

Mossley CofE Primary School

Boundary Lane, Congleton, Cheshire CW12 3JA

Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2016, in key stages 1 and 2, the progress made by some pupils was not good enough. Pupils are insufficiently challenged to excel.
- The difference between the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is not diminishing quickly enough.
- Leaders' views of current standards of teaching and learning lack accuracy and rigour. As a result, leaders have an overgenerous view about the quality of provision.
- Leaders' plans and actions to improve the school are not robustly and rigorously checked to see how effective they are.
- Leaders' systems to track pupils are not used effectively to identify underachievement and provide timely support.
- Teachers do not consistently utilise opportunities to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not routinely use the information that they have about their pupils to promote more-rapid progress.
- The quality of teaching is not consistent across the school. Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve.
- Pupils are sometimes unclear as to how they should improve their work.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and governors have now put in place plans and strategies to address the issues identified from the 2016 test results.
- The curriculum is rich and varied, enabling pupils to develop a wide range of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The early years foundation stage is well led. Children make good progress because staff make effective use of assessment information to plan the next steps of children's learning.
- Leaders have developed a strong Christian ethos throughout the school. Pupils are polite, friendly and respectful. They demonstrate self-discipline in and around the school.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They know how to stay safe and protect themselves from bullying, including when online.
- Almost all the parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire would recommend the school to another parent.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and learning are accurate and robust so that they quickly identify where pupils are not being sufficiently challenged to make the progress of which they are capable
 - ensuring that leaders use their tracking systems to identify potential underachievement and provide timely intervention
 - embedding the newly-introduced strategies to improve outcomes for pupils
 - ensuring that the school's assessment policy is consistently implemented, so that pupils are clear how to improve their work.
 - ensuring that leaders' plans and actions to improve the school are rigorously monitored and evaluated to measure their effectiveness.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers make use of information that they have about their pupils to plan lessons that maximise learning and progress
 - ensuring that teachers make good use of time in lessons, enabling pupils to make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve
 - continuing to develop cross-curricular studies, enabling pupils to practise and apply skills and knowledge.
- Improve pupil outcomes by:
 - ensuring that pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 make more rapid progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make progress in line with other pupils nationally.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Until recently, given pupils' starting points, leaders had not taken effective action to improve the progress made by pupils in reading and mathematics in key stage 2 over time. Governors and other leaders have now taken action following the 2016 key stage 2 results, supported by the use of an external consultant who had been engaged in 2015.
- New initiatives have been implemented throughout this academic year designed to bring about the required improvements. Leaders and governors have also undertaken additional training to support whole-school improvement. However, some leaders and governors do not rigorously evaluate the impact of their actions on school improvement. Consequently, leaders do not have an accurate picture of whether their actions have been effective or not.
- Some leaders' views of the current standard of teaching and learning across the school are not accurate in all areas; others recognise where pupils could respond to greater challenge. Some leaders describe 'rapid' progress being made, particularly in writing, where progress is not yet good enough. Some leaders do not recognise that pupils need more challenge to excel. Some leaders believe that the areas for improvement identified by 2016 results have now been addressed; evidence from this inspection does not support that view.
- Some leaders do not make effective enough use of their checks on the quality of teaching and learning to drive forward the required improvement. This is because leaders' systems to measure the quality of learning and progress are not yet sufficiently robust or effective. In the instances where leaders do identify areas where teaching needs to improve, the time taken to bring about these improvements takes too long. Consequently, some pupils continue to make slow progress from their starting points.
- Staff are supported by leaders to develop their skills to be effective in their roles. For example, support has been given to teaching staff when areas for development have been identified. Appraisal systems are in place for teachers and learning assistants. However, leaders' appraisal of teacher performance still lacks rigour and there have been missed opportunities to ensure that all teaching staff know their role in bringing about the required improvements across the school. Leaders do not adequately link teachers' targets to whole-school improvement.
- The inclusive ethos of the school underpins the work that leaders do to support the small number of pupils who are disadvantaged. Leaders have an understanding of the individual needs of these pupils and put support systems in place for them. That said, the difference between these pupils and other nationally is still too wide.
- An example of leaders' support for disadvantaged pupils is their use of pupil premium funding for a range of activities to reduce some barriers to learning. This includes providing additional support through a nurture room, a breakfast club for identified pupils, speech and language support and financial contributions towards residential trips. However, the specific needs of current disadvantaged pupils in school are not identified clearly enough and the impact of actions taken are not measured with sufficient rigour. As a result, disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress they are

capable of.

