

# The Berkeley Primary School

Laidon Avenue, Wistaston, Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 6RU

## Inspection dates

13–14 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- This is a very caring and nurturing school with a positive climate for learning and strong relationships.
- Children get off to a good and sometimes outstanding start in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Most pupils continue to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, reaching standards that are significantly above those expected for their age by the time they leave the school.
- Teaching is almost always good and sometimes outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good. They are proud of their school, enjoy learning and feel safe.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have successfully focused on improving achievement, teaching, behaviour and the Early Years Foundation Stage since the last inspection.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Improvements in teaching, to ensure it is consistently good, are not yet evident in all lessons.
- The role of subject and middle leaders in improving pupil progress is not yet fully developed, especially with regard to boys' writing and improvement plans are not focused closely enough on their impact on pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 10 teachers covering 21 lessons. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and observed teaching assistants working with small groups, scrutinised pupils' work and listened to them read. They also observed children at play and lunch times.
- Discussions were held with staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority. Inspectors also took account of 26 responses to a staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a wide range of documents including the school's improvement plans, data on pupils' past and current progress, minutes of the governing body meetings, performance management information and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of 57 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as letters from parents.

## Inspection team

Chris Maloney, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Anthony Buckley	Additional Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children from service families, is low.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also low.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been significant changes in staffing since the last inspection.
- Some pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes.
- The deputy headteacher led the school through the inspection due to the absence of the headteacher through illness.
- The on-site, independent pre-school provision is inspected separately.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding, by:
  - providing more opportunities for teachers to share best practice
  - ensuring that teachers consistently plan work that is not too easy or too hard for all pupils
  - ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their work and have time to respond to the advice given
  - ensuring that the skills of teaching assistants are used well throughout the whole lesson
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write at length and for different reasons in all subjects.
- Increase the impact of leadership and management at all levels on achievement, by:
  - ensuring that improvement plans are always clear and measurable and focused more sharply on the impact of the school's action on pupils
  - ensuring that subject and middle leaders use the information they gather from checking on the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils to bring about improvement, particularly in boys' writing.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Children usually enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a range of skills and knowledge typically expected for their age. They settle quickly and make good and sometimes outstanding progress in all areas of their learning, especially in their reading and personal development. They enter Year 1 with skills and abilities well above those typically found for children of their age.
- Most pupils continue to do well in Key Stage 1 so that they usually leave Year 2 with standards significantly above those expected for their age in reading and writing, and following a rise in 2012, also in mathematics.
- Attainment rose sharply in 2012 in Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics. Thus, by the end of Year 6, due to sustained good progress, pupils reached standards significantly above those expected nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Current Year 6 pupils are making similarly good progress.
- Pupils do well in their reading because they receive good quality teaching of phonics (the regular practising of linking letters and sounds) in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. In the Year 1 check on pupils' use of phonics, attainment was higher than seen nationally in 2012. Reading skills are developed systematically in Key Stage 2 so that by the end of Year 6 pupils read with increasing fluency and confidence and talk knowledgeably about their favourite books and the different authors they like.
- Pupils' writing skills develop well through school but boys do less well in their writing than girls do. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write in all subjects.
- The small proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similarly good progress to that of other groups of pupils. This is because their needs are identified early and met effectively with skilled and targeted support and the school has a strong commitment to ensuring that everyone is helped to do their best. Pupils who join the school with English as an additional language benefit greatly from the good quality support they receive. The low numbers of pupils attracting the pupil premium funding are making similarly good progress.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding, although there is a small amount that requires improvement. The strong focus on improving teaching, so that pupils make more rapid progress, has resulted in most teachers having higher expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teachers have responded enthusiastically to initiatives by senior leaders and to the external support and training provided. These have allowed them to ensure that they are setting work at the right level to challenge groups of different abilities and that they are giving pupils precise information on how to improve their work and time to respond to the advice given. Teachers are also encouraged to make the best use of teaching assistants in supporting pupils throughout the lesson and many do. Although these features were seen in many lessons, they are not yet consistent practice in all. The best examples of teaching are not fully shared across the school so teachers do not always understand what constitutes outstanding teaching and learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They know their pupils well and build very positive and caring relationships with pupils that help support pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- In the most effective lessons, learning takes place at a good rate and teachers ask probing questions to judge how well pupils understand their tasks and often make changes to the lesson so that pupils can move on more quickly. In such lessons, pupils are given creative and practical learning activities that 'stretch' them and keep them fully engaged. A typical pupil view is, 'I like lessons most when they are fun and we do interesting and exciting things that make you think and work hard'. In an outstanding Year 6 lesson, pupils were highly stimulated by the excellent use of poetry and picture images of a forest to produce high quality writing such as 'I will put in the box the bitter sweet taste of the fog' and 'Rocks struggling to breathe due to the thick

moss growing over them’.

