

# St Chad's CE Primary School

Gladstone Street, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 4AT

**Inspection dates** 22–23 January 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Achievement is inadequate because too many pupils do not make enough progress across the school. Too few pupils reach the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Work set often fails to take account of what pupils can already do and is not always challenging enough.
- Teachers do not make accurate checks in lessons on how well pupils are learning and they often miss opportunities to help pupils when they are stuck or making mistakes.
- Too often, teachers' marking does not tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to correct their errors.
- Too few learning activities are provided in the outdoor area of the Reception class preventing children from learning as well as they should.
- Actions taken to improve teaching have been too slow and have had too little impact on pupils' progress.
- Behaviour and safety require improvement. Pupils do not always listen when teachers are talking and this slows their learning.
- Plans for improving the school are not sharp enough. Leaders are not focusing on the key areas to improve or checking how effective their actions are.
- Subject leaders do not yet play a role in improving the quality of teaching.
- The pupil premium funding is not used well enough to support vulnerable pupils and consequently their attainment lags behind others in the school and even further behind that of pupils nationally.
- Governors have not regularly checked on the quality of teaching or on how well pupils are doing. They have not successfully held the school to account for its work.

### The school has the following strengths

- Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for by the adults in the school.
- The new headteacher is clear about what needs to happen to improve the school. Pupils and their parents are positive about the changes being made in the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 19 lessons or parts of lessons including a joint observation with the headteacher.
- The inspectors also looked at examples of pupils' work and listened to pupils read. They observed the teaching of reading skills and talked to pupils about the books they have enjoyed and those that they are currently reading.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils and inspectors spoke to pupils about their work. Inspectors held meetings with five governors. They spoke to a representative of the local authority and met with members of the school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day and before the two family assemblies held during the inspection. They took account of 27 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and nine responses to staff questionnaires completed during the inspection were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school's work including that of the breakfast club and looked at a wide range of documentation, including external reviews of the school's work, safeguarding documents, records of current standards and progress, the school development plan and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance. Minutes from governing body meetings and reports produced by the acting headteachers were also considered.

## Inspection team

Lyn Pender, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Marilyn Massey

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 44 the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most other primary schools.
- Most pupils are White British with a very small proportion from other heritages. All pupils speak English as their home language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average. An above average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding is above the national average. This additional 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 provides a breakfast club for pupils.
- Since the last inspection the school has experienced significant changes in leadership and staffing. During the past year the school has been led by four successive headteachers, including two acting headteachers who were temporarily drafted in from other local schools. A permanent headteacher came into post at the beginning of January 2014. A seconded deputy headteacher was in post in the spring term. There was also a seconded deputy headteacher for 6 months from 1 June 2013 – 31 December 2013. Six of the eight teachers currently in post joined the school in September 2013, replacing staff who left in July 2013.
- The local authority appointed three additional members to the governing body in October 2013. The role of Chair is currently vacant and there have been several resignations from the governing body since the time of the school's last inspection.
- The headteacher of Frodsham Manor House Primary School is a Local Leader of Education. He is providing supporting for the new headteacher of St Chad's.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching to good or better in order to raise standards and ensure pupils make at least good achievement by:
  - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - making sure all teachers have an accurate understanding of how well pupils are doing in lessons and build on what they can already do by setting work which provides the right level of challenge
  - making sure teachers' planning promotes the development of pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills in other subjects
  - improving marking so that teachers provide helpful next steps for pupils and that they act upon the guidance to improve their work
  - ensuring that pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium funding have their learning needs met well

- making sure all teachers have high expectations about how pupils behave in lessons to ensure learning time is not lost
  - teachers ensuring that pupils concentrate and listen carefully to their instructions and guidance so that they know how to learn well
  - providing a wider range of learning activities in the outdoor area of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Rapidly improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels including governance, so that the school improves quickly by:
- ensuring that pupils' progress is checked closely to identify pupils who are not doing well enough and taking swift action to help them catch up quickly
  - ensuring that school leaders at all levels rigorously check on the quality of teaching and learning and take decisive action to bring about improvements where needed
  - making sure leaders, including governors, make better use of the pupil premium funding to boost the progress and attainment of those pupils eligible for support
  - ensuring that plans for improving the school identify the key priorities, have specific targets and a clear series of actions that are checked regularly to ensure the school is moving forward
  - strengthening the ability of governors to hold the school's leaders fully to account for pupils' achievement
  - undertaking an external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Ofsted will make recommendations on governance to the authority responsible for the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- The achievement of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those who are supported by the pupil premium, is inadequate.
- Pupils make slow progress because of weak teaching. They leave school at the end of Key Stage 2 with overall standards which are below the national average, having started the Year 3 with standards in line with the national average. Leaders' actions to improve teaching in the current year have not yet led to sufficient improvements in the progress made by pupils across the school.
- Most children enter the Reception