

Cambridge Road Primary and Nursery School

Cambridge Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 4AQ

Inspection dates 6–7 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Due to outstanding leadership the school has improved rapidly in recent years.
- Pupils make good progress from starting points that are often well below those typical for their age and attain broadly average standards by the time they leave Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is good overall with some that is outstanding. Teachers and support staff are dedicated to ensuring that pupils succeed in learning and achieve this well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good overall around the school and outstanding in lessons. This is because school staff have worked tirelessly to implement new policy guidelines and to create a culture of mutual respect. Pupils take on board responsibilities in an enthusiastic and mature way, ensuring that new pupils and visitors are welcomed into the school. Pupils feel safe in school.
- Pupils enjoy school because they experience an exciting curriculum taught by committed teachers and other adults who have high expectations of them
- The school is very well respected by parents and is highly valued within the local community.
- The organisation and management of the school is meticulous and enables school leaders to keep a very close and accurate check on the quality of teaching and the school's performance, both of which are improving strongly.
- Outstanding leadership at all levels, including the governing body, is highly effective. There is a climate of challenge and support for all, which has inspired the whole school team to improve the quality of their work and to be ambitious for further improvement.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Although increasing, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in English and mathematics is below average.
- Occasionally, the activities teachers plan for in lessons are not hard enough for some pupils, particularly the more able.
- Pupils do not always get the chance to think about and learn from the comments teachers make when marking their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons. They also visited parts of lessons across the school and listened to pupils read from Years 2, 3, 4 and 6.
- Inspectors met with a number of school staff including the headteacher, senior leaders, three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone conversation took place between the lead inspector and the school's education consultant, formerly of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the responses of five parents who completed the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), and considered detailed survey and questionnaire information presented by the school relating to the views of parents and pupils over the last three years.
- Inspectors analysed 30 questionnaires completed by staff and held meetings with two groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for the pupil premium. Various documents were scrutinised, these included the school's development plans and its own assessment of its performance, performance management files, records relating to pupils' behaviour, curriculum planning and records relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited the school's breakfast and after-school clubs and talked to parents who participated in the Nursery and Reception classes Stay and Play initiative.

Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Buckley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is more than twice the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is more than twice the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average and a small minority of pupils speaks English as an additional language.
- The school has achieved a number of awards including the National Healthy School status and the Inclusion Quality Mark.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club, both of which are very popular and well attended.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has taken up the post in September 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and improve achievement further by:
 - ensuring that all work in lessons is hard enough, especially for the more-able pupils
 - increasing the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics to at least the national average
 - ensuring that all marking of work consistently indicates to pupils how well they are doing and provides opportunities for them to think about and act on the teachers' comments.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The majority of children enter the Nursery class with skills in communication, language and social development which are well below those typical for their age. Teachers provide a stimulating and orderly environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and as a result children make good progress.
- Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 1 and the vast majority also do so during Key Stage 2 to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. However, fewer than average reach the higher standards in mathematics and English.
- Mathematics is the strongest subject in both key stages and standards have improved significantly over the last three years. Writing, although the weaker subject at Key Stage 1, has shown steady improvement over the last three years.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding to good effect to provide specialist staff, as well as one-to-one and small group support in mathematics, English and phonics (teaching pupils about the sounds that letters make).
- Pupils who have special educational needs both with and without a statement of educational needs and those supported by school action and school action plus perform better in mathematics and English than similar pupils nationally, especially at Key Stage 2.
- Pupils make good progress in learning to read although, because of their low starting points, standards are a little below average in the national phonics test taken in Year 1. The school has recently introduced a system of teaching phonics which all teachers now use and this is already beginning to further increase the rate of progress pupils make in reading.
- Inspectors observed a number of phonics sessions in which pupils were making good progress. They were confidently sounding out letters and sounds and using their skills to read out unfamiliar words. One pupil who read for inspectors said that the new way phonics is taught had helped him to learn new words.
- The school has set up an 'assessment information system' that enables teachers to check on pupils' achievement regularly in all areas of the curriculum. Each pupil is assessed once a term and targets are set which focus on academic performance, as well as attitudes to learning. Parents and pupils are directly involved in this process as are pupils who enter the school mid-term and toward the end of Key Stage 2.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently at least good, with several examples of outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. The vast majority of lessons are purposeful and well-organised. In these lessons, plans identify the needs of all groups of pupils, including less-able and more-able pupils.
- Teachers strive to ensure that their lessons interest pupils and fire their imagination. This is greatly helped by the school's approach to exploring different topics, such as The Victorians, in history, English and mathematics. The different visitors that are invited into the school help to bring lessons to life and enthuse pupils even further.
- The school regularly works with artists; together with teachers, they help pupils to develop a good understanding and appreciation of art as well as to enhance their skills.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy their learning. In the Nursery class, they quickly settle into lessons and learn to follow routines, such as hanging up their coats and putting bags away. In one lesson children quickly moved from their tables to the carpet area for a phonics session. They settled into an 'I spy someone whose name begins with' game with great enthusiasm and began to match letters and sounds.
- In the best lessons, activities move at a quick pace and maintain the interest of all pupils. In many subjects, including mathematics and science, teachers phrase questions carefully so that pupils can think their answers through. Great attention is paid to the importance of literacy.