- At the beginning of the inspection, the information on the school's website relating to the spending of funds for disadvantaged pupils reflected this lack of analysis. Improvements made to this information during the inspection showed that leaders have the capacity to make the improvements needed.
- Similarly, the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified through discussion between the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENCo), teaching staff and parents. Pupil views are also sought out. Plans are put in place for these pupils and these plans are monitored throughout the year. The SENCo advises teaching staff about suitable strategies and has arranged training for teaching staff to develop their skills in supporting pupils in class.
- Analysis carried out by the SENCo of the progress of these pupils show that there is a variety in the amount of progress these pupils make, which is influenced by their specific needs. The SENCo has recognised where good practice is within the school and has initiated some school-based research to share that good practice. However, the policy for special educational needs and disabilities is unclear in how and what teaching staff do across the school to provide support for their current pupils. Some variability in the quality of support was seen during the inspection. In some classes, there was high-quality interaction and support, enabling pupils to engage well. However, for some pupils, adults did not have sufficient awareness of their specific need and how they should be supported to make even better progress.
- The curriculum has been devised by leaders to engage pupils, and this is effective. Pupils who spoke to inspectors were enthusiastic about their cross-curricular studies and were proud to share their work. A wide range of subjects are included within this work. High-quality art and design and technology work can be seen displayed around the school. Pupils have access to a range of extra-curricular activities, including music, sport, performing arts, writing, construction and eco-clubs.
- Planning of the wider curriculum does not provide enough chances for pupils to practise and develop skills learned in English and mathematics lessons, honing the skills they will need later in their learning.
- Sports premium funding is used appropriately to enhance pupils' experience of sport and develop healthy lifestyles. Funding is used in a variety of ways, including use of specialist sports coaches, accessing competitive sport, providing motivational speakers in assembly, provision of resources, providing well-being activities and cycling training.

Governance of the school

- Although governors articulate passionately their ambition for leaders to bring about much-needed improvements to the quality of education that the school provides, the rapid progress needed is not consistently evident across the school. Governors understand the current strengths and weaknesses of the school and they speak candidly about the journey the school needs to make. This understanding evolved from reflecting on a report from an external consultant, and by developing their skills of analysing and evaluating information about pupils' attainment and progress. Since then, governors have become more aware of how standards at the end of key stages compare with other schools nationally.

- Governors are now involved in evaluating the monitoring activities undertaken by leaders. Those who spoke with inspectors were now better informed as a result of this renewed monitoring.
- Governors reported in discussions with inspectors that they ask challenging questions to hold leaders to account with regard to pupil outcomes. Governor minutes, however, do not reflect this. Minutes of meetings demonstrate that previously governors have been over-reliant on what leaders have told them rather than asking searching questions to establish the accuracy of the information that they have received.
- Governors have not ensured that the required information in relation to sports and pupil premium funding is on the school website. Although the amount received is given, there is a lack of further information explaining the impact of the spending. For sports premium, further information also needs to explain how any improvements can be sustained.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Governors and other leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of ensuring that pupils are happy, safe and have their welfare needs met.
- Staff work closely with parents and a range of other agencies to ensure that this happens.
- Staff and governors are well trained and understand their role in keeping children safe. Staff receive regular updates about any changes to school policy, procedure or practice.
- Records are meticulous and fit for purpose, demonstrating that leaders use appropriate systems and procedures to refer pupils for multi-agency support where needed.
- Appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that only suitable persons have access to the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The standard of teaching and learning is variable across the school, resulting in pupils making different amounts of progress in different classes. Pupils and parents commented on this variability.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of their pupils. This is evident in pupils' work.
- At times, teaching does not use time effectively to promote learning. For example, pupils spend time waiting for shared resources or until their teacher checks their work before moving on. This results in slow progress for these pupils. At other times, pupils have a limited amount of time to deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding because teachers do not plan effectively for their progress.
- Pupils' engagement in their learning reduced in lessons where the task was not well matched to their ability. This is particularly true for pupils of middle ability. Despite this, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning, even when the challenge is not well matched.

