

St Chad's CofE Primary School

Gladstone Street, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 4AT

Inspection dates October 31–1 November 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although more pupils are reaching the standards they should, progress across the school remains inconsistent, especially in writing.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good in all year groups. Tasks within lessons are not always well matched to the needs of different pupils.
- Pupils are not always clear enough about the level of their work and what they need to do to take the next steps in their learning.
- Displays and classroom organisation do not sufficiently support pupils' learning or celebrate their work.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not make consistent progress, as teaching is not matched to their needs. Their knowledge of letters and sounds to help them read is not good, as teaching is not effective in this area.
- Some teachers are not putting into practice the ideas they have gained from training, and observations from advisers and leaders, to help them to make their teaching better.
- Leadership has secured some improvement to pupils' progress but does not hold staff sufficiently to account for the progress that their pupils make.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are delightful; they behave well and show great pride in their school and the work that they do.
- Some teachers have worked hard to improve their teaching and, as a consequence, pupils' progress in their classes is speeding up.
- Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and work closely with the local authority and other experts to secure necessary improvements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons, of which three were joint observations with the senior leaders. Class teachers and teaching assistants were seen working with pupils.
- In addition, other direct observations of pupils' learning were undertaken. These included hearing pupils read and attending assemblies.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, from Key Stages 1 and 2, and many other opportunities were taken to talk with pupils.
- Meetings were also held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, senior members of staff, such as the special educational needs coordinator, the Early Years Foundation Stage teacher and family support worker, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took into account the five responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), which had been completed during day two of the inspection, and written responses from parents, school survey results and informal discussions with parents at the school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of school documents including development plans, policies, self-evaluation, data relating to pupils' progress, safeguarding and curriculum information, and behaviour and attendance documentation.

Inspection team

Sarah Quinn, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Christine Birchall	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The percentage of pupils supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium has increased since the last inspection and is now above average.
- The school holds Healthy School status and the Activemark and Inclusion Quality Mark.
- A new deputy headteacher started in September 2012.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards (minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress) for attainment, but not yet for progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to at least good, in order to raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress, by:
 - improving classroom environments so that pupils can use them as a learning resource and can see their work celebrated on the walls
 - ensuring teachers' expectations are high, that they set aspirational targets and promote challenge through effective questioning
 - ensuring tasks are matched to pupils' abilities and enable them to make good progress in their learning.
- Improve achievement in writing by:
 - ensuring pupils in all classes have opportunities to write frequently and by improving teachers' understanding of how pupils learn to write, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - consistently applying the school's 'editing code' so pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their writing, then allowing pupils the opportunity to reflect on the comments made by teachers and to address their suggestions
 - promoting high standards in writing and the correct use of standard English, particularly in labels around the room and in comments on pupils' books.
- Accelerate school improvement by ensuring that leaders and managers at all levels:
 - rigorously monitor how effectively teachers are tracking pupils' progress in order to set work at the right level for pupils of all abilities
 - hold teachers to account for the achievement of pupils in their class and link this to salary progression
 - increase the rigour with which teachers' performance is developed and monitored
 - ensure subject leaders monitor the progress of pupils in their subject areas.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- From starting points on entry to school that are typically below those expected for their age, pupils make adequate progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They settle quickly, but the range of activities is not sufficiently matched to children's needs.
- Although pupils are now doing much better by the time they leave school, there remains some variation in the pace of learning in lessons across the school. Some classes are doing much better than others. For example, in Years 1 and 6 learning is well paced and pupils are engrossed in exciting activities. However, between Years 1 and 6 pupils' progress and achievement are variable and require improvement.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs receive appropriate support to achieve as well as their classmates. Where pupils have specific needs, the school identifies specialist support to ensure that these pupils achieve successfully. The special educational needs coordinator keeps careful records of pupils' achievements and supports teachers appropriately.
- The progress of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is generally similar to that of others eligible for pupil premium nationally. The school has invested its additional funds to provide extra, sharply focused sessions and this is having a good impact on the progress of these pupils, particularly in reading.
- Pupils have a good grasp of a range of strategies to promote their reading. Children learn to recognise letters and the sounds that they make very effectively from Year 1. They learn to blend sounds and build words confidently, and build successfully on this good foundation as they progress through the school.
- Pupils' good achievement in reading is not reflected in the quality of their writing because, in some classes, pupils do not practise their skills frequently enough to achieve more. They do not have appropriate opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage effectively to develop skills to enable them to write.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics; opportunities for them to develop problem-solving skills and to apply their mathematical knowledge have enabled them to do better in this area over time.
- Pupils make expected progress overall and by the end of Year 6 attain levels in reading, writing and mathematics which are broadly average. Parents indicate they are happy with the achievement of their children.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Where the quality of teaching is good, pupils enjoy lessons and they proceed at a fast pace. In the Year 6 class, for example, levels of concentration and enjoyment were high due to the excellent relationships in the class and the teacher's high expectations and strong rapport with the class. In other year groups teaching requires improvement because teachers' expectations are too low and their questioning does not challenge pupils to do better. Parents are happy with the quality of teaching in school.
- Some teachers carefully plan tasks that excite and inspire pupils to learn. Other teachers do not match tasks to pupils' abilities, particularly in writing, which slows pupils' progress.
- Some classroom environments are vibrant and full of useful resources and 'learning walls'. Teachers value pupils' work, particularly their writing, and display it for all to see. These classroom environments effectively encourage pupils to consider how to improve their work. Other classrooms rely on printed materials only, leave walls bare or use labels that are incorrectly spelt. This does not encourage pupils to work hard or to be accurate.
- The role of teaching assistants in supporting pupils is well developed. They take an active part in lessons and are clear about what pupils are expected to learn. Marking and written feedback are not used consistently by teachers to provide information for pupils on how they can improve their work. Some provide comments written with incorrect grammar and spelling, thus setting a

