

Whitby Heath Primary School

Wyedale, Whitby, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 6RJ

Inspection dates 29–30 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils of all abilities achieve outstandingly well from their starting points in English, mathematics and a wide range of subjects in this highly successful school. They reach well above average standards by the time they leave.
- Children in the Reception classes make excellent progress and are very well prepared for Year 1. They are happy, inquisitive and thoughtful.
- Those pupils supported by the pupil premium make excellent progress and reach standards close to those of their peers.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar, excellent progress to other pupils in the school. Pupils benefit from specialist programmes and interventions to ensure that they achieve as well as they can.
- Pupils' reading is wide and frequent within a school culture that strongly encourages it. Writing standards are high with pupils coached to fluent expression appropriate to a broad range of contexts. Whilst pupils are increasingly confident in their use of information and communication technology (ICT), there is potential to provide even greater opportunities for pupils to advance their learning via new technologies.
- Teaching is outstanding. Highly effective teachers and teaching assistant teams create a strong learning culture with high expectations for the achievement of all pupils in every classroom.
- Pupils are extremely well behaved and feel very safe. They relish their many opportunities for responsibilities in the school and develop as confident individuals.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide inspirational leadership. Their crystal clear sense of purpose allied to incisive direction, has driven exceptionally rapid improvement in teaching and achievement in the school.
- Leaders receive excellent support from a highly-talented, buoyant staff and a committed governing body that is not afraid to take decisive action when required. As a result, the rapid improvement in the school is being securely sustained.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are fostered exceptionally well within a caring and aspirational community.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 24 lessons including joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to a range of teaching activities.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and members of staff. The latter included teachers with key subject and pastoral responsibilities.
- Fifty seven parental responses to the on-line (Parent View) questionnaire were considered, together with the school's independent surveys of opinion and the views of parents given in informal encounters.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents that recorded pupils' achievement and progress in the school, the school's plans for development, the performance management of staff, the use of additional funding and issues of behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Paul Copping, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrew Clark

Additional Inspector

Sheila O'Keefe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British families.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and receive the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, for children who are looked after by the local authority and children from service families.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is average for schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has several new leaders and teachers since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide pupils with even greater opportunities to advance their learning through new technologies.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children begin the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are generally well below those typical for their age. They make excellent progress in all areas of learning. They develop very well in their personal, social, number and communication skills and quickly gain confidence to apply their new skills. Children's attainment at the end of the Reception Year has improved and is now close to national expectations.
- Pupils' achievement as they move through school is outstanding. National test results for 2013 show that all groups of pupils made excellent progress from their individual starting points.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is securely in line with the national average and pupils have made good progress from their starting points.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen very rapidly over the past three years due to the highly effective actions taken by the school's leaders to improve teaching. In 2013, attainment in writing and reading was high and it was above average in mathematics. School data and inspection evidence show that attainment is also rising rapidly in other year groups. In terms of both confidence and skills, pupils are extremely well prepared to move to the next stage of their education.
- Attainment in reading is well above average and pupils read fluently across a wide range of books. The teaching of letters and their sounds (phonics) is exceptional and leads to pupils of all abilities tackling confidently unfamiliar words because they have a fundamental understanding of how to apply their knowledge of phonics. Most pupils not only read very well, but share a love for reading. One Year 6 pupil remarked that a few children did not read books all the time but they read newspapers instead.
- Pupils' writing skills are outstanding and demonstrated in a very broad range of contexts. This is helped by the consistent approach in teaching writing. Teachers demand accuracy and high standards in spelling, punctuation and grammar in pupils' writing for all purposes.
- Pupils' mathematical skills have been very carefully developed. Year 2 pupils have a very good command of essential mathematical terms and older pupils tenaciously pursue lines of enquiry to solve problems.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are cultivated very carefully and are a major contribution to their high rate of progress in their learning. On the many occasions when pupils work in groups during lessons, their spontaneous commentary on the learning taking place, even for very young children, is informed and articulate. This is especially helpful for the pupils who speak English as an additional language and enables them to make the same progress as their peers.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress, considering their starting points. This is because their needs are swiftly identified and effective help provided.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, make outstanding progress and gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils who are not eligible for free school meals are closing. They reach at least average standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- More-able pupils take full advantage of the high level of challenge they are offered and make very good progress and reach high standards. Their progress is helped hugely by their very positive attitudes and embedded habits of enquiry and independent working.
- Skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are very secure and are demonstrated across the curriculum, although there are opportunities to extend further pupils' use of modern technology.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is consistently of a high quality and makes a major contribution to pupils' excellent progress.
- A real strength in teaching is the consistency of approaches as pupils move from class to class. For example, learning is reinforced via frequently refreshed displays, linked to current learning.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is highly detailed and very accurate and is consistently so across all subjects. Pupils are left in no doubt as to how they may improve. Many books include an active dialogue between pupils and teachers about the quality of their work. The responsiveness of pupils was shown by such relaxed comments as 'Yes – I'll do that' following a teacher's suggestion, representing assessment and improvement as a very habitual conversation.
- Cross-curricular links and the extension of pupils' basic skills are a consistent feature of teaching, with weeks of enactment and multi-media work to explore such topics as The Victorians. Teachers use ICT well across subjects, although the use of more modern technologies is not yet fully established.
- All members of staff demonstrate high expectations for pupils. This extends to expecting that pupils will exercise a high degree of independence in their work. At social times, pupils often work independently on computers in the corridor pursuing individual interests. They are also expected to assess frequently and accurately the work of other pupils in their lessons.
- Teaching assistants are very active partners with teachers in lessons and are integrated into planning to a high degree. They provide a valuable additional adult voice in lessons.
- The high quality teaching of literacy, including phonics, provides a very secure foundation for pupils' rapid progress in reading and writing. Teachers foster pupils' love of reading following very structured guidelines. Pupils speak of a culture of reading that is promoted in a freshly planned way through a recent guided reading initiative.
- Mathematics is taught most effectively. It reflects teachers' strong subject knowledge and shows a strong emphasis on the skills of applying their knowledge to solve problems. This focus on following a line of enquiry has a positive impact on the excellent way in which pupils learn across the whole curriculum.
- Homework is set regularly and very well matched to pupils' abilities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are hugely supportive of each other in and out of the classroom and this makes a decisive contribution to the quality of their learning. Their courtesy to visitors and their confidence in speaking to them reflects an assured pride in their school. Politeness was often strikingly mature as pupils thanked inspectors for inviting them to a meeting or for taking an interest in their work.
- The school has taken imaginative steps to ensure that teachers and parents work closely together to promote pupils' learning, and this is a major factor in producing the very high regard in which parents hold the school. Sophisticated on-line facilities allow parents to see exactly what their children are doing in school and to follow their progress very closely. The school has had no exclusions for two years, reflecting the extent to which the strikingly rapid improvement has been inclusive of all pupils, including those for whom their attention and behaviour might represent a potential problem.
- Attendance is monitored very closely. It has shown sustained improvement and is above the national average.
- Pupils understand very well the different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, although they see none in their school. In a very orderly environment, their understanding of rules and expectations is complete at all times.
- The sense of a community working together for common aims is felt very powerfully in the school. In this context, pupils develop very well as responsible individuals who show a keen

