

Weston Heights Infants' School

West Street, Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST3 6PT

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2014

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 achieve well throughout the school because teaching is good.
- The progress of some pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and for some outstanding, especially in writing.
- The gaps between boys' and girls' achievement in reading and mathematics are reducing well in Years 1 and 2.
- Teachers have an accurate view of the levels at which pupils are working and give good guidance in marking.
- Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils.
- Pupils behave well. They feel safe and secure. They enjoy positive relationships with adults in the school.
- The school promotes the health and well-being of pupils well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- The school has good arrangements to check and improve teaching. Teachers are well trained and supported.
- The headteacher provides good leadership to improve the school further. She is very committed to the school, staff and the local community. Leaders at all levels carry out their roles well to improve teaching and achievement.
- The governing body provides good support, challenge and expertise for the school. They ensure pupils are safe, happy and healthy.
- Parents feel happy in sending their children to this school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Boys' achievement in writing and the achievement of pupils supported by the pupil premium, especially in reading, needs to be raised further.
- Teachers do not check enough on pupils' identifying and sounding out of words in lessons, and on the appropriate levels of work that pupils are completing.
- Teaching assistants are not used early enough in lessons to help pupils learn faster.
- Pupils do not improve their work in response to guidance given in marking.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise writing at length in different subjects in Year 2.
- The checks by leaders and governors on the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils are not as sharp as they could be.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made 19 visits to lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher.
- There were insufficient responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to enable inspectors to take parents' views into account. However, inspectors took account of the most recent responses to a parental questionnaire recently carried out by the school and talked to parents on the school grounds.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, inspectors spoke to pupils at break and lunchtimes and they listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors also held discussions with five governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and school 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, documents relating to the school's plans for improvement, its procedures for checking the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Pupils' books were checked by inspectors.
- Inspectors visited the school's breakfast club.

Inspection team

Clarice Nelson-Rowe, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Evans

Additional Inspector

Patricia Cope

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding 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 proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A breakfast and after-school club operates on the school site that is managed by the governing body.
- The school became a Co-operative Trust school in January 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that most is outstanding in order to raise pupils' achievement further by:
 - ensuring teachers attend to gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge, particularly for boys in writing and those supported by the pupil premium in reading
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise writing at length across a different range of subjects, especially in Year 2
 - ensuring teachers check that the levels of work are not too easy or hard for pupils and the most able pupils are always completing the higher level tasks set for them, especially in mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers carefully check that pupils are correctly identifying and sounding out words in lessons
 - providing opportunities for pupils to regularly improve their work based on the guidance given to them in marking
 - helping pupils to get on to learning more quickly through using teaching assistants much earlier on in lessons to give individual support.
- Improve leadership and management so that it becomes outstanding by sharpening the information that leaders collate on the achievement of different groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From much lower than typically expected starting skills, pupils' progress is good throughout the school and sometimes outstanding. They are well prepared for junior school.
- Children get off to a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress overall in a wide range of skills. This is due to the good attention that adults pay to children's different levels of abilities and due to the good links with parents. Particularly impressive is the excellent progress that children make in writing. Children are well prepared for going into Year 1.
- Pupils enter Year 1, with skills that are close to what is typically expected for their age. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are at least average. Because the school sets high targets for pupils to reach, when their achievements in all the subjects are combined, pupils consistently reach above average attainment.
- In 2013, Year 1 pupils further increased their skills to reach close to the national average in their ability to read words. Evidence from lesson observations and listening to pupils read indicates that most pupils are continuing to improve well.
- The attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below that of others. However, the gaps in their relative attainment are similar to the national picture in reading, writing and mathematics, and the progress they make from their individual starting points is mostly good overall. Nevertheless, their progress in reading is not quite as strong as in writing and mathematics when compared to other groups of pupils in the school.
- The achievement of the most able pupils is good overall. However, currently they are not consistently reaching the levels of which they are capable. This is sometimes due to the fact that teachers do not check enough that pupils are completing the higher level work set for them in lessons. This is particularly the case in mathematics.
- Compared to girls, boys do not consistently attain higher than the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the school is working well to address this. Current records of progress show that the gaps in achievement between girls and boys are narrowing. However, boys are still not doing as well as girls in writing. The school has a little further to go in fully promoting the equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress across the school. Teachers plan well for their needs and they receive good support from teaching assistants. By the end of Year 2, they reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are sometimes strongly above similar pupils nationally.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall. Teachers plan lessons that engage most pupils and that encourages them to take pride in their work. All adults get on well with pupils.
- The topics pupils study and activities given help to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. For example, pupils' work shows that they are able to compare Christian and Muslim worship. They also have opportunities to reflect on how to solve problems through peaceful means.
- The teaching of writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. In a very short space of time, children make rapid progress in holding pencils well, writing letters clearly, and then start to go on to writing words and sometimes full sentences that make sense. The teaching of writing is good in Years 1 and 2 but pupils lack opportunities to practise writing at length to vary types of sentences and words, especially in Year 2.
- Teachers have an accurate view of the levels at which pupils are working. Good guidance is provided for pupils on how to improve their progress. However, pupils do not always take heed

