

Whittington CofE (Aided) Primary School

Station Road, Whittington, Oswestry, SY11 4DA

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils make good progress and reach above-average standards in English and mathematics. Well-targeted and high-quality interventions undertaken by teaching assistants ensure lower-attaining pupils make particularly strong progress.
- Children make a good start in the Reception class because they have a high-quality learning environment and the important learning that takes place is reviewed well.
- Teaching is good. English and mathematics lessons meet the needs of pupils with differing abilities well.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium are making especially good progress because the school targets this resource well.
- Pupils behave very well around the school and in the playground. They concentrate well in most lessons. Attendance levels are high.
- Staff are highly supportive of the headteacher. Parents who spoke to the inspector or responded through Parent View are very positive about all aspects of the school.
- Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics does not contribute enough to pupils' literacy and numeracy development and is not as well matched to the needs of pupils of differing abilities.
- Teachers' questioning is not always effective.
- The school's improvement plans are not sufficiently focused on improving the quality of teaching and lack indicators that can be used by all governors to check how well the school, and pupils, are progressing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons and, in addition, made a number of short visits to lessons. They held meeting with pupils and spoke to pupils in lessons, at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school’s improvement plans, and a wide range of policies, including those designed to ensure pupils are safe. They also examined the work in some pupils’ books and a range of data about their progress.
- The inspectors met with teachers, the headteacher, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of parents were considered through the 45 responses contained on the Parent View website and through discussion at the start of the school day. The inspectors also considered the views expressed in questionnaires returned by members of staff.

Inspection team

Kevin Sheldrick, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Catherine Beeks

Additional Inspector

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are both well below the national average.
- The school has an above-average proportion of Gypsy Roma pupils.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action (pupils who need extra support with their learning) is broadly average. The proportions at school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, are also close to average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is about two thirds the national average. This funding supports those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and a few children of members of the armed services.
- The school met the government's floor standard, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress, in 2013.
- The deputy headteacher has not been working in the school since April 2013 because she is supporting leadership in other local schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To make teaching outstanding:
 - improve questioning so pupils have to think more deeply about their responses in all subjects
 - in subjects other than English and mathematics, ensure lessons focus more on the needs of pupils of differing abilities
 - ensure all subjects contribute more to the development of pupils' literacy and mathematical skills.
- Enhance the school's planning for improvement by:
 - giving more attention to improving teaching, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - including more indicators that can be used by the entire governing body to regularly check the progress pupils are making in every year group.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress. Information collected by the school over several years shows that most children started school in the Reception class with the skills, behaviours and attitudes that are below those which are typical for their age. This situation is changing, as more children in the current Reception year group possess more of the skills, behaviours and attitudes that are expected for their age.
- Children make good progress in the Reception class and transfer smoothly into Year 1. Pupils in Year 1 demonstrate an ability to listen carefully to their teacher, and almost all respond to the teacher's questioning using full sentences. At this early stage of the year, almost all pupils could identify colours in Spanish; many can count to 10 and most know the names of shapes.
- Until recently, the progress pupils made in Key Stage 1 was not as fast as elsewhere in the school. This was because the school did not pay sufficient attention to the teaching of letters and sounds. The progress pupils are making is now comparable to elsewhere in the school because letters and sounds are now emphasised more and are linked well to pupils' writing and to improving spelling. The school intends to increase the opportunities pupils have to undertake more problem solving to help pupils to make faster progress in mathematics.
- In 2012, pupils' progress in both English and mathematics dipped in Key Stage 2, and attainment was close to the national average. This year, results have bounced back. The provisional results are likely to be well above the national average. During the inspection, the progress observed in lessons was more variable. Although pupils were observed to be making good progress in most English and mathematics lessons, this was not always the case in other subjects.
- In 2012, pupils supported by the pupil premium were about a year behind other pupils in the school in writing, reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6, with little sign at that time that this gap in attainment was closing. This situation has been transformed because these pupils have received the close attention of all teachers. Throughout the school, all pupils supported by the pupil premium made above expected progress in the last twelve months. This is also the case for the Roma and Gypsy heritage pupils. These pupils have benefited greatly from well-targeted interventions led by teaching assistants.
- There are a few times when the progress made by more-able pupils slows because they are not challenged sufficiently in all subjects. Older more-able pupils do not have quite enough opportunity to have a go at secondary level tasks. Despite this, more-able pupils make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Many make better than expected progress because they benefit most from the very high levels of additional support that is made available in lessons. They also benefit from some very well considered intervention aimed at improving their reading and writing.

The quality of teaching is good

- In English and mathematics, teachers almost always plan lessons that meet the needs of the full ability range. These plans ensure effective use is made of teaching assistants. Teachers avoid overly long introductions so pupils can concentrate on their work.

