

Much Wenlock Primary School

Racecourse Lane, Much Wenlock, TF13 6JG

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school leadership has successfully improved teaching and learning since the previous inspection. As a result, pupils now achieve well.
- Children learn and develop well in their Reception Year. The good progress they make from there on enables them to reach above-average attainment in Year 6.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are particularly skilled at helping pupils to build on what they already know when they are about to learn something new.
- Reading and writing are taught well. These key skills are supported effectively through the many opportunities pupils have to use them in different subjects.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and they behave well. They and their parents know and appreciate the systems that encourage good behaviour.
- The headteacher has successfully moulded the staff into a cohesive team that has the expertise and determination to take the school further.
- Different subjects are linked together and organised well, so that teachers have clear guidance on how to build pupils' skills progressively in different age groups.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in mathematics is not always as good as progress in reading and writing.
- Pupils' work is not always marked well enough in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Subject leaders are not fully enough involved in checking progress in skills in their subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes. She visited 12 lessons, five of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. Playtimes and lunchtimes were also observed.
- Discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, pupils and the School Improvement Partner from the local authority. The returns from the staff questionnaires were also analysed.
- The views of 18 parents were analysed through the Parent View website. Other parents' views were sought through informal discussion at the start of the school day.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation document and the school improvement plan. She also examined the work in pupils' books, and sampled work from last year.

Inspection team

Doris Bell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The number on roll has increased considerably in the last 18 months.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- It has achieved an International Schools Intermediate Award, a CreateIT Award, a Forest Schools award, a Gold Live Arts award, several sporting trophies, and the local authority's Silver Award for its work with pupils who need extra help.
- The school has its own breakfast- and after-school clubs.
- The privately run Much Wenlock pre-school operates on the same site as the school. This is inspected and reported upon separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the work already under way to raise achievement in mathematics by ensuring that:
 - younger pupils, for example, in Year 2, do not have to consider too many steps at one time when they start learning to solve mathematical problems
 - older pupils, for example, in Years 4 and 5, use equipment such as rulers to draw shapes more accurately so that they can see more clearly what they are learning.
- Extend the principles of the good quality marking and feedback in writing and mathematics to other subjects so that pupils can see how to develop their skills further in all subjects.
- Improve subject leadership by giving staff the skills and opportunities they need to monitor teaching and learning in lessons, so they can check that the work they have done to identify key skills in different subjects is improving progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment on entry is, in most years, broadly in line with expectations. Variations occur because the numbers in each year group are small, and there are different proportions in each year group of children who need extra help or who are at risk of underperforming. The good progress children make in Reception sets them up well for their work in Year 1.
- Overall attainment is above average by the end of Year 2. The variations mentioned above, and the high proportion of pupils joining the school in the past two years, mostly in Years 5 and 6, mean that comparisons with earlier data are unreliable. Pupils' work and data held by the school show that progress is good in all year groups. Attainment is above average in Year 6.
- Pupils' writing is imaginative and varied. Spelling, grammar and punctuation are mostly accurate. By Year 6, writing is organised well to suit different audiences and purposes, and the gaps between boys and girls are closing. This is because writing is usually given a context within which pupils have a choice of which style to use, and it is often linked to work in other subjects, for example, science and geography.
- Pupils enjoy reading. The strong emphasis on learning the sounds that letters represent, which starts in Reception, means that by Year 1 pupils already have the skills they need to develop their reading as they grow older. By Year 6, pupils read widely. They can say what it is they enjoy about a particular author or book, and give examples to illustrate it.
- Progress in mathematics is improving because solving real-life problems has been given due prominence. For example, pupils in Year 2 learned to weigh parcels, work out the cost of postage, and decide which stamps to use. However, there were too many steps in the problem and some pupils became confused. Pupils are not always sufficiently encouraged to use the right equipment, for example, to draw shapes. In Years 4 and 5, this detracted from the presentation of their work, and from their understanding of shape.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, pupils at risk of falling behind, and pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, all make good progress. The support these pupils receive from other adults successfully ensures that they achieve as well as their classmates. This has been recognised in the award the school has received from the local authority.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers' planning ensures work is at the right level for each pupil. Annotations show teachers constantly evaluate and assess pupils' learning to determine what should be taught next. They regularly refer in lessons to what they have found when they marked pupils' work. Pupils value this because it helps them to understand what it is they need to work on and why.
- Mindful of pupils who need extra help, teaching is sharply focused and presented in different ways so that each pupil has the chance to succeed. The different teaching approaches used develop pupils' confidence in their ability to take their own learning forward in different ways. This good practice starts in Reception and continues through to Year 6.
- Paired work is used extensively to give pupils the opportunity to collate their thoughts before answering teachers' probing questions, or to help each other learn. Adults are usually vigilant in

checking that each pupil contributes equally within their pair. Occasionally, however, one pupil takes over, or does all of the work while the other copies and therefore does not develop his or her own learning.

