make excellent progress in lessons.
- Pupils’ excellent progress and high achievement are driven by the school’s aspirational target setting. Ensuring success for every pupil is central to the school’s work.
- In the early years, children make exceptional progress. They leave Reception very well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils are not always given enough opportunities, except in Years 5 and 6, to write at length and develop their writing skills further.
- Pupils who are disabled, have special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language are supported to make exceptional progress and to achieve as well as their peers.
- Skilful teaching assistants make an extremely strong contribution to pupils’ progress. They know exactly what pupils need to learn and support different groups of pupils highly effectively.
- The curriculum has been very carefully planned to ensure that pupils have a range of exciting experiences.
- Behaviour is exemplary in classrooms and during social times in the playground. Pupils are friendly and caring with one another, happily following the excellent example set by older pupils.
- Excellent pastoral care where relationships flourish makes sure that pupils feel safe and secure in school. This results in a happy and caring environment where pupils thrive academically and personally.
- Governors hold the school’s leaders robustly to account for their performance and are very well informed about the quality of teaching. Together with the headteacher, they provide an inspirational vision for the development of the school.

Information about this inspection

- Learning was observed in a range of lessons throughout the school and one observation was made jointly with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors heard pupils reading in Year 1 and Year 5.
- Inspectors discussed the school’s work with members of staff, pupils, the governing body, a representative from the local authority and a group of parents.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation, including that relating to the school’s safeguarding policies and procedures, information about pupils’ progress and attainment, the school’s judgement of its own performance and the school development plan.
- They examined pupils’ work on display and in their exercise books.
- Inspectors spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school’s own survey of parents’ views. Inspectors also took account of the 39 responses to the staff questionnaire completed during the inspection.

Inspection team

Gillian Hunter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Lawley	Additional Inspector
Gillian Burrow	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium, is well-below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to provide support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Pupils attend the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2014. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club for pupils during term time as well as full-time care during the school holidays.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide more chances for pupils to write at length and develop their writing skills further throughout the school in the same way that they do in Years 5 and 6.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and senior leaders have very high expectations. There has been a relentless drive to ensure high levels of attainment and progress since the previous inspection. The headteacher's ambitious vision is fully supported by senior and middle leaders, governors and staff at all levels, who constantly challenge themselves to improve the school's provision for learning. The school's motto, 'Inspiring a love of learning', is understood by every child and adult, and promotes equality of opportunity for everyone. Throughout the school there is a culture of success, with outstanding teaching and exemplary behaviour.
- There has been a relentless focus on the leadership of teaching. There are regular lesson observations, and pupils' work is carefully and regularly checked. This ensures that pupils are making the maximum amount of progress. The successful management of teacher performance has ensured that all staff are committed to the pursuit of excellence.
- Leaders at all levels are fully committed to improving teaching and raising standards even further for pupils. The school's monitoring of its own effectiveness is very robust. The judgement of performance is rigorous and accurate, and leads to highly effective actions to ensure continuous improvement in all areas of school life.
- The role of middle leaders has developed rapidly since the previous inspection because of the headteacher's determination to develop the talents and enthusiasm of all staff to the full. This is making an enormous contribution to the continuous development of the curriculum as staff extend their ambitions for their subjects and for pupils' achievement.
- Pupil premium funding is well used to support the small numbers of disadvantaged pupils. The progress of these pupils is closely monitored through rigorous tracking systems, ensuring that they make the same progress as other pupils in the school.
- Everyone in this school is valued and this is demonstrated by pupils' respect and tolerance for people of other cultures and backgrounds both locally and globally. They understand that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated in the school, which is highly successful in fostering excellent relationships and respect between pupils.
- The curriculum drives a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning for both pupils and their teachers. Children learn extremely well because of the stimulating and interesting curriculum which they study across a wide range of subjects both in and out of the classroom. There are regular visits and visitors to the school, which have provided pupils with high aspirations and possibilities for their future. These include opportunities for enterprise and working with local experts during their recent 'Meadow University Day'.
- Pupils know about the concept of democracy and were able to share their thoughts, opinions and knowledge about the different political parties and the system of voting in this country. They have elections for school councillors and eco councillors and they are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school uses the primary school physical education and sport funding well to promote active lifestyles and physical well-being by involving professional coaches who work with each year group to develop specific skills, in both the pupils and teaching staff. There is a high level of participation in sports and this ensures that pupils stay fit and enjoy healthy lifestyles.
- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are very secure and very effective. All administrative requirements including checks, policies and training are rigorous and up to date. Guidelines for pupils and staff about safe use of the internet are highly effective. Attendance is checked rigorously and has continued to rise since the last inspection. It is above average as a result of the school's positive action.
- The local authority provides effective light touch support for this outstanding school.
- Parents are kept very well informed about the work of the school and about how well their children are doing. Parental support for the school is very positive.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is outstanding. Governors are exceptionally well informed about the achievement of pupils and know in detail how the school is doing when compared to other schools. The continued success of the school is assured because they set the headteacher challenging targets to maintain the exceptional progress that pupils make.
 - Detailed reports from staff, regular meetings with leaders and frequent visits to talk to pupils and check on the work of the school provide governors with an accurate view of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching. They hold leaders fully to account. They know how to support the headteacher should there ever be any teacher underperformance and they oversee performance

