

Western Springs Primary School

School Road, Rugeley, WS15 2PD

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2012

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
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| 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.

- Pupils across the school make consistently good progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics, and achieve well.
- Attainment has risen strongly since the previous inspection and is above average in reading.
- Pupils feel safe, are keen to do well, persevere with challenging tasks in lessons and are polite and well-behaved at all times.
- Teachers give pupils clear feedback that ensures that they know how to check and improve their work.
- Teachers use effective methods to interest pupils and make good use of opportunities to learn outside the classroom to promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher has improved teaching and subject leadership significantly.
- The governing body plays an active role in checking the school's performance and planning improvements.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always plan activities in mathematics that enable pupils to use their addition, subtraction, division and multiplication skills to complete calculations quickly and independently, and to explain their learning clearly
- Improvement targets in the school's development plan do not sufficiently include measures of the progress pupils are expected to make with the result that monitoring activities and evaluations of performance sometimes lack focus
- Despite the school's strenuous efforts, a few families still fail to send their children to school regularly.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons. In addition, the inspector made a number of other short visits to lessons.
- The inspector held meetings with small groups of pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body including the Chair, Vice-Chair and a parent governor.
- The inspector talked to parents and carers informally at the start of the day and took into account the school's recent parent survey in conducting and reaching judgements. No results were shown in the online questionnaire (Parent View) because there was an insufficient number of responses.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at pupils' work in books and on display, past and current pupil progress data, and documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, monitoring and school improvement planning.

Inspection team

Georgina Beasley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Western Springs Primary School is smaller than average. The number of pupils in some year groups is very small.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium (those known to be eligible for free school meals and children in care) is twice the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average and high in some year groups. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement for a disability or learning difficulty is average.
- The school met the government current floor standards (the minimum expected standard) for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics and pupils' progress in English for the last two years. It met the target for pupils' progress in mathematics last year.
- The school works with another local school in partnership with the Cooperative Learning Trust.
- There is a pre-school facility on site called 'Little Springs' which provides care for babies and children up to age four and which is managed by the governing body. This was inspected separately and has its own report.
- There is a breakfast club at the school, also managed by the governing body. This was part of this inspection and is included in this report.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teachers plan activities that develop pupils' calculation skills systematically, and provide regular opportunities for pupils to talk about how they solve problems in mathematics.
- Include targets in the school's development plan that derive from a probing assessment of the progress of different groups of pupils and use the information to focus monitoring activities and to measure improvement.
- Reduce by 75% the number of pupils with less than 92% attendance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children generally start in the Reception Year with the level of personal, social and emotional development that is expected for their age. This prepares them well for school and their attainment is higher than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Children are inquisitive and independent learners because they are provided with a good balance between activities guided and led by adults and those that they plan and carry out independently. Children make good progress and, by the time they start in Year 1, nearly all reach the expected levels in all areas of learning. A good number exceed these.
- Good progress in Years 1 and 2 has resulted in strong improvement in pupils' attainment since the previous inspection. Nearly all pupils reach expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are confident readers. Most can work out unfamiliar words on their own and talk knowledgeably about what they are reading.
- Pupils have a good understanding of numbers. Most now add and subtract numbers to 100 confidently by the end of Year 2. Pupils are less confident when asked to explain how they managed this because they lack the necessary vocabulary. This inhibits their ability to solve mathematical problems independently when they get older.
- Pupils throughout Years 3 to 6 make good progress from their different starting points. Any previous underachievement has been eradicated. Progress compares favourably with the percentages of pupils nationally who make expected progress, and with those who exceed expectations. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 has risen strongly for the last five years. It is now average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading.
- Until last year, less able pupils, those known to be eligible for free school meals and so eligible for the pupil premium, and girls in Years 3 to 6 did less well than their classmates in mathematics. Some of these pupils still struggle to add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers quickly and to remember how to solve problems in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action plus and school action make good progress. Some make excellent progress because of the individual support they receive to overcome their learning and behavioural difficulties, and attain expected levels.
- The rich curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to read and write for different purposes. Pupils regularly visit the spiritual garden to listen to and act out stories. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 were excited to talk about the ice eggs that they found outside and which they thought were laid by a mythical creature. This motivated their ideas for writing.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers plan lessons and use methods that interest and engage pupils fully in learning, taking advantage of the natural links between different subjects to reinforce pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 used the knowledge of the Aztec designs learned in history very well to create symmetrical patterns in mathematics. Similarly, Year 6 pupils successfully read maps to locate different-sized parcels which they then weighed in mathematics using a variety of weighing scales.