-
- Pupils receive helpful written feedback and are required to respond to this. Regular reviews of learning in lessons are often used well to ensure pupils understand how they can improve. A teacher in Year 4, for example, skilfully involved the class in analysing how a promising piece of writing produced by a class member could be further improved.
 - The pace of learning in English and mathematics lessons is almost always strong because teachers' expectations are consistently high. In a good mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils independently challenged themselves to evaluate different approaches to solving division problems. The school has recognised that greater consideration of Level 6 work could further raise pupils' aspirations.
 - There are some strengths in the school's approach to questioning. For instance, 'talk partners' are used well so all pupils think about responses. In English and mathematics, pupils are asked a good range of questions, some of which require them to think more deeply about their learning. In other subjects, questioning is not quite so effective. Pupils do not have enough opportunity to evaluate the responses from other pupils.
 - Teachers make lessons interesting by linking them to stimulating situations: for instance, pupils really enjoyed studying area because it was linked to calculating the material required to complete the furnishing of the local community hall.
 - In subjects other than English and mathematics, less effective teaching does not always make clear the expected learning for pupils of differing abilities and does not make the most of the support provided by teaching assistants.
 - The Reception class, both indoors and outside, is a stimulating environment. Interesting and regularly changing topics further enhance the provision. During the inspection, children were highly absorbed by the gingerbread theme. Some pupils had been inspired to begin writing their own stories while others proudly started counting how many gingerbread men they had found hidden outdoors. Pupils' learning is reinforced through high-quality regular reviews, although teaching assistants are not always sufficiently involved.
 - Suitable adaptations are made so that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs can participate in lessons fully. The interventions for these pupils observed during the inspection were of high quality. Pupils participated enthusiastically because the highly skilled teaching assistants ensured all pupils were fully engaged in well-prepared activities.
 - Reading is promoted well through the recently introduced and much more effective approach to the initial teaching of letters and sounds. As pupils progress through the school, they read widely, because they have access to a wide range of reading books that have been carefully matched to their reading abilities.
 - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a major strength. This is a key focus in daily assemblies. Pupils in Year 2 were observed reflecting deeply in their class assembly on how they have made themselves safe. Social aspects feature in the identified outcomes for lessons: for instance, pupils discuss the importance of concepts like 'compromise'. Pupils remember well key messages from sessions designed to encourage them to identify 'stereotypes' that may be associated with those from different ethnic backgrounds.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say that behaviour is good and only rarely is learning affected by off-task behaviour. Staff and parents agree that pupils' behaviour is good.
- Pupils respond quickly to any reminders about how to behave. They value their golden time that is given as a reward for good behaviour. Pupils' very good knowledge of right and wrong is further evidence of the impact of the school's effective approach to the promotion of their moral development.
- Attendance is high and the school has successfully improved punctuality, particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Pupils are highly positive about almost all lessons and enjoy the topics they experience. They talk enthusiastically about the Ancient Greeks they are studying in history. They particularly enjoy the opportunities they have to use information and communication technology, especially the hand-held devices.
- Behaviour in corridors and in the playground is consistently first class. Pupils show considerable respect for the quiet area in the playground. The large majority of pupils concentrate well in lessons and in assemblies. In a few lessons where pupils are not appropriately challenged, pupils occasionally engage in off-task talk.
- Pupils and their parents indicate that incidents of bullying are rare. When they occur they are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils know about the forms that bullying can take, including that which is prejudice based. A girl who arrived relatively recently spoke of how she had been made to feel welcome. She particularly valued the support of a buddy that had been allocated to her when she first started.

The leadership and management are good

- The school's headteacher has the wholehearted support of staff and parents. Staff and parents greatly appreciate the headteacher's approachability. Staff morale is high and leaders at all levels are enthusiastic and keen to improve further. The school is contributing strongly to improvement in other schools; for instance, the deputy headteacher has been providing leadership support to other schools.
- The local authority has been instrumental in assisting the school in developing partnerships with other schools. However, the school itself receives relatively little support because it has been identified as an effective school that is able to take full responsibility for its own improvement.
- Leaders accurately evaluate the quality of teaching and have resolutely addressed any identified weaknesses, particularly as they relate to the teaching of English and mathematics. Although there was a dip in achievement last year, the school has returned to its usual strong position this year. There have been noteworthy improvements in the progress made by pupils who are supported by the pupil premium and by all pupils at Key Stage 1.
- Training has enabled staff to improve, particularly in their teaching of English and mathematics. The school has provided good opportunities for leadership development: for instance, middle leaders have regular release time and have opportunities to shadow other leaders. The school has excellent plans in place to ensure its new leaders of English and mathematics are enabled to

be highly effective in their new roles.

- The school has allocated its additional funding to promote sport, following a robust audit of current provision. Funding is being used to promote more competitive sport and to provide external coaches to cover the gaps in expertise among the existing school staff.
 - The school has recognised that there is more to do to ensure the subjects of the curriculum contribute well to the development of pupils' literacy and particularly their mathematical skills.
 - Performance management has been effective in bringing about improvement. All staff, including the headteacher, have challenging targets linked to the progress to be made by all groups of pupils.
 - The school is taking highly appropriate steps to ensure that it uses its pupil premium funding more effectively. All staff are held to account for the progress made by eligible pupils. They have benefited particularly from support for reading and writing.
 - The school has recognised that its current improvement plans are in need of further development. For instance, there are no indicators that the entire governing body can use to regularly evaluate the progress being made in every year group. The current plan does not give sufficient attention to improving further the quality of teaching. The school also recognises that the greater involvement of an external partner could assist in identifying more precise improvement points.
- **The governance of the school**
- Governors are clear about the role they play in ensuring that the school maintains high standards and continues to improve. They have an accurate view of pupils' attainment and the progress that different groups of pupils make. Governors on the curriculum committee have a secure grasp of the assessment information that is used to compare the school's performance against the national averages, although this is not the case for all on the governing body. Governors undertake extensive training to ensure that they have a detailed knowledge of the information related to the school's performance. The governing body has made highly appropriate arrangements for the use of pupil premium funding, and is very well informed about how the money is used. It is holding leaders to account for ensuring that these pupils make better progress. Governors know how teachers' performance is managed to improve their practice. They ensure that only effective teaching is rewarded by pay and promotion. They know, and support, how senior leaders are tackling any remaining underperformance in teaching.

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	123549
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	427251

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Ankers
Headteacher	Sean Sibley
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2010
Telephone number	01691 662269
Fax number	01691 662269
Email address	admin.whittington@shropshirelg.net

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email 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, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: 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.

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
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