of this guidance and so do not address gaps in their learning.

- Teaching assistants support pupils well. For example, they give pupils confidence to answer questions in class, and they explain tasks in more detail for pupils and help them to stay on task. However, sometimes they are not used quickly enough to target pupils who need support to enable them to learn more quickly.
- Sometimes teachers do not check that pupils are identifying and sounding out words correctly. They do not always check that the levels of work are too easy or too hard for pupils and so do not change what pupils are doing to enable them to make better progress.
- Although most pupils are making good progress, teachers are not accelerating progress enough, particularly for boys in writing and for those supported by the pupil premium in reading.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are generally keen to work hard and to do their best. They work well in groups. For example, they were observed working well together on solving how to make a circuit work when adding more bulbs and batteries. Parents, pupils and staff all agree that behaviour is usually good.
- Pupils point out that sometimes their attention in class could improve further, but there are not usually any major disturbances. When incidents occur, including any bullying, pupils point out that they are usually dealt with very quickly by all staff and very well by the headteacher.
- Pupils play safely outside of lessons and are polite to each other. This is also the case in breakfast club.
- The schools' behaviour policy is well understood by all and reinforced by staff as needed. For those who have emotional and learning difficulties which may affect their behaviour in class, the school's nurture group provides effective support. Teachers model calm and considerate behaviour which pupils follow well.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Security is good around the school and pupils feel safe. The school ensures that pupils are safe during the current building work taking place in the school. Pupils are provided with a range of appropriate play activities during break and lunchtime despite the restricted space.
- Pupils have good awareness of different types of safety including bullying and road safety.
- Most pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils are happy and appreciate the range of clubs that they can attend including science, art and crafts, computers, recorders and football.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is driving improvements well. She is well supported by her senior leaders, staff and governors. She helps to create a positive ethos for the school. Staff morale is high.
- The curriculum is enriched well with a range of clubs and visits to help children to enjoy their learning. This also includes the effective use of the new primary school sport funding. For example, the school runs a 'Change for Life' club to promote health and well-being for families such as through cooking classes. There are also good links with a local rugby club to extend the types of sports available for pupils.
- Links with a local university help to develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem through awards given for their achievements.
- Leaders provide good support for teachers to help them to keep improving. The performance of staff is checked on well. All staff have good opportunities to receive training to help them to improve their teaching. Those who are new to teaching are well supported.
- No teachers are given rises in salary if they are not teaching well.
- The school demonstrates a good ability to keep improving. The staff, including subject and middle leaders, check the quality of teaching well. They are knowledgeable and regularly identify what needs to be improved. However, teaching is not yet outstanding because there is not

enough focus on checking and improving the progress that different groups of pupils are making.

- The school shows good awareness of most of its strengths and weaknesses. However, not all key areas for improvement are identified sharply enough. This is because the school's records on the progress that pupils make do not provide enough fine detail from which leaders can check exactly where the performance of pupils needs further support to improve.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. The governors ensure that pupils are safe and looked after. They have good awareness of the quality of teaching in the school because of their regular visits and good links with individual teachers. The day jobs and experience of governors enable them to provide good expertise for the school in a range of areas including finance, managing staff, physical education and classroom experience. They challenge and support senior leaders to make sure that systems to check the performance of teachers are in place and effective. They have good awareness about the new primary sport funding and the effects of its use on improving the range of sports in the school and on pupils' health. Governors have a good overview of pupils' achievement in the past and current achievement in the school. Even so, they do not have sufficient information about the difference that the pupil premium is making to pupils' achievement.

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	124026
Local authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	440874

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Barber
Headteacher	Kathryn Oakley
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2007
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