

Sandbach Community Primary School

Crewe Road, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 4NS

Inspection dates

27–28 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Since the previous inspection, attainment in English and mathematics has improved significantly and is now in line with the national average.
- Most pupils make good progress and learn well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils say they enjoy their reading. They read fluently and with understanding. Those who have fallen behind are given effective help to catch up.
- Teaching is consistently good across the school. Teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively together to ensure pupils make good progress.
- Pupils really enjoy school. They feel very safe, are well looked after and have excellent relationships with each other and with adults in the school. Their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils take on responsibilities with enthusiasm, are keen to learn and are very proud of their achievements. Since the last inspection attendance has improved and is now above average.
- The headteacher, strongly supported by the senior leadership team and the governing body, provides very clear direction. They have an accurate view of the school's work and have successfully improved the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Opportunities are missed for pupils to work independently of the teacher and to use their initiative to solve problems. In some lessons pupils are not always given the resources they need to be able to complete tasks independently of the teacher.
- The quality of pupils' writing is sometimes hampered by errors in spelling. Pupils are not always given the guidance they need to write accurately.
- The progress of some pupils slows as they move into Year 1 because they have not yet achieved the skills expected for their age.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 11 lessons, of which seven were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. These included a number of short visits to lessons and other activities conducted by teachers and trained assistants.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, with the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and school staff, including middle and senior managers.
- The inspector took account of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), letters from parents and questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Judith Tolley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Sandbach Community Primary is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are predominantly of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average, although this varies from year-to-year.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. (Pupil premium funding is provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and the children of military personnel.)
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection a Children's Centre has been established on the school site. This is run independently of the school and is inspected separately.
- The school has a number of awards including the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to quicken the rate of progress for all pupils by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently of the teacher to solve problems
 - providing pupils with the resources they need to complete tasks independently
 - ensuring pupils are always given good guidance about how to improve their work, particularly their spelling, in all subjects
 - ensuring pupils moving into Year 1 from the Early Years Foundation Stage are given the opportunities they need to achieve the skills expected for their age.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Many pupils join the school with skill levels that are well below those expected for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, all children make good progress, particularly in communication, language, reading and personal and social skills as a result of the way they are able to access a range of activities which allow them to achieve their next steps in learning. This is because activities in the Nursery and Reception classes are carefully planned so that the needs of all children are met in a range of carefully planned activities where all children work and play together. Although less-able pupils make good progress from their starting points, the pace of their learning slows initially as they move from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Year 1 because they do not always have the same opportunities to learn through play.
- By the end of Year 6 attainment in English and mathematics are in line with the national average. Since the previous inspection, standards have risen year-on-year and continue to rise. The proportion of pupils who make more than expected progress from their starting points compares very favourably with national figures.
- In reading, most pupils make good, and some make outstanding progress as they move through the school. They read a variety of texts fluently and write for a variety of purposes and audiences. However, the quality of their writing is sometimes spoiled by inaccuracies in spelling.
- The school's analysis of pupils' progress indicates that gaps in the performance of different groups of pupils have now closed and illustrates that the school uses the pupil premium funding to good effect. Previous gaps in the attainment and performance of those pupils who are eligible for free school meals compared with those who are not eligible, for example, have been successfully closed and so these pupils make equally good progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils who have fallen behind or who have special educational needs and those who are at the early stages of learning English are all supported well through a range of well-tailored support programmes, the learning mentor and extra support in class. As a result, these pupils successfully take part in activities alongside their classmates and also make good progress from their starting points.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The overall quality of teaching over time is good and leads to pupils' good progress.
- Teachers usually present new ideas clearly and activities are well designed to engage pupils' interest. Information and communication technology is used effectively by both teachers and their pupils, even the youngest, to clarify ideas and to enable pupils to consolidate and extend their learning. For example, pupils regularly access programmes to help them practise their reading skills or write reviews of the books they have enjoyed.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively together to plan lessons so that no time is lost in organising groups. Activities are well matched to pupils' needs and capabilities. They ask pupils very searching questions to get them thinking and to see how much they have understood.
- Pupils often make the best progress when they are given the opportunity to work with a partner or in small groups to explore ideas and solve problems. In a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, for instance, pupils worked together enthusiastically to investigate ways to complete multiplication calculations and to determine the effect it had on the place of decimal points. Similarly, pupils in Years 1 and 2 worked enthusiastically together to spot patterns in spelling and past tenses. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to promote pupils' enjoyment and independence as learners in this way.
- Teachers skilfully adapt their lessons so that any misunderstandings are corrected. However, pupils sometimes lack the resources they need to check their work or to move on without the teacher's help, such as glossaries or dictionaries to check meaning or spelling and solutions to

the problems they have been solving. When they are not able to check their work, the pace of their learning slows.