management arrangements closely.

- The governing body checks that the pupil premium is spent wisely to support disadvantaged pupils, not just in their learning but also in enabling eligible pupils to access the wide range of enrichment activities on offer.
- Procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare are managed well and reviewed regularly. Governors ensure that equal opportunities are promoted so that all pupils have every opportunity to enjoy all aspects of school life and that there is no discrimination.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The respect that pupils show towards each other and staff makes a strong contribution to the happy and welcoming environment which exists. Pupils play very well together and are kept very safe and happy at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Within classes, pupils display exceptionally positive attitudes to their learning. This is because they are encouraged by dedicated staff who develop pupils' skills carefully. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning. Their books are well presented and reflect the pride pupils take in their work. Records kept by the school show that behaviour is exemplary.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsible roles, for example, as members of the school council and 'transition buddies' when older pupils help younger pupils to settle into their new class. Behaviour is excellent in the before- and after-school clubs. Pupils enjoy the activities provided and benefit from the way links are made to the school curriculum.
- Attendance is now above average and continues to rise. There have been no exclusions in the last two years.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Parents express no concerns over their children's safety and welfare. They recognise how much they have improved. Parents also greatly appreciate the additional care and safety provided in before- and after-school provision.
- Pupils confirm parents' views. They have an excellent understanding of what it means to stay safe and how to deal with potentially dangerous situations. Rules about internet safety are clearly understood throughout the school and pupils know that there are many forms of bullying of which to be aware.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. Bullying and offensive name calling are extremely rare and pupils are adamant that should they occur they will be dealt with swiftly.
- Pupils who are potentially the most vulnerable are cared for and supported extremely well. The school works very closely with those pupils and their families, and has established excellent home-school working relationships.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Pupils achieve very well because teachers have the highest expectations of what they can do. Teachers provide work that is of just the right level of difficulty and this ensures that all pupils make excellent progress.
- Pupils make rapid progress in the acquisition of early reading skills because they are assessed accurately according to their specific stage of development. This allows teachers to plan work which matches pupils' needs, so that they quickly consolidate their knowledge of letters and sounds and are able to join them to make words that they recognise and can pronounce.
- The impact of teaching on reading is strong. Pupils are regularly encouraged to read different types of books, which stimulates their interest. Many pupils become accurate readers from an early age. This is because they have been encouraged to develop a love of reading and talk about the books and authors that they have read.
- In mathematics, teachers have concentrated on ensuring that pupils not only fully understand how to do

calculations but also see the relevance of mathematics when solving mathematical problems in school and at home.