- The presentation of written work is variable within classes and pupils do not receive enough guidance about handwriting or presentation. As a result, some pupils are unclear about how they should improve.
- In some lessons, lack of adult intervention slowed progress and misconceptions were not always addressed. Teachers do not routinely challenge pupils to deepen their knowledge through effective questioning.
- Conversely, there are, however, some good examples of teachers making good use of clear explanations. They challenge misconceptions and use high-quality questioning to ensure that pupils make progress. This, however, is too variable.
- Teachers have benefited from training in use of the school's data tracking system to develop their ability to make effective use of information about what pupils already know and can do in reading, writing and mathematics. However, this information is not yet routinely used to drive pupil progress. The newly introduced assessment system for the creative curriculum is also being used effectively for groups of pupils.
- Learning assistants are well deployed, ensuring increased engagement of targeted pupils or groups of pupils through skilful questioning and good modelling of language. Learning assistants are used to effectively support most-able as well as least-able pupils.
- Weaknesses in teaching are not evident across the school. Learning is most effective when teachers provide tasks that are well matched and targeted to the pupils' ability and interest. Effective use of practical mathematics resources was observed in Year 2. Engagement was high in Year 6, where pupils were enthusiastically planning a formal letter in reply to a building contractor planning to knock down the school to build houses. Similarly in Year 5, pupils were engrossed in writing a diary entry from the point of view of a character in 'Tom Sawyer'.
- Pupils respond well when challenged to apply their skills. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils make good use of phonic knowledge in reading and writing. Pupils in key stage 2 were keen to edit their own and others' work and respond to teacher comments and challenges in their books.
- The newly implemented problem-solving approach in mathematics has been well received by pupils. Although this work only began at Easter, greater progress can already be seen in pupils' work.
- Pupils enjoy the activities that leaders plan to support a developing understanding of British values. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of tolerance, respect and equality. They also display positive attitudes that will help them in their next stage of learning and to prepare them for living in modern Britain.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders ensure that a strong Christian ethos is evident in all relationships throughout the school. Pupils respond well to the positive role models that adults provide, showing warmth, friendliness and respect to each other and all adults. The school is a calm

learning environment as pupils are able to move around it with little guidance needed from adults.

- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and are keen to contribute to keeping themselves and others safe. Pupils who spoke to inspectors described work they had done to try and improve road safety outside the school. They also spoke about how some were being trained as playground 'buddies' to help other pupils while they are playing. Pupils spoke to inspectors about how well staff listen to them. They described how teaching staff notice if something seems to be upsetting pupils and try to help them if they might be having problems at home.
- Pupils were able to talk eloquently about how 'difference' would be accepted at their school and how equality is expected for all. They described different forms of bullying and what anyone should do if they experienced this. They were confident that bullying would be quickly dealt with by staff at their school.
- Opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge, skills and attitudes are woven into the curriculum and underpin relationships throughout the school. The high-quality work on display around the school reflects a range of cultures. Learning to say 'sorry' was part of a writing task in Year 2. Teaching staff in Year 1 made good use of a moment of 'awe and wonder', thinking about 'Bluebell Wood' in their work on 'Bog Baby'. Pupils in key stage 2 were able to describe different places of worship and told inspectors that 'difference is OK'.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to learning and some pupils can show resilience, even if the task they are asked to do is not effectively challenging them. In lessons where pupils did lose focus, they tended to amuse themselves quietly without disturbing others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and display positive attitudes to their learning. They are confident learners and are self-assured. They were able to talk easily with inspectors about work they were proud of.
- Pupils demonstrate self-discipline in lessons, on the playground and as they move around the school. Pupils listen to and follow instructions from their teachers and engage in tasks set. This results in a calm learning environment, enabling learning to take place without interruption. At times, when pupils are not fully challenged, off-task behaviour is evident. At breaktimes, pupils take turns on the outdoor play equipment without being prompted.
- There were no incidents of poor or disruptive behaviour seen during the inspection. Pupils enjoy listening to each other and value each other's contributions.
- The majority of pupils and parents feel that behaviour is good. Pupils are well mannered, polite and friendly towards each other and all adults. They respond well to the positive role models adults provide. As a result of this, there are positive relationships across the school.
- Levels of attendance and punctuality are above the national average and there are few incidents of persistent absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The progress that current pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics is not consistently strong across the school.
- In most classes, progress can be seen in aspects of the pupils' work. However, not all pupils make the progress that they are capable of, given their strong starting points and the positive attitudes to learning. Pupils have the confidence and good language skills to make more rapid progress.
- Some pupils have not made the progress expected of them over time. In 2016, this was particularly true for pupils in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 with average starting points. Progress for these pupils was not good enough.
- Leaders have taken action to address this, particularly in mathematics. It is, however, still too early to see the full impact of these actions on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders' tracking and current school information about current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils suggest that pupils are now making much stronger progress. However, work in pupils' books and observation of teaching and learning during the inspection do not concur with leaders' view on pupils' progress more generally. Progress is not consistently strong across all classes.
- Progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities show that there is a variety in the amount of progress these pupils make. There are small and varying numbers of these pupils in individual year groups. Additional funding to support this group of pupils is used effectively.
- Although there are relatively small numbers of disadvantaged pupils, the progress made by some of these pupils across the school lags behind other pupils.
- The teaching of phonics is strong and has improved over time, as demonstrated by outcomes for Year 1 pupils being above national averages since the academy opened. Pupils in key stage 1 who read to inspectors demonstrated confidence in applying good phonic knowledge to their reading and writing. They spoke with enthusiasm about reading and talked about books they had read and their favourite books. Pupils in key stage 2 who read to inspectors showed less confidence in applying phonic knowledge.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership in the early years foundation stage is strong. Leaders have a clear understanding of standards within the setting. Leaders analyse the strengths and weaknesses of children as they enter the school, taking into account information from previous early years providers and parents. This information is used to draw up a plan that informs the practitioners' planning of learning activities for the children. Analysis of areas where progress has not been as strong is also used to inform and adapt planning for the following year.
- Although children are allocated key workers in one of the two Reception 'bases', children are able to access activities in any of the shared resources, including the outdoor area. All staff are involved in teaching, monitoring and assessing all the children, enabling greater consistency.