- Teachers use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding in lessons. This enables adults to add or change resources and to guide learning. Questions do not always give pupils enough opportunity to explain what they are doing and why. Teachers and teaching assistants sometimes give too much help to pupils attempting to solve problems rather than letting them come up with explanations for themselves.
- Work in mathematics books and pupils' responses in lessons indicate that, occasionally, learning tasks do not build sufficiently well on individual's previous knowledge, skills and understanding. Tasks are sometimes too difficult for less able pupils to complete without a lot of help from adults. While teachers usually adjust tasks when found to be too difficult, unnecessary time is lost and learning slows.
- Teaching assistants play a full and active role in lessons, supporting all groups of pupils as required to help them make good progress. Excellent support for pupils with behavioural difficulties ensures that they are fully integrated in lessons and make positive contributions to everyone's learning.
- Marking has improved significantly. Pupils like being told what went well. They understand the school's system of scores given for accuracy and for presentation, and this encourages them to take a pride in their work and to always do their best. Teachers' comments give clear guidance on how to improve. Coupled with the targets at the front of the book, marked work helps pupils to know how well they are doing and how to improve their work independently.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils know the school's five values because they are constantly reinforced throughout the day. They all understand the importance of being respectful, responsible, honest and cooperative, and to appreciate their own and others' endeavours. One Year 1 pupil was heard to congratulate a classmate for being respectful by listening to the teacher. Nearly all parents who spoke to the inspector were complimentary about behaviour.
- Pupils' positive relationships with adults and each other support achievement well. Pupils say that they feel safe because, 'There is always someone we can talk to,' referring to pupil peer mediators and to all adults.
- Pupils have a good understanding of all forms of bullying including deliberate name-calling that causes distress. They know how to stay safe including when using the internet. Bullying incidents are rare and, when they do occur, are tackled quickly and effectively by the school.
- Pupils' good knowledge and understanding of different religions, countries and cultures are reflected in their high levels of respect for their own and others' beliefs, opinions and feelings. Pupils follow the school's rules and understand what will happen if they 'go into the red section on the behaviour wheel'. The 'outside the classroom' curriculum promotes pupils' care and respect for the environment well.
- Due to the school's continuous efforts to encourage good attendance, most pupils attend regularly. The number of pupils whose attendance is below 85% has been reduced significantly. Nevertheless, a few parents still do not make sure that their children come to school every day and so the attendance of some pupils remains below 92% and requires improvement.

The leadership and management are good

- All staff share the headteacher's very clear vision that focuses strongly on creating an environment that supports every child's learning. Its successful implementation is reflected in a well-planned thematic curriculum. Pupils practise and reinforce their speaking, listening, reading, writing, and mathematical and computer skills while learning about other subjects such as religious education, history, geography, art, and design technology.
- The school's good capacity to improve is evident in its continued good improvement since the previous inspection and, in particular, in the improvements made to teaching and achievement. Staff and governors have an accurate and realistic view of how good the school is. All teachers are involved in monitoring pupils' progress to check that achievement in all subjects is at least good and to implement improvements when found not to be. The arrangements for monitoring teaching are effective and, together with good training and professional development opportunities, ensure that staff have the required skills and expertise to implement the planned improvements.
- Targets in the school's subsequent improvement plan do not always derive directly from its analysis of pupil progress and attendance to focus monitoring activities and to provide benchmarks against which to measure the success of its actions.
- The school ensures all pupils are fully involved in school activities and supported effectively to engage with learning. One pupil's view, echoed by others, confirmed that, 'We can always take part if we want.' The school tackles all discrimination head on and promotes equal opportunities at all times. The International Schools Gold Award recognises the school's commitment to helping pupils' ability to live as global citizens in an ever-changing world.
- The breakfast club is managed well and gives effective support to the school's work. Pupils take part in sporting activities every morning before enjoying a healthy breakfast.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - ensures that the school consistently implements comprehensive systems to assure pupils' safety when at school or on visits
 - checks carefully that the budget is allocated effectively to support the learning of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
 - undertakes regular visits to ensure that all governors have detailed first-hand information about the school's work.
 - gives good support and asks challenging questions of the school's leadership whenever actions are not being as successful as they should be.
- The local authority's support for improving teaching and the learning of children in the exception class has been good. It has helped improve children's achievement over the last three years. The recent partnership with another local school and the Cooperative Learning Trust is providing good opportunities for teachers and school leaders to share expertise and training opportunities.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 124125 |
| Local authority | Staffordshire |
| Inspection number | 402229 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 129 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Kevin Walsh |
| Headteacher | Shirley Wellings |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 July 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01889 256000 |
| Fax number | 01889 256008 |
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