- In a Year 6 science class, pupils confidently used scientific words such as 'evaporating', 'condensing' and 'dissolving' and were able to engage in independent research and experiments to find out how certain materials reacted when subjected to heat.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide a wide range of activities for the benefit of different groups of learners to develop literacy and numeracy skills.
- In a small group of Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils, a teacher took great care to make sure that they understood how to build number blocks, while at the same time emphasising to them the importance of words such as 'independent' and 'accuracy'.
- Teaching assistants and support staff are a strength of the school. They work well and plan effectively with teachers. Their time is well used in the classroom where they provide one-to-one specialist help and small group support to various groups of pupils, including the more-able.
- Most pupils, especially those in Key Stage 2, know how well they are doing and are aware of how to improve their learning. However, this is not the case with all pupils, including some in Years 5 and 6.
- Marking is mostly of a high quality and pupils say that they find teachers' comments useful. However, not enough opportunities are provided to enable pupils to comment on their own work and take time to reflect on and learn from what teachers have to say.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in most lessons is at least good and often exemplary. This is because teachers and other adults have worked together in a clear and consistent manner to implement a system of sanctions and rewards which ensures that all pupils know exactly what is expected of them.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and that they are confident in talking to adults about any concerns that they have. Pupils are acutely aware of the dangers and their responsibilities while using computers, mobile phones and internet-enabled games. They have an in-depth knowledge of cyber-bullying and know not to divulge personal information when using the internet.
- When discussing behaviour with pupils, inspectors were impressed with their courteous response. Pupils readily engaged in conversation and were very proud to talk about the things they liked best about their school.
- The school's well developed and very effective partnership with parents is a strength and has led to improvements in attendance, achievement and behaviour. During the inspection, a number of parents were seen in the school working with children and supporting in specific areas of the curriculum, such as art, and also working with teachers in the Nursery class helping children with reading and writing.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now average. The school has put a lot of effort into ensuring that pupils and parents know the importance of good attendance. This has been enhanced by an exciting and engaging curriculum and parental involvement in celebration assemblies.
- School questionnaires completed during parents' evenings provide compelling evidence that the overwhelming majority of parents are confident that the school is safe and always deals with any poor behaviour.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of what bullying is and why it is wrong. This is because of the school uses every opportunity in lessons and other activities to teach pupils right from wrong and these experiences are added to through visitors into school, such as 'Athletes Against Bullying'.
- The school's records of behaviour show that incidents of bullying are rare. However, some pupils did express concerns about bullying at school.
- Some pupils who are admitted at various times during the academic year from other schools and elsewhere display behaviour not in keeping with the school's expectations and way of going about things.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher is very well respected throughout the school community having gained the confidence of staff, parents, pupils and school partners. Since his appointment he has tackled head-on, and with great success, all of the areas for improvement identified at the school's last inspection.
- The headteacher is supported by a very able senior leadership team, committed teaching and support staff and knowledgeable governors. All are highly ambitious for the school's success and take action to promote excellence for all. Together with the support of parents they have raised pupils' levels of achievement and, through their high expectations, they have also improved pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- The rigorous systems developed to check on the quality of teaching are outstanding. Because of this, the school's leaders are able to show that the quality of teaching has improved significantly over the last two years. All teachers are set ambitious targets that are linked to their performance in the classroom and the progress that pupils make. Teaching is now at least good with examples of teaching that is outstanding. All staff agree that the school is extremely well led and managed and that senior leaders do all they can to improve teaching. School leaders are fully aware of what needs to be done for the school to continue improving and are relentless in their efforts to push standards higher.
- Leaders responsible for mathematics, English, the management of the Early Years Foundation Stage and special educational needs are highly organised and effective. They understand and analyse tracking data extremely well. They use their detailed knowledge of the achievement of each pupil to make sure that extra help is targeted with great precision to where it is needed most. Consequently, pupils who show any sign that they might be falling behind with their learning, or are not making the progress that they should, receive the help they need to quickly get back on track.
- All teaching and support staff benefit from well-focused professional development opportunities which they say help them to address the school's priorities and improve their teaching skills
- Pupils are provided with a wealth of exciting learning opportunities. These include going to London and visiting 10 Downing Street, and engaging in various residential and team-building activities in Delemere Forest. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all its pupils ensures all are given the chance to take part in these activities. No one feels left out.
- Senior leaders ensure that pupils develop a keen sense of their responsibilities towards each other and to people of other cultures or walks of life. It does though a well thought out, and highly effective, programme which strongly supports pupils in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's relationship with parents is strong. Regular newsletters help to keep parents fully informed about school activities and the part that they can play in helping their children to learn well.
- The school is well respected within its family of schools. Its relationship with social services is more highly developed than in most schools and it ensures that all statutory safeguarding requirements are met.
- The school has a very effective relationship with an education consultant, formerly of the local authority, who provides 'light-touch' advice on what the school needs to do to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors' involvement in the school has improved greatly since the last inspection. They are highly motivated and articulate an ambitious vision for the school that demonstrates their commitment to getting the best from everyone. Governors know the school very well and have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and how well pupils are doing. They are knowledgeable and through the robust and well-informed level of challenge and support that they bring to the school's senior leadership team, they help to set priorities for future school improvement. Governors ensure that they keep up-to-date with their training, especially in relation to child protection and safer recruitment. Governors ensure that the pupil premium is spent appropriately and its effect monitored

properly. They have recently sanctioned spending to employ additional staff to help to raise standards further. Governors play a full role in the performance management of the headteacher and annually review his achievements and highlight additional priorities when necessary.

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	111084
Local authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	403135

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	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Kenneth Salter
Headteacher	Mr Darryl Pickering
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2008
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