poor example for pupils. Guidance provided is not always clear enough to help pupils achieve the next steps in their learning and pupils do not always have the opportunity to reflect on written comments and practise their skills. Some pupils do not know what is expected of them or how to improve their work because the school's effective 'editing code' is used inconsistently by staff.

- In some classes writing is promoted well and pupils have frequent opportunities for writing. For example, Year 1 pupils enjoyed writing prayers, making lists for an Eid party and making cards for each other. However, some teachers offer too little time for pupils to write at length and develop their writing skills and some teachers show little understanding of how younger pupils learn to write.
- In all classes teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They plan assemblies to support spiritual development well and take account of cultures and celebrations from around the world.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- Pupils are enthusiastic, welcoming and friendly. They are polite and considerate towards both adults and each other as they move around the school, holding doors open for adults and each other. They use manners well and helpful signs around the school enable pupils to remember what is expected of them. Pupils contribute well to the development of expectations, such as how to come into the hall for lunchtime.
- The headteacher has made productive links with external agencies. The school employs a specialist member of staff to work with children and families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The main objective is to support children to enable them to feel safe and to be secure enough to access education.
- Parents and pupils are positive about the work of the school. Feedback from parents indicates that they are happy that their children are safe and pupils say that teachers are swift in dealing with any instances of poor behaviour.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school and know about different forms of bullying, such as bullying that can occur using the internet, but say that it occurs rarely.
- Assemblies and class discussions reinforce the importance of working together and contribute well to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is given strong emphasis. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and all adults in school help them learn. This helps to explain the good punctuality and attendance, which is slightly above average.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Senior leaders' accurate self-evaluation means that they have a clear picture of what needs to be done to improve pupils' achievement. However, procedures to check how well teaching is helping pupils to learn are not rigorous enough to achieve rapid improvement across the school.
- The school's actions have improved some aspects of the school's work, such as achievement in mathematics and reading, but they have not yet had full impact on improving pupils' progress in writing.
- Teachers, including subject leaders, are set targets for the progress that their pupils make but they are not held fully to account for these through performance management procedures. Some teachers do not use these targets well and do not use the tracking of pupils' achievement to help them to set work at the right level for pupils of all abilities. Teachers' response to training and advice is inconsistent and this is reflected in the different rates of improvement in pupils' achievement in different classes. The pupil premium is used effectively to provide additional resources and support staff and is targeted effectively at improving the progress of the pupils for whom the premium is intended.
- The local authority has provided support for the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage,

although this has yet to result in improved provision in this area. The local authority is fully involved in other aspects of the school's work and provides a range of development opportunities relating to teaching and leadership of which the school takes full advantage.

- Safeguarding and child protection procedures are robust. For example, arrangements for site safety are secure and recruitment procedures are sound. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination where it occurs.
- The curriculum is developing and most teachers have begun to develop lessons based on what pupils want to learn and what inspires them to learn, as well as the essential skills and knowledge they must have. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a prominent feature of curriculum plans and, as a consequence of its high profile, is well developed in school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are knowledgeable about the work of the school, understand what needs to be done to improve the school and ask leaders challenging questions. They are highly supportive of the school, including when difficult decisions are required to improve provision. The governing body understands its legal responsibilities and ensures that resources are managed well. They monitor the use and effectiveness of the pupil premium funding to ensure it is used appropriately.

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	111262
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	405325

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Harris
Headteacher	Maria Cross
Date of previous school inspection	9 September 2010
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