- There are strong relationships with parents through newsletters, contributions to the children's online profile and visits to the school. The weekly 'Thumbs Up Thursday' sessions are well attended by parents and carers.
- All welfare requirements are met and staff demonstrate the same diligence in safeguarding children that is evident in the rest of the school. The layout of the building makes access to toilets challenging for the children. Despite this, children cope well accessing the toilets independently and move around the area confidently and safely.
- Children respond well to the range of learning activities planned for them by their teachers, especially when the task challenges them. One example of this was children observed responding very well in a French lesson, being able to repeat words and simple phrases in contexts. Children are also exposed to a wide range of opportunities to explore and learn about their environment. Parents particularly commented on how their children enjoy using the 'forest area' within the school grounds to learn.
- Children are working at least at typical standards for their age when they enter the school. The proportion of children attaining a good level of development by the time they leave the Reception class is above the average for schools nationally. This means that children make good progress during the Reception Year because staff make good use of the information that they have about children's development to plan the next steps of their learning.
- Pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes developed in the early years foundation stage prepare them well for entering key stage 1. Transition activities including visits and discussions between staff ensure that the children are happy and confident to move into their next class.
- Pupils are articulate, cooperative, enthusiastic and capable and were keen to show inspectors their work. However, during the inspection there were missed opportunities observed for children to be challenged further for children who were 'wandering' from one activity to another or for children who already had good knowledge. Adults miss opportunities to ensure that children make more rapid progress by intervening and challenging these children to excel in focused activities.

School details

Unique reference number	141152
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10032211

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	410
Appropriate authority	Mossley Academy Trust
Chair	Mr Andy Mitchell
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Aston
Telephone number	01260 272451
Website	www.mossleyce.cheshire.sch.uk
Email address	head@mossleyce.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to academy status in 2014 and became the Mossley Academy Trust.
- Floor standards were met in 2016 and 2015.
- The school is larger than the averaged-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in 15 classes of mixed ability.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- Children in the early years attend on a full-time basis.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information with regard to school performance data on its website.

- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish with regard to the impact of sports premium spending.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 14 classes. The headteacher and deputy headteacher teacher took part in some of these visits.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading and held discussions with groups of pupils. They also talked informally with pupils around the school, in the dining room and on the playground.
- Inspectors took into account the 105 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, the 95 written responses on this survey, the analysis of a recent parental survey carried out by school leaders, a handwritten letter from a parent and also spoke to parents on the playground before school. Account was also taken of the 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The lead inspector held meetings with governors, which included the chair of the governing body and four other governors.
- Inspectors held discussions with members of staff including the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, staff from the early years foundation stage, the SENCo, the business manager and leaders of mathematics and English.
- The lead inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation. These included information about pupil attainment and progress, leaders’ review of current school performance, meeting records and reports from external consultants. Inspectors also examined safeguarding documentation and records of attendance.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Rigby	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Loftus	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Else	Ofsted Inspector
Saeeda Ishaq	Ofsted Inspector

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