- Teachers make a successful contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through activities such as links with a partner school in Kenya, school assemblies, links with other local faith groups and in the wide range of creative activities used to motivate pupils in their learning.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The very caring ethos of the school is promoted well through the strong relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to reflect about their feelings, differences, beliefs and values. As a result, pupils are respectful of adults and each other.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They are proud of their school and particularly like the ‘Good to be Green’ approach where their good and sometimes outstanding behaviour in lessons and around school is encouraged and rewarded. Their improved behaviour and attitudes to learning has contributed well to their improving progress and rising attainment.
- Pupils benefit from the good quality anti-bullying work undertaken by school. They understand the various forms that bullying may take, including name-calling, cyber-bullying and bullying as a result of prejudice. Incidents of bullying of any kind are rare, but pupils say that if an incident occurred, they would know who to speak to and are confident it would be dealt with quickly and fairly. They say, ‘You never feel awkward talking to an adult in school’.
- Pupils report that they feel safe because they are well cared for by teachers and other adults. A typical pupil view is ‘All adults care about us and keep us safe’. Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and have a good understanding of potential dangers, such as when using the Internet, crossing local roads or talking to strangers. Some pupils act as ‘Safety Officers’, taking their responsibilities seriously to help others understand about how to stay safe. Parents agree that their children feel safe.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and taking the many responsibilities on offer, such as reading buddies, eco- and school councillors. The school’s procedures for dealing with absence are very thorough and, as a result, attendance is average and improving.
- Regular ‘Celebration Assemblies’ are greatly valued by the pupils and motivate them to do their best and behave well by celebrating their behaviour, work and achievements in and outside of school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher leads the school well and is supported very well by the senior leadership team and governors. Senior leaders have communicated high ambitions and expectations, worked together well as a team, checked the school’s performance and used the information gathered to plan improvements. Staff morale is very high because the senior leadership team has ensured that all staff, including the significant number of those who are new, know how they can help to make the school more successful. This was clearly demonstrated by the way in which the very able deputy and other senior managers stepped in to lead the school during this inspection in the absence of the headteacher due to illness.
- Since the last inspection the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior leaders have worked relentlessly, and with great success, to improve the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils throughout the school. They have also been successful in improving the behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning, helping pupils make much better progress.
- The detailed school improvement plan is based on an accurate evaluation of the school’s performance. Although school plans are focused on improving pupils’ progress and the quality of teaching, their impact on pupils is not always clear and measurable.
- Senior leaders have accurate views about the quality of teaching because they monitor it

regularly and identify any improvements needed. Improvements have been made to the rigour with which they hold teachers to account through the management of their performance, by holding more regular meetings to check on the progress pupils are making.

- Subject and middle leaders are keen and enthusiastic and have made improvements in their areas. However, their role is underdeveloped as they do not always use information they gather to refine their action plans and target help where it is most needed, for example, to accelerate the progress of boys in writing.
  - The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and is enriched with art, music, clubs, visits and visitors. Years 5 and 6 pupils enjoy residential visits to Robin Wood Activity Centre. The school also benefits from links with schools in the Shavington Learning Partnership and a partner school in Kenya. The school also does impressive work on helping pupils understanding of how to help the environment through its Eco-Council.
  - Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory guidance. Rigorous checks are made on all staff and visitors so that pupils are kept safe.
  - The vast majority of parents are supportive of the school and would recommend it to another parent. A small number did not agree.
  - The local authority has provided good practical support since the last inspection through training and the use of external consultants and this has helped the school to improve strongly.
  - The governance of the school:
    - Governors are supportive, clearly demonstrate high expectations and are committed to providing all pupils with an equal chance to learn. They have a secure knowledge of the strengths of the school and recognise where improvements need to be made. They also ensure that pupil premium funding has an impact on the achievement of the pupils it is intended for. Governors frequently visit the school and receive good quality reports from staff and external consultants to help them get a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils.
-

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111122
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	405317

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	330
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Bartholomew
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janine Stainsby-Cope
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01270 685144
<b>Fax number</b>	01270 651492
<b>Email address</b>	head@berkeley.cheshire.sch.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

