

Cheslyn Hay Primary School

Saredon Road, Cheslyn Hay, Walsall, WS6 7JQ

Inspection dates

22–23 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		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils, especially boys, learn the skills they need sufficiently well.
- Although most pupils are making better progress, improvements are not yet sustained over time.
- There is an insufficient emphasis on pupils' development of handwriting in English and other subjects.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to respond to the teachers' marking of their work.
- A few pupils demonstrate inappropriate physical and verbal behaviour during lunchtime on the playground. This means that pupils do not always feel as safe as they should.
- Systems for helping teachers to develop their skills are not precise enough. Similarly, methods of recording the effectiveness of school improvement strategies on pupils' achievement are not rigorous enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has secured a strong staff team, committed to raising pupils' achievement. Staff morale is high.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes do well because teaching there is good and adults help children to become independent learners.
- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now above the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils show positive attitudes to learning in lessons. They are polite and respectful to adults.
- Relationships with parents and carers are strong. Parents and carers say their children enjoy coming to school and are well cared for.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons or parts of lessons and one assembly.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff and members of the governing body. The lead inspector talked with a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors talked with pupils, listened to them read and observed them at play during break times.
- The school's safeguarding policies, improvement plans, governing body meeting notes and records of pupils' behaviour were reviewed. In addition, inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in their books, and at records of their progress.
- The inspector took account of the 45 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and replies from 28 staff questionnaires. The views of parents and carers were sought at the start of the school day as they brought their children to school.

Inspection team

Sarah Warboys, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stephen Howland	Additional Inspector
Philip Scull	Additional Inspector
Jenny Edginton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Cheslyn Hay Primary School has expanded significantly since September 2011 and is much larger than the average primary school. Consequently, the school has experienced staff changes and class groups have been reorganised to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers.
- An average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding to the school. The funding is based on the number of children at the school in local authority care, from Forces families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action is average as is the proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The number of pupils joining the school at different times during the year is well above that normally found. A quarter of the pupils currently at the school have arrived since September 2011, which has led to substantial changes to the organisation of classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A privately owned Kid's Club, including before- and after-school clubs, operates on the school site. Children who attend the club and the school work very closely together. They share staff, resources, indoor and outdoor learning areas, but it is not managed by the governing body and so is separately inspected.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By December 2013, increase the proportion of good or better teaching by ensuring that all staff:
 - increase opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking of their work so that they can practise their skills and improve
 - learn from each other in sharing the best practice that exists within the school.
- Raise attainment and speed up pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that all staff:
 - provide boys with tasks that engage their interest and help them to learn reading and writing skills
 - build on the successful approach to using pupils' speaking and listening skills as a way of organising their ideas before writing
 - enable pupils to develop and use a neat and accurate handwriting style consistently in all written work.
- Increase leadership capacity by ensuring that leaders, including the governing body:
 - provide teachers with more precise guidance about what they need to do to improve their skills
 - use more rigorous systems, including the analysis of assessment information, to check the effectiveness of their actions on pupils' achievement
 - strengthen the school's strategies to promote good behaviour at lunchtimes and thereby reduce the number of physical and verbal incidents.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make adequate, rather than good progress. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, and by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, are average. Although better teaching is leading to raised achievement for all groups of pupils, recent improvements are not yet sustained over time. In most year groups, boys reach lower standards than girls in reading and writing. More recently, there are signs that they are making better progress in writing because of the school's efforts to encourage boys to talk about their ideas before writing.

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills just below those expected for their ages and make good progress. Most children have above-average skills as they start in Year 1. Adults help children to become independent learners and promote language skills particularly well. Interesting activities are organised for children to read and write letters and numbers for a purpose, such as ordering 'rocket fuel' and writing instructions for astronauts, and this helps them to make good gains in literacy and mathematics.
- The teaching of reading is improving. Young children are taught the links between letters and the sounds they make and older pupils are taught precise reading skills regularly. Well-resourced reading areas promote interest and enjoyment in reading throughout the school. Parents and carers support their children by listening to them read at home. Consequently, pupils are beginning to make good progress in reading.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs varies across the school. Most make similar progress to other pupils. In Year 6, they make good progress. Teachers and other adults are increasingly able to adapt lessons effectively to ensure that children get the help they need. Learning is often broken down into small, manageable steps, and gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills are tackled well. Parents and carers spoke highly of the support their children with special educational needs receive and say that their confidence has much increased.
- Newly arrived pupils are supported well. They are paired with other children as 'buddies' to help them make new friends and learn routines. Early assessments of pupils' skills are carried out and they are given extra help. Most make progress in line with their peers. Leaders check with pupils and their parents and carers to ensure that they are settling in well.
- Additional funding received by the school to support those eligible for the pupil premium has been used successfully to provide one-to-one tuition, support for emotional wellbeing and to provide extra help in lessons. Support is at a very early stage for many of these pupils who are new to the school. There are signs that they are making good progress and, as a result, their attainment in English and mathematics is closing on that of their peers.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving, it is not consistently good enough to ensure good achievement for all groups of pupils, especially boys, in reading and writing. The quality of teaching varies between classes. Outstanding teaching was observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection where pupils made rapid progress in lessons, but this has yet to show in good or better progress over time.

