

# Cherry Grove Primary School

Chapel Lane, Boughton, Chester, Cheshire, CH3 5EN

**Inspection dates** 26–27 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement.

- Although pupils are making faster progress than they used to, their attainment in mathematics at the end of Year 6 is lower than it should be given their starting points.
- There is a wide gap between the standards of attainment reached by pupils supported through the pupil premium funding and other pupils. This gap is widest in mathematics.
- Across the school, the quality of teaching requires improvement because it varies too much. Pupils make faster progress in some classes than in others.
- In some lessons, teachers give too many instructions and do not do enough to check how well pupils are learning.
- Learning time is not always used as well as it could be. Pupils spend too long moving between different lessons and in some lessons the pace of new learning is too slow.

### The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching and pupils' achievement is improving because of good leadership.
- Pupils' achievement in English is good. By the end of Year 6, their attainment in reading and writing is in line with age-related expectations. This represents good progress from generally below average starting points.
- Children get off to an excellent start when they first start school.
- Pupils are courteous and well mannered. They feel safe at school and rates of attendance have improved year-on-year.
- The school provides pupils with a wide range of worthwhile subjects and activities that broaden their horizons. Consequently, they enjoy school and get many opportunities to develop their individual talents and skills.
- School leaders, including governors, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have already improved the school since the last inspection. They celebrate successes and know what needs to be done to improve the school further.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, three of which were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher, and made short visits to other lessons. Inspectors also visited an assembly; observed lunch and break times and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders, and the Chair and three members of the governing body. A meeting and telephone conversation with a local authority representative also took place.
- Inspectors took account of 40 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). They also looked at the results of the school's own survey of parents' views, talked to parents on the school playground, and considered the responses to the school staff questionnaire.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included information about pupils' progress, school improvement plans and records of governors' meetings. The work in pupils' books and records relating to the quality of teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Martin Pye, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Smith	Additional Inspector
Prydwen Elfed-Owens	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Cherry Grove Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school and, over the past three years, the number of pupils on roll has steadily increased.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the additional pupil premium funding is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, for children who are looked after by the local authority, and pupils whose parents are serving in the armed forces.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a before- and after-school club on the school site. This is not managed by the school and is subject to a separate inspection at a different time.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, so that it is always at least good and more is outstanding, by making sure that:
  - teaching always focuses on what pupils will learn rather than tasks to be completed
  - teachers always take time to check what pupils have understood during lessons
  - learning time is not lost when pupils move between different lessons
  - the brisk pace of learning and sharp teacher questioning to check how well pupils are learning, as seen in the best lessons, becomes an expectation in all lessons
  - teachers' expectations are raised of how much progress pupils can make in each lesson.
- Raise attainment in mathematics so that it is at least in line with the higher standards of attainment seen in reading and writing by:
  - closing the attainment gap between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils
  - making sure that school leaders provide sufficient time and support to assist the work of the subject leader in sharing good practice in mathematics teaching across this school and through links with other schools
  - making sure that work is always at exactly the right level of challenge, even within sets grouped by ability.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement in mathematics requires improvement. In contrast, pupils' achievement in English is good.
- Progress for all pupils has improved since the last inspection. However, while progress in mathematics has accelerated in recent times, there is still some lost ground to be made up due to the slower progress of the past. Pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Year 6 is below expectations given their starting points.
- Most children start school with knowledge and skills that are below the typical expectations for their age. They do very well in the Nursery and Reception classes because teaching is effective. By the time they start in Year 1, the attainment of many pupils is close to age-related expectations.
- The rate of pupils' progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 varies. In some classes it is fast and in others it is too slow, with the greatest variation being seen in mathematics. Data held by the school and progress seen in lessons and in pupils' books confirm that the fastest progress is being made in Years 5 and 6 which, for some pupils, is too late to help them catch up.
- The progress and attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals presents a complicated picture because the numbers of pupils is quite small and some of these pupils joined the school late in Key Stage 2. On one hand, it is clear that, over time, progress rates in English and mathematics for these pupils have improved. However, it is also clear that their attainment is still a long way behind other pupils in the school, with the widest gap being seen in mathematics. At the end of Year 6 in 2013, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were over a year behind their classmates in this subject. More needs to be done to boost their attainment.
- Over time, the achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also presents a mixed picture but, like other pupils in the school, the progress that they make in mathematics is faster in some classes than in others.
- Most of the more-able pupils do well at Cherry Grove Primary School and, for the past two years, their attainment at Level 5, and sometimes Level 6, at the end of Key Stage 2 has been at least in line with the standards seen nationally.
- Achievement in reading and writing is good. The school gives reading a high priority and is successful at teaching pupils to read and enjoy books. From when they first start school, a structured, yet imaginative, approach to teaching letter sounds (phonics) helps children to establish firm foundations for success. Throughout the school, a variety of routines and creative activities build further on this good start.
- The school works hard to make sure pupils with complex needs, or who face difficulties in their lives, get access to extra support and are fully included in all that is on offer. This commitment to providing equality of opportunity to all pupils is a strong feature of the school's work. However, in order to ensure equality of achievement, there is more to be done to boost the rate of progress in mathematics in some classes.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Across the school, variations in the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, means that progress in some classes is too slow. This is why teaching requires improvement.
- When teaching is less effective, teachers focus too much on getting pupils to complete tasks rather than on learning. Teachers issue too many instructions instead of asking questions to check what pupils understand and need to learn next.
- In some subjects and year groups, pupils move between classrooms to be taught in ability sets. This helps teachers to target work at different levels for different needs. Nevertheless, even within ability sets there is still a spread of learning needs and work is not always pitched at the

right level of challenge. Consequently, some pupils struggle to keep up while others get through their work quickly. Teachers' expectations of how much pupils can achieve in lessons are not always high enough.

