

Pewithall Primary School

Kenilworth Avenue, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 4XQ

Inspection dates

31 October 2013–1 November 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- This is a very happy school. Its overall performance has been maintained at an outstanding level over a significant period of time. The school is rightly highly regarded by parents and the local community.
- All groups of pupils achieve exceptionally well from their starting points, not only in academic terms but also in their personal development as confident and well-rounded individuals. The outstanding curriculum, including a wide range of additional activities and experiences, contributes to this.
- Pupils are proud of their school, feel safe and enjoy it immensely. Their attendance, behaviour and attitudes towards school are outstanding and demonstrate a real love of learning. Excellent opportunities are provided for pupils to contribute to their school and wider community.
- All who work and learn here are proud to be a part of the school and contribute to its family ethos and high levels of care and consideration for one another.
- The quality of teaching across the school is outstanding overall and never less than good. Teachers have high expectations of all groups of pupils and provide lessons that enable them to learn outstandingly well across all subjects.
- Leadership and management are outstanding and demonstrate the capacity to sustain the school's high levels of performance across all aspects of its work. The headteacher's passion and commitment to the needs of the pupils are shared by the whole staff team.
- Leaders, managers and the governing body have an excellent knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. Senior leaders, as a relatively new team, acknowledge that some aspects of their monitoring and observations of the school's work could be more evaluative and succinct. For example, in its description of the impact of the school's actions on pupils' achievement.
- Challenging targets and focused professional development opportunities have a positive impact on the quality of teaching, as teachers are not complacent but committed to continually improving their skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons, including two joint observations with the headteacher, and made several shorter visits to classrooms to observe pupils' learning.
- Inspectors talked with pupils about their work in lessons and met with several groups of pupils, including the school council.
- They took account of 26 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own surveys of parents' views.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other leaders, members of the governing body, the school's improvement partner and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation and development plans, information about the progress made by pupils currently and in the recent past, minutes of governing body meetings and policies relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Marguerite Murphy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bimla Kumari

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action are well-below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is well-below average. This additional government funding is provided for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that senior leaders continue to develop and refine their skills and experience in:
 - evaluating succinctly the impact of the school's work on outcomes for pupils
 - observing lessons with a more rigorous focus on the impact of teaching on the precise progress being made by individuals and groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children in the Reception class enter the school with skills that are at least typical for their age, with a few children exceeding this. Children settle in quickly and feel happy and secure. They make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are very well prepared to access the curriculum in Year 1.
- A particular strength is pupils' achievement in their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics). The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who meet the required standard in the national check on phonic skills is high compared to the national average. Effective action is taken to enable the very few pupils who do not meet the standard in Year 1 to catch up in Year 2.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 has been consistently above or well-above average over time. After what appeared to be a slight drop in reading in 2012, swift action was taken to remedy that this year and, consequently, the proportion reaching the higher Level 3 in reading was well above average.
- Pupils continue to make excellent progress in their literacy and numeracy skills across Key Stage 2. Standards in mathematics, reading, writing and in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests are high by the end of Year 6.
- The relatively small number of pupils who are supported by pupil premium funding achieve as well as their peers, with almost all reaching or exceeding at least average levels across the key subjects. The gap between the overall attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and that of other pupils is reducing considerably in English and mathematics. For those who may be at risk of not reaching their full potential, this is identified early and funding used to provide additional well-focused support.
- The few pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs achieve exceptionally well to reach their full potential because the school has in-depth knowledge of their specific needs and caters for these extremely effectively. A similar level of attention helps those pupils who may struggle with their learning at various points to benefit from well-focused support from experienced staff. This is just one example of the school's many successes in ensuring all pupils have equal opportunities to learn.
- The most-able pupils reach their potential and make at least good progress to achieve at the higher Level 5 across most subjects. In a more recent development, the school identifies those who demonstrate the capacity to reach the highest Level 6 by the end of Key Stage 2, which represents outstanding progress.
- The standard of pupils' work in books right across the school is consistently high, both in content and presentation. Pupils spoke to inspectors about how much they love their work in writing, reading and mathematics as well as a wide range of other subjects. They achieve well in sports and physical education, for example, and are proud of the school's outdoor woodland learning environment for which the school recently achieved a Green Tree Gold Award.
- Pupils quickly develop fluent reading skills and enjoy reading widely and often from a large range of books appropriate for their age. Pupils talk confidently about their preferences for particular book genres and authors, including older classics alongside more modern-day titles.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The majority of teaching is outstanding and never less than good. Typical features of teaching across the school include:
 - excellent relationships and an effective balance between teachers talking and opportunities for pupils to contribute, enhancing their speaking and listening skills and confidence
 - high levels of pupils' enjoyment and involvement in learning because the teachers enthuse them and provide interesting activities and challenging tasks

- planning that provides a close match to individual pupils' needs and capabilities so that their progress is accelerated
 - excellent use of resources to support pupils' learning, for example, interactive whiteboards and information and communication technology, alongside books, stories and writing frames that promote pupils' love of reading and writing
 - effective deployment of teaching assistants and additional staff to personalise the support for pupils, either in classes or in separate 'booster group' sessions for those who need additional help to reach their potential
 - excellent subject knowledge and skill in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics
 - detailed annotation, marking and feedback to pupils that is relevant to their age, so that they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further
 - an emphasis on applying skills across the curriculum, for example in writing, so that pupils have ample opportunity to practise and hone these skills in a variety of contexts.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides an excellent grounding for children's development of communication, language and literacy skills in particular and they are very well prepared for the move into Year 1. There is a very good balance of adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves. The school is aware of the need to develop further the planning of some activities to make the best use of the outdoor learning provision.
 - Excellent teaching across the curriculum ensures that pupils enjoy, and make equally strong progress in, subjects such as science, history, French, music and physical education, for example.
 - Teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in pairs or groups to discuss their work or solve problems as a team. This helps to generate increased confidence for the times when they are rightly expected to work independently at tasks which challenge them, whatever their ability level. Teachers recognise that on occasions this challenge, particularly for the most able, could be introduced at an earlier stage in a lesson or activity to maximise its impact.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils love their school and find it hard to think of any ways in which it could be improved. They behave exceptionally well, feel very safe and have an excellent understanding of ways in which they can help to keep themselves and others safe.
- Pupils know about different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and the dangers of social media and other internet use. They know about strategies to prevent any type of bullying and are absolutely confident that, if incidents did occur, these would be reported and dealt with.
- The school has a very active school council with representatives from all year groups. They meet regularly, including with governors, to put forward the views and ideas of all pupils in the school. There are many other opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibilities, which they do eagerly, for example: prefects, safety officers, heads of house, 'buddies' for children in Reception Year, peer mentors, librarians and eco-officers.
- The exemplary behaviour and attitudes of pupils contribute to the outstanding, caring ethos of the school. They also contribute to pupils' successful learning as they concentrate and apply themselves extremely well in lessons and other activities. Parents agree that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils' attendance is well-above average and they arrive punctually to school, well prepared and eager to learn. They understand the school's high expectations of their behaviour and respect for one another, appreciating the praise and rewards they achieve for living up to these. House points, teacher reward cards and invites to the 'Captain's Table' at lunchtime are just a few examples.
- Pupils actively engage in activities in and out of the classroom and, for the vast majority, this extends to the effort applied to completing homework and learning logs. These contribute to the excellent progress they make in their learning and personal development.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Outstanding leadership has enabled the school to build on the outstanding overall effectiveness identified at the school's last inspection. In the last two years, the headteacher has ensured that the transition towards a relatively new leadership team has been very successful and the momentum for continuous improvement is evident.
- The headteacher, staff and governors share a relentless focus on ensuring pupils have equal opportunities to succeed and reach their full potential, both academically and personally. There is an exceptionally strong team spirit among all staff and morale is high.
- Leaders and all staff are very conscientious and carry out their roles and responsibilities to a high standard. They are held to account by rigorous performance management systems but are also well supported with training opportunities for their continuing professional development.
- The school is rightly highly regarded and is oversubscribed. It runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis and resources and finances are managed extremely well.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is very effective in ensuring that high quality is sustained. Much of the responsibility for the observation and development of teaching has been carried out by the headteacher up until recently. There is now strong capacity to delegate some of this responsibility to other leaders as their skills have grown. Leaders are aware of the need to observe lessons with a more rigorous focus on the impact of teaching on the precise progress being made by individuals and groups of pupils and to record these findings more succinctly.
- Excellent relationships with parents and with pre-school providers contribute to children's smooth and confident transition into the Reception Year. The high quality of regular, ongoing communication with parents enables them to take a full and supportive role in the partnership between home and school for the benefit of their children. Parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that they receive valuable information about their child's progress.
- The outstanding curriculum promotes pupils' enjoyment of learning and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Great attention is paid to linking learning in a creative way across subjects wherever possible and providing enrichment activities such as trips, residential visits and visitors to the school, all of which make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- The school has well-developed partnerships with others in the locality and further afield, such as with a multicultural school in a different socio-economic community. There are established links with a school in Africa and, more recently, in several more countries.
- The school is also proud of its sporting achievements and has well-considered plans for spending the additional government funding for primary school sports. There is a clear commitment to further increasing participation in a range of sports to 'continue the Olympic legacy'.
- The local authority provides appropriate light-touch support for this outstanding school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an accurate overview of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching because they are given detailed information by the headteacher and spend time in the school as often as they can; notably, the Chair of the Governing Body is in school on a very regular basis and meets with the headteacher. The governing body holds the headteacher to account through performance management procedures. Governors have a good awareness of the requirements for staff performance and salary progression linked to national teachers' standards, which will inform their decisions about teachers' pay. They ensure that all safeguarding policies and procedures meet requirements and that the school is a safe and well-maintained environment for learning. The governing body makes sure that any additional funding, for example the pupil premium, is wisely spent to have a positive impact on the progress those pupils make. Since the last inspection, governors have also ensured they are fully informed of pupils' views; they have established close links with the school council and pupils enjoy inviting governors to their meetings.

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	111141
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	422515

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trevor Payton
Headteacher	David Baugh
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2008
Telephone number	01928 576139
Fax number	01928 581737
Email address	sec.pewithall@halton.gov.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. 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