- In some lessons, teaching requires improvement because teachers spend too long explaining activities. On these occasions, the pace of learning slows and a few pupils, particularly boys, lose interest and drift off-task. Although pupils practise handwriting skills in separate lessons, not enough emphasis is placed on writing presentation in English or in other written work. Teachers' marking of pupils work identifies clearly what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to address their errors or to improve their skills because teachers' marking is rarely followed up.
- In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of behaviour and learning. Teachers use assessment information accurately to plan tasks for pupils that match their abilities so that they learn the skills they need to improve.
- Particularly successful is the way in which teachers use 'talk partners' for pupils to share their ideas with each other and clarify their thinking before writing. Pupils regularly assess their own and other's work, which helps them to check whether they have achieved success. Teachers demonstrate tasks for pupils so that they know precisely what is expected of them. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils made good progress because the teacher showed pupils how simple sentences could be improved by including more interesting word choices and better punctuation.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well to support individuals and groups of pupils. Staff use computer technology and creative resources to motivate pupils and to maintain their interest. In Year 5, pupils watched a video clip and took part enthusiastically in role play. These techniques were successful in inspiring all pupils to write imaginatively about a chosen character.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Isolated incidents of inappropriate physical and verbal behaviour by a small minority of pupils at lunchtimes mean that pupils' behaviour and safety requires improvement. Leaders ensure that such events are meticulously recorded and have taken action to address the issue, including the organisation of zoned areas to create safer playground spaces. Nevertheless, these incidents persist.
- Pupils say they feel safe and almost all parents and carers agree. Those who responded to the online questionnaire and who spoke to inspectors say their children are happy to come to school and are well cared for. Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and insist that it occurs infrequently. They say that adults deal quickly with their concerns. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet.
- A large majority of pupils show positive attitudes to learning in lessons. They are polite and well mannered in school. For example, they frequently hold doors open for adults and for each other. Adults actively teach good behaviour and pupils are responsive to their guidance. One boy explained how his behaviour is now good and how he is more focused on learning because the school has helped him to control his anger.
- The school works well with outside agencies to support pupils that need extra help. As a result of closer working with families and the work of an attendance officer, punctuality has improved and attendance rates have increased to above the national average.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leaders have successfully addressed weaknesses in teaching and, consequently, it is improving. However, leaders have not secured consistently good teaching for all pupils. Senior leaders

provide teachers with helpful feedback after watching them teach, but the targets for improvement they are set are too vague to ensure that they have a precise enough idea of how they can get better.

- Due care and attention is given to equality of opportunity and suitable measures are put in place to tackle discrimination. Leaders meet with staff to discuss pupils' progress and ensure that those in danger of falling behind get the extra help they need. Although leaders check that this support is benefiting pupils, and increasing their confidence, their checks do not focus sufficiently on pupils' levels of attainment and their rates of progress in demonstrating improvements.
- Led by a determined headteacher, all staff are focused on improving pupils' achievement. Those in charge of English and mathematics know what needs to be done to rectify weaknesses. For example, more systematic teaching of reading and an increase in opportunities for pupils to solve problems in mathematics are leading to signs that standards are beginning to improve. However, their actions are yet to yield consistently good progress over time for all pupils.
- Newly qualified teachers are supported by more experienced colleagues. New systems have been introduced for teachers to work more closely together, such as coaching, in order to share the good practice that exists within the school. However, it is too soon to show fully their effectiveness in terms of pupils' progress. Other teachers agree targets with leaders based on their particular areas of responsibility. Training for teachers is linked to the needs of staff and to the school. Leaders and governors ensure that all staff who achieved the goals set for them were awarded pay increases.
- The school offers a range of subjects and activities that is enhanced by clubs, visits and visitors. Leaders ensure that a positive learning environment promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well with each other. Teachers foster a love of words and enrich pupils' vocabulary choices. Teamwork is a key feature in lessons.
- The local authority now provides light touch support for this school. Previously, it has helped to develop the skills of the school's leaders. It has been particularly effective in developing the Early Years Foundation Stage, which has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors support the work of the school and are firmly behind the headteacher in securing better progress for pupils. They have made the most of training opportunities so that they can make more informed choices about the school's work. They challenge the school to improve its performance, though its records of their discussions in holding leaders to account are not as thorough as they could be. Members of the governing body provide a range of skills and expertise. They have supported the school in tackling weaknesses in teaching and have effectively managed the reorganisation of teaching groups due to the recent increase in pupil numbers. Members of the governing body carry out joint monitoring activities with senior leaders so they are better placed to make decisions about what happens in school. They ensure that national safeguarding requirements are met. They manage the school's finances well, including the spending of the pupil premium. Governors are aware that its use is making a positive difference to pupils' attendance and progress. Governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including the establishment of a more rigorous system of tracking pupils' progress to ensure that they are more able to check how well different groups of pupils are doing.

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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	124189
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	402240

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jan Toplis
Headteacher	Sharon Maiden
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2010
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