- Pupils say they have 'great teachers' who 'know the pupils they teach and what they can and can't do'. They value their targets, and the comprehensive feedback they get when their writing and mathematics are marked. This good marking does not extend to showing pupils how to develop skills in other subjects, despite the school having worked hard to identify those skills.
- The teaching of sounds that letters represent is good. All adults contribute well to this. The imaginative approaches used include songs, rhymes, writing and movement that make learning to read, write and spell enjoyable. Staff are skilled at helping pupils to reflect on their learning and behaviour, to persevere with their tasks, help each other, and accept each other's differences. This contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Excellent relationships with the pre-school mean that Reception children quickly settle and become fully involved in everything, including assembly. Here, they and other pupils displayed exemplary behaviour and an excellent understanding of the school's code. Pupils very much appreciate the weekly awards for following the code and being a good citizen. They also enjoy the before- and after-school clubs where pupils of different ages mix together well and prepare for, or relax after, the school day.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. The school keeps them safe and teaches them how to behave well and keep themselves safe, for example, by recognising and dealing with risks, and managing their own behaviour, including when using the internet or a mobile phone. Mini-mentors are trained to recognise bullying, know when to involve an adult to diffuse a situation, and contribute well to managing behaviour in the playground.
- Pupils say that behaviour is almost always good. They recognise that 'some behaviour can't be helped', when pupils have behavioural difficulties, but say lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. They say 'teachers make learning fun', 'don't favour anybody' and 'everyone is equal in their eyes'. Pupils spoken to did not know of any bullying but they do know the different forms bullying can take, for example, persistent name-calling and physical violence, and the effect it can have. They recognise the importance of always telling someone.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, as their good attendance shows. They develop good levels of independence right from Reception because staff are skilled at using their responses and suggestions to take learning further. Good examples were noted as Reception and Year 1 children explored ways to build a dam to stop water flooding onto the path, or treated 'patients', including staff, in their 'hospital'.
- By Year 6, pupils take much greater charge of their own learning. In an exceptionally well-organised guided-reading session, they showed excellent ability to read independently and review what they had read. They understood the rota for the week and followed it meticulously. Similarly good independent skills were noted in a mathematics session where pupils rose to the challenge of beating the computer. Pupils develop into mature young people, who leave the school well prepared for their future.

The leadership and management are good

- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school. It has been instrumental in helping the school to improve writing and, more recently, mathematics. It has also supported the school well through some staffing difficulties.
- The headteacher rigorously checks how well all staff are performing. She ensures they receive well-targeted support to improve their practice, for example, through opportunities to share good practice, participate in professional development, and work together and with other schools to ensure that assessments are accurate.
- Each pupil's progress is carefully monitored and extra help is quickly provided to help them get back on track should their learning falter. Well-qualified support staff contribute effectively to this. Discussions with staff, pupils and parents show that they all understand their role in improving learning. Staff regularly have to account for how well each of their pupils perform.
- The broad and interesting range of subjects pupils are taught have been organised well so that reading, writing and mathematical skills are developed further alongside key skills in the subjects themselves. Subject leaders have drawn up action plans for their subjects but have not yet had the opportunity or the training to observe or support teachers in the classroom to ensure those skills are being developed progressively.
- Pupils' learning and personal development are greatly enhanced through the Forest School work, work on the allotments, well-attended extra-curricular activities and a wide range of visits and visitors. Parents and members of the governing body support the school well in all of this. The school is justifiably proud of its achievements in sports and the arts, and of its work to teach pupils about cultural diversity at home and abroad. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these activities, all of which contribute to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - ensures arrangements for safeguarding pupils are up to date and effective
 - contributes well to school improvement planning and the school's accurate self-evaluation because it knows the school well and challenges it to improve further
 - has made sensible decisions about spending to ensure pupils' learning continues to improve
 - ensures that all pupils have equal opportunity to do well, and all forms of discrimination are tackled and eradicated.

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	123407
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	402158

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	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Gribbin
Headteacher	Lindsey Andrews
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2009
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