- The movement of pupils between classrooms for different lessons can lead to some lost learning time. During this inspection, this was observed when a lesson overran and returning pupils had to wait outside the classroom before they could come in and start their next lesson. Conversations with pupils indicate that, while this does not always happen, it does happen more often than it should.
- There is some good and outstanding teaching in the school with the consistently strongest practice being in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at the top end of Key Stage 2.
- In the very best lessons, teaching is brisk but not hurried. Learning intentions are made clear and there are high expectations of what can be achieved in the time available. Teachers ask rather than tell. They listen carefully to pupils' responses and prompt them to think hard and explain their ideas to each other. Consequently, pupils' engagement in learning is good and they make fast progress.
- In one highly effective phonics session, for example, a series of active, simple and fun activities kept younger pupils fully focused on new learning and allowed the teacher to make careful checks on their understanding at each step of the way and then adjust her teaching to their needs with precision.
- Work in pupils' books is usually presented well and all teachers mark work regularly. Teachers' marking, at its best, is very effective in prompting pupils to reflect on what they have learned and to identify what they need to do next. There is plenty of work in pupils' mathematics books, although the level of challenge is not always carefully matched to their learning needs.
- The work of support staff, such as the learning mentor, is effective and helps pupils with particular needs to feel good about what they can do. Teamwork and communication between teachers and teaching assistants are good and pupils appreciate the extra help that they get.

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

- Pupils enjoy school, attend regularly, and behave well. They are well mannered, courteous, helpful and friendly.
- At playtimes, pupils get on well together and first-aid treatment for the bumps and scrapes that do occur is prompt and efficient because adult supervision is good.
- In lessons, most pupils are keen to learn and, when teaching really stretches their thinking, they respond with enthusiasm. In the less effective lessons, pupils still aim to do their best, although sometimes their attention can wander when they find a task too difficult to manage. The many after-school clubs and extra activities that the school provides help to generate an active interest in learning.
- Older pupils take on responsibilities such as play leaders or road safety officers and, in these roles, help to look after younger pupils and teach them how to stay safe. Members of the junior leadership team respond well to the expectations placed upon them. They are keen to talk about the decisions they have made and wear their badges with pride.
- Attendance at school has risen year-on-year because all school staff give clear messages to encourage good school attendance. Most pupils are punctual in the mornings but a few arrive late without good reason.
- Pupils are taught about different types of bullying and what to do if it happens. They say that instances of bullying are very rare and that behaviour around the school is good. Pupils of all ages know the difference between right and wrong and report that they feel very safe at school.
- There have been no exclusions in the past two years because pupils' behaviour is managed well.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The faster progress now being made by pupils is the result of the headteacher's clear-sighted leadership that has lifted expectations and improved teamwork. Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement in English has improved significantly; pupils' progress is tracked with greater precision and staff are held to account for the quality of their work.
- Leadership roles across the school are clearly defined and well organised. Staff with leadership responsibilities regularly observe teachers and make sure they get advice and training to help them improve their teaching. The most effective staff have been placed in key positions across the school so that they can set high standards and support others.
- Subject leaders show a well-informed understanding about what needs to be done to lift standards higher, although so far, the improvements seen in English have not been matched in mathematics. This is because teachers have not had enough opportunity to learn from good practice in the school or from other schools.
- Many high-quality displays and records of events serve to highlight the wide range of subjects and activities on offer. The school's creative approach to curriculum planning provides pupils with exciting and memorable experiences, which are often enriched by trips or visitors to school.
- Learning outside the classroom also includes many sporting activities. The school has recently received the additional primary sports funding, and employs a specialist sports teacher for one day a week to work alongside school staff and provide coaching to improve pupils' skills in competitive sports.
- Pupils' artwork is superb; often drawing on influences from different cultures. A strong focus on the arts broadens pupils' horizons and stimulates them to think deeply about how other people live, think and view the world.
- Procedures for keeping pupils safe are second to none. All statutory requirements are met and the thorough attention given to all matters relating to pupils' safety is indicative of the level of care that is provided at Cherry Grove Primary.
- The local authority has confidence in the current school leadership and provides an appropriate level of support.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is strong. Governors are well informed about pupils' progress and use this information to check the quality of teaching. They recognise success and challenge underperformance. The most effective teachers are rewarded and deployed to roles that increase their influence on improving the quality of teaching in the school.
  - Governors regularly meet with staff and pupils to receive updates about the school's work and to review policies and practice. They regularly share information with parents via their weekly blog on the school website.
  - Governors embrace innovation; being inspired by the British Olympic cycling team's focus on the 'aggregation of marginal gains'. By thinking and acting in this way, governors are alert to every factor, however small, that can assist school improvement.
  - They are aware that their use of pupil premium funding has been successful in improving the attendance of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and participation in after-school activities. They also know that spending so far has not had a significant impact on raising their attainment, especially in mathematics, so it is closer to that of their peers.

## 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>	111209
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	426121

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	302
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Janet Myers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Bousfield
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 December 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01244 981120
<b>Fax number</b>	01244 350556
<b>Email address</b>	admin@cherrygrove.cheshire.sch.uk



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