- There have been significant improvements in the teaching of writing since the last inspection and this has resulted in outstanding progress from pupils' starting points by the end of Year 6. In Years 5 and 6, pupils make accelerated progress because they are given extensive opportunities to write at length to a high standard. This is not fully developed in other classes throughout the school.
- Teachers show excellent subject knowledge and skilfully question pupils to assess their learning and understanding throughout lessons. They also provide a stimulating range of resources to support learning and give pupils plenty of opportunities to share their ideas and to learn from each other.
- Teachers carefully assess their pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and adapt their teaching to ensure that concepts and skills are fully understood.
- Teachers work closely with support staff to provide work that is matched to pupils' abilities and that offers a high level of challenge, particularly for the most able and those with disabilities and special educational needs. Pupils are frequently encouraged to share their work with their parents, who are very positive about their children's progress.
- The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress. Teachers ensure that there are no barriers to learning for these pupils and that their English language skills are effectively developed.
- Teachers mark pupils' work very carefully and give pupils helpful hints on how to improve their work. Marking comments also demonstrate the strong supportive relationships that teachers have with pupils. Meticulous marking, and feedback to pupils on the quality of their work and how they can improve it, is a powerful tool very well used by teachers to accelerate pupils' progress. As they mature, pupils are increasingly given opportunities to reflect on their work and decide how they will improve its quality or accuracy.
- Displays around the walls demonstrate the high levels of pupils' achievements in writing and mathematics.
- Learning support assistants are exceedingly well deployed to ensure that individual needs are carefully met. They work very well with teachers to help those with disabilities or who have special educational needs make the best possible progress.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- The majority of children enter Reception with skills and understanding in their language development that are broadly typical for their age. They leave the school at the end of Year 6 with standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are well ahead of those found nationally. This represents outstanding progress.
- As a result of greatly improved teaching, the progress of all groups of pupils currently in the school in reading, writing and mathematics has shown exceptional improvement since the previous inspection. The vast majority of pupils are making outstanding progress. While writing has improved significantly since the last inspection, attainment is not yet as high as it is in mathematics and reading.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is outstanding. Inspection evidence shows that there is no specific pattern in the achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils either nationally or in the school. There are very small numbers of these pupils in each cohort. In 2014, there was no difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 and other pupils nationally in reading; there was a gap of around two terms in mathematics and writing. The gap compared with other pupils in the school was over one term in mathematics and two terms in writing, with no gap in reading. Disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 2 attained better than other pupils nationally and in the school in reading and mathematics, and they were in line with both other groups in writing.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils has continued to accelerate throughout the school because teaching has continued to improve. The learning needs of these pupils is well supported and, as a result of very well targeted use of pupil premium funding, the progress of disadvantaged pupils throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 is outstanding. They are attaining as well as their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same excellent progress as their classmates. This is because their needs are identified early, and they are very well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Other groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic heritages and those who speak English as an additional language, make similarly rapid progress.
- In Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved and continue to improve at a faster rate than nationally. They are now above the national average in all three subjects. This is

because improved teaching since the previous inspection has led to pupils making rapid progress in Years 1 and 2.

- Pupils achieve very well in reading, including those pupils who struggle with language and communication skills in their first few years in the school.
- The most-able pupils achieve exceptionally well. While the proportion of these pupils attaining results of Level 5 or above in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014 was in line with the results in most schools in reading, writing and mathematics, inspection evidence shows that the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining above the national average. A good proportion of pupils are attaining well above the national average and making exceptional progress.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- Children join the Reception classes with skills that are broadly typical for their age. All groups of children make excellent progress whatever their starting points because their learning is closely tracked by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Reading, writing and mathematics skills are developed particularly well and so the majority of the children who join Year 1 are very well prepared for this next stage of their education. Children in Reception are achieving very well and are already performing above expectations and continuing to make rapid progress. This demonstrates impressive and continuing improvement since the previous inspection.
- Currently, children's progress is continuing to accelerate rapidly because the quality of teaching is outstanding. Adults ask questions skilfully and demonstrate new ideas very clearly for the children, checking regularly to ensure that they understand what they are doing and moving learning on quickly, particularly for the most able.
- Throughout the early years, children learn to take turns to share and to help each other. They become increasingly confident in using language throughout their play activities both in the indoor and outdoor areas. Children are able to work alone and with others in small groups. They show that they are able to concentrate on an activity for increasingly longer periods of time. Behaviour is outstanding.
- Leadership is outstanding. The early years leader has built a strong team of teachers and teaching assistants so that they have an extensive knowledge of every child. Together, they use this information to plan exciting, creative and stimulating learning opportunities which meet children's individual needs and interests. A good balance of activities is provided. Children work directly with an adult at times and spend appropriate amounts of time exploring activities independently or with others. Leaders ensure that teaching meets the needs of all Reception children.
- Safeguarding procedures are in place and all necessary steps are taken to keep children safe at all times.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the care provided for their children in the early years. They are made to feel very welcome and many share with staff the things their children achieve at home.

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	111235
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	461719

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	388
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Harry Ziman
Headteacher	Sarah Curtis
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2011
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