- The teaching of reading is systematic and consistent across the school. The teaching of phonics (the sound letters make) in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is having a positive impact upon the quality of pupils' writing and upon their reading skills. Pupils are excited about reading and say how much they enjoy it.
- Marking is thorough and pupils are increasingly involved in tracking their own progress against their targets, especially in English and mathematics, as they move through the school. Most pupils regularly enter into a dialogue with their teachers about how best to improve their work. However, opportunities are missed to provide pupils with the guidance they need for spelling accurately, particularly in subjects other than English.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are kind and considerate to each other and work and play very well together. They take responsibility very seriously and are proud of their contribution to the school through, for example, the school council, as playground leaders and prefects.
- There is no disruption to lessons and pupils work responsibly and with enthusiasm, especially when given the opportunity to work independently or collaboratively. They listen attentively to others and respect each other's views. Even the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage relish the opportunities they have to take responsibility, for example to tidy up. They do this with enthusiasm and without fuss, needing very little supervision.
- Pupils have excellent relationships with adults, feel very safe and both pupils and parents are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively. They are aware of the different forms of bullying, such as name-calling and cyber-bullying, that can take place and know how to deal with it; prefects and play leaders actively helping their peers at break and lunchtimes. Their knowledge about how to stay safe is impressive. They also have a very good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Extra-curricular activities, including sport are very popular.
- The school has worked well with outside agencies and with parents to improve punctuality and attendance. Attendance rates have risen to above average and persistent absence has decreased.
- Pupils have frequent opportunities to reflect on their own learning and regularly write down their thoughts and feelings about all aspects of their learning in 'Impact' books. These clearly show how pupils reflect upon their experiences and their own learning and make a significant contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership and management of the headteacher are outstanding. She provides very clear direction based on an accurate evaluation of the school's work. Strategies to improve teaching and learning, to raise standards and to increase pupils' progress across the school have proved very successful and have led to significant improvements in these areas since the previous inspection. The pupil premium funding is used effectively and gaps between the performances of different groups have closed.
- There is good leadership of teaching but it is not yet outstanding owing to the work still to be accomplished in developing opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively to solve problems and to smooth the transition between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1.
- The headteacher is strongly supported by the deputy headteacher and subject leaders who also have an accurate view of the school's performance and know how to improve further. Subject leaders are fully involved in procedures for checking how well the school is doing and driving

improvement in teaching and learning in their subjects.

- This, and the detailed analysis of pupils' progress, triggers appropriate interventions for pupils and training for staff. A comprehensive system of appraisal and performance management has been adopted, which is linked to the pay scales. Teachers are positive about how they are helped to improve their teaching, including the amount of professional development available to them.
 - Issues identified in the previous report have been tackled successfully. Teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively as a team and regularly share good practice. This results in a good degree of consistency across the school. The school is well-placed to improve further.
 - Safeguarding meets government requirements. The school promotes equal opportunities well and pupils' consistently good achievement in general demonstrates success in these respects.
 - Good links have been established with the recently opened Children's Centre and the school works effectively with local agencies and with parents to remove barriers to learning.
 - The curriculum meets the needs and interests of the pupils well. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the topics they are studying. It is effectively adapted for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. It is enriched by a variety of activities such as art, theatre and music as well as a wide range of clubs and sporting activities, visits, including residential visits, themed and 'University Days', and visitors.
 - Pupils have frequent opportunities to reflect and appreciate their own skills and the skills of others, for example, through assemblies and their contributions to the 'Impact' books. This is successful in increasing pupils' confidence and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
 - Since the previous inspection the local authority has worked effectively with the school to improve teaching and learning in English and mathematics. It now provides light touch support for this good school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas which need to be improved. Some governors are fully involved in checking the school's performance, including data that shows pupils' attainment and progress and by observing lessons. As a result, they have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and the performance of staff. The efficiency of spending is scrutinised, for instance the effectiveness of the use of pupil premium funding. Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are met. They are actively involved in the life of the school and effectively hold leaders to account.
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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	111037
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	401166

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	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Di Morrison
Headteacher	Lynn Treadway
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2009
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