interest in the wider world and for whom a spirit of enquiry is embedded in how they learn.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The drive towards improvement on the part of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is relentless and has driven up standards very rapidly, with an unwavering focus on all improvements being sustainable. Their leadership, supported by an active and well-informed governing body, has inspired a collective effort amongst all staff. Adults working at the school attest to high morale and a sense of common purpose engendered by their leaders. The school has an accurate view of its provision and is extremely well placed to continue improving.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have monitored teaching rigorously and promptly resolved any weaker aspects. The many newly appointed staff are left in no doubt of the high expectations for performance. Systems to support them are most effective and routines clearly established so that all quickly attain the required high standard.
- Specific programmes developed by the school in tracking pupils' progress and teaching phonics are being taken up by schools across the area as excellent practice. This is indicative of the school's success and the extent to which it is extending support to partners.
- The tracking of pupils' progress is exemplary and any underachievement identified promptly so that support is targeted swiftly to where it is most needed. This reflects the very effective promotion of equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- The school's performance management systems have taken full account of all formal requirements. Senior members of staff are very accurate in how they judge the quality of colleagues' work. Teachers' salary progression are rigorously linked to what is demonstrable in their contribution to the excellent progress made by their pupils.
- Middle leaders are a significant factor in the school's sustained improvement. Exercising responsibility for key aspects of the school's work, they are also mentors to a group of colleagues, preparing them well for the future assumption of greater responsibility.
- The local authority has supported the school very effectively in its rise since the previous inspection. Indicative of the school's success is the local authority reducing its intervention appropriately.
- Partnership with parents is highly effective, from the opportunity to talk to the headteacher every morning when arriving with their children, to sampling all aspects of the school's work and their child's progress via its very user-friendly on-line facilities. Parents are warmly supportive of the school and value the major improvements made.
- Provision to encourage pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very comprehensive. It ranges between explicit cultural reference, such as the classical music played frequently, to the more subtle impact of a very calm and caring community. In lessons and in a wide range of out-of-school activities, pupils demonstrate very good expressive skills. In a lesson that united gymnastics and Indian dance, pupils' responses were often strikingly artistic.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a detailed grasp of pupils' performance and offer a strong challenge to senior school leaders. They review data and compare performance with other schools. They know children start in the Reception classes with skills well below those expected and check that they make enough progress. School leaders have formulated a strategy that keeps governors informed of the quality of teaching and they are aware of the impact on pupils' progress of recent appointments. They check that staff meet their individual targets and that these are linked to salary progression. Governors are aware of the use of pupil premium funding and its positive impact on the progress of those pupils who are eligible. They also check that the new Primary Schools Sport funding to support physical education is extending teachers' skills as well as increasing pupils' participation in sport. Governors ensure safeguarding meets requirements.

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	111087
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	426116

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	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr. R. Crompton
Headteacher	Gill Morris
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2011
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