

Grappenhall St Wilfrid's CofE Primary School

Church Lane, Grappenhall, Warrington, Cheshire, WA4 3EP

Inspection dates 12–13 November 2013

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school achieves its aim of enabling children to be confident, successful learners.
- Children have an outstanding start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In Key Stages 1 and 2, standards are consistently above average.
- Pupils develop high levels of literacy and acquire above-average skill in mathematics.
- Teaching promotes a love of learning amongst pupils. Lessons are typically good or outstanding enabling pupils to learn rapidly. Good use of educational visitors and visits enrich learning and motivate pupils to learn.
- Pupils' behaviour and awareness of safety are outstanding. They grow into mature, very polite youngsters who willingly take on responsibility for others.
- An imaginatively planned curriculum, enriched by a host of additional activities, inspires learning. It promotes good levels of spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
- The school is a much valued part of the community with which it works closely. Parents are constantly encouraged to work with the school and offered guidance about how to support their children at home.
- Very effective leadership by the headteacher has secured an effective leadership team. Staff have high morale; they manage key parts of the school and access regular training and development.
- The governing body is very strong and together with the headteacher and skilled leaders offers the school a good capacity to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2 has slowed in recent years. While pupils understand the basic ideas of mathematics, they are not sufficiently skilled at applying these to solve mathematical investigations to a variety of subjects.
- There are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The quality of marking and target-setting varies, not enough use is made of computer technology to support learning and the potential for pupils to perform enquiries in mathematics and science are not developed enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 21 part lessons.
- Meetings were conducted with governors, the staff team and four groups of pupils. In addition, a conversation was conducted with a representative of the local authority.
- Information from the scrutiny of a range of school documentation added to inspection judgements. This included:
 - samples of pupils' work in their books
 - the details relating to safeguarding and the school's improvement plan
 - the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance
 - records held by the school of pupils' standards and progress.
- The views of parents were ascertained by analysing 124 responses posted on the online questionnaire (Parent View). In addition, a meeting was held with a cross-section of parents and an evaluation made of the school's recent questionnaire of parents' views. Two emails and three letters were evaluated and a phone call conducted with one parent who requested this.
- An analysis of 27 staff questionnaires, together with an ongoing dialogue with teachers and teaching assistants, gave the inspectors an insight into the views of the staff.

Inspection team

David Byrne, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Elaine Maloney	Additional Inspector
Peter Jones	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil-premium funding is well below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Over half of the teaching team has changed since the previous inspection in 2008. Within the last 12 months, some new leaders have joined the school leading mathematics, English and the provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain the improved rate of progress in mathematics by:
 - enabling pupils to apply their basic skills of mathematics to solve mathematical problems in wide variety of contexts.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding by:
 - ensuring the senior leaders remove the variations in the quality of teaching
 - making sure that the quality of marking and target-setting is consistent in offering pupils guidance about how to improve
 - extending the pupils' use of computer technology to support their learning
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to carry out enquiries in mathematics and science.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Given the children's starting points to the Reception class, which are broadly typical for their age, pupils achieve well in their time in school. Children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage very well equipped for learning at Key Stages 1 and 2. At the end of both Years 2 and 6, standards are consistently high in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The very large majority of parents agree that their children make good or very good progress. Inspection findings indicate that most pupils make good progress because good teaching makes learning fun and the curriculum offers many memorable experiences.
- Progress fluctuated in recent years and in Key Stage 2 dipped to average in 2012. The school has reacted swiftly to stop the slowing of progress most noticeable in mathematics. Interventions are now provided for the most-able pupils. As a result standards in mathematics rose in 2013 with some pupils gaining the very high standard for their age of Level 6.
- Thorough data held by the school indicate that standards are rising in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 and progress exceeds expectations. The school is aware that the pupils' ability to apply their skills of mathematics to a variety of contexts and situations is not yet as good as it could be
- Excellent approaches to the teaching of the sounds that letters make (phonics) give children in the Reception Year and Key Stage 1 a very good foundation for reading and writing. The proportion of pupils gaining expectations for their age in the Year 1 phonics test was well-above average in 2013.
- Pupils' standards in literacy are high across the school with examples of some excellent writing for their age in all classes. The quality of handwriting is excellent, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. The good start made in this regard is now moving into upper Key Stage 2 and raising the quality of presentation.
- Pupils have a good command of English and understand advanced basic skills for their age. They correctly use grammar, spell with reasonable accuracy and apply different techniques to create a variety of genres of writing. In 2013, standards gained by pupils at Year 6 in the spelling, punctuation and grammar test were higher than the national outcomes, reflecting improvements in recent years in meeting the needs of the most-able pupils.
- Pupils love reading and have opportunities to read each day in lessons and as part of their homework. Many pupils have a very good knowledge of a range of contemporary authors and maturely discuss books they like and dislike.
- The school is committed to promoting equality of opportunities for all and keeps a close eye on the progress and achievement of all pupils. The number of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding through the pupil-premium grant is too small to make a comparison with similar pupils nationally. Data held by the school indicate that the attainment of such pupils is similar to other pupils in the school and that their progress is the same and at times better than other pupils in the school. There are few pupils with disabilities and special educational needs; effectively managed support enables them to gain standards similar to others nationally.
- Pupils' involvement in sport is good and enhances their health and well-being. Pupils participate in a range of inter-schools sports events. The new primary sports funding provides training to widen the staff's knowledge and expertise in gymnastics and dance.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The very large majority of parents feel that their children are taught well. Inspection findings are that teaching is good with some outstanding elements.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children thrive in an exciting, safe and stimulating environment. An excellent staff team ensure that children learn rapidly. The creative approach to learning, so successfully promoted in the Reception Year, extends into Year 1. This eases the transition for children from the Early Years Foundation Stage to the national curriculum.

- In Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching is usually good in all lessons with some outstanding teaching in mathematics and literacy. Teachers make learning fun. Strong partnership work with educational providers such as authors, an archaeologist and a leader of learning in the natural environment enhance standard lessons. Where necessary, outside experts supplement teaching, for example in music.
- Pupils receive precise guidance about the purpose of lessons and have high expectations for what they will learn. Questions asked by adults usually ascertain what pupils already know and enable a check on whether they have made progress. Pupils are regularly engaged in lessons by the good use by staff of interactive whiteboard technology. Few opportunities were seen where computer technology was used by pupils to support their learning.
- Excellent links between different subjects often add relevance for pupils. For example, in Year 2, pupils were motivated to create poems about electricity after exploring circuits in science. In Year 6, pupils deepened their knowledge of different clauses by elaborating basic sentences about the Mayan culture linked to their class history studies.
- All staff have extremely detailed knowledge about individual pupils so that they are exceptionally well cared for and develop self-esteem, respect and a sense of responsibility. A key strength is the contribution of teaching assistants to pupils' education. The team are very professional and work extremely effectively with teaching staff.
- Pupils at risk of falling behind are identified by using assessment data. Marking is not consistent though in helping pupils know how to improve their work and targets are not refined enough to give pupils insight into how to raise their achievement to the next level. Pupils are not enabled to apply their basic skills often enough to enquiries in mathematics and science.
- Well-established procedures involve parents when their children enter school, move from class to class and transfer to secondary school. Homework is a regular feature of learning and the very large majority of parents feel the current provision is suitable but a few would like a different approach and more challenge to be provided.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are courteous, have excellent attitudes, form very positive relationships and show enormous enthusiasm for learning. They especially enjoy the wide range of activities on offer in the curriculum and the many clubs and educational visits available.
- They care for one another well, have great respect for one another and for the adults in the school, and say they feel extremely safe. Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take, including ostracising others for their heritage, for their looks or for their lifestyle choices. Pupils are adamant that bullying is almost non-existent and the vast majority of parents feel the same.
- Pupils make a highly positive contribution to the school community. The school council meets regularly to discuss ways of improving the school. Older pupils willingly take on roles as playground leaders and 'buddy' up with children in the Reception classes to act as helpers and friends. They support a range of charities, for example, by collecting for the Christmas Shoe Box appeal and for Children in Need.
- Pupils are exceptionally aware of the importance of a healthy diet. Their enthusiasm for physical education and the high take-up of pupils in after-school clubs demonstrates the pupils' commitment to exercise. Pupils have an advanced understanding of safety; they willingly share their knowledge of the dangers of using computers and talk about risks of roads.
- The very large majority of parents say that their children are safe and that children are well behaved. Inspection findings support this positive view. Almost all of the time, behaviour is impeccable. A few parents expressed concerns about some negative incidents during outdoor play at lunchtime. Inspectors found that such incidents are rare but some elements of supervision are not as strong as they could be. The senior leaders are aware of this and are taking steps to improve play opportunities during lunchtimes.
- Attendance is consistently high. Pupils love school and enjoy coming each day.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is very efficiently managed. The headteacher has the respect of staff, pupils and the very large majority of parents. The consistently high standards maintained year after year demonstrates the effectiveness of teamwork within the school.
- There is very clear educational direction based upon an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Recently improved systems effectively track pupils' progress and identify any at risk of falling behind.
- All staff have clear roles and responsibilities and are accountable for key areas of the school and the curriculum. While support for teaching is good, senior leaders have not yet fully ensured that teaching is consistently good or better in every class.
- There are very effective systems to manage the performance of all staff, including teaching assistants. Targets have recently been raised to secure suitably rapid progress for all pupils coupled with providing staff with professional development needs. A new policy meets the imminent requirements for linking the pay of staff to their performance.
- The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. It promotes good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Close links with the local church promotes a good understanding of modern Christianity; these are supplemented by studies of other world faiths. Well-planned enrichment activities, including opportunities to work with authors and with musicians, help to develop pupils' skills in literacy, drama and music.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. Good communication keeps parents informed about school events and good procedures report the achievements of their children. Parents are keen to support their children at home. Regular events explain to parents how the curriculum is taught, for example the approaches taken to teaching phonics and reading.
- Very productive partnerships with schools in the locality benefit the professional development of staff and secure the accuracy of teacher assessments. Local businesses get involved with the school and contribute to developing amongst pupils an understanding of business enterprise.
- The local authority efficiently deploys its resources to support the school. It signposts professional development courses, works with the headteacher to evaluate the school's performance and offers advice where requested.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors staunchly support the school and are very keen for its success to continue. They are rigorous in keeping abreast of local and national developments and access training to keep up to date. The governor team share responsibilities very effectively, meeting formally twice a term and governors often meet with staff and visit classrooms. The performance of pupils is carefully checked and any changes in standards are scrutinised to establish the reasons why.
 - The governing body ensures that safeguarding policy and practice meet requirements. The management of finance and building matters is astute and very effective in securing the best possible resources within its budget. Some excellent features have been developed in the school grounds. Governors are vigilant in checking the appraisal of the headteacher and staff and its connection with pay. They have made sensible decisions on the use of pupil-premium funding and regularly check on its impact on removing any gaps between pupils' performances.

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	111315
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	426241

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	397
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Bygate
Headteacher	Glenda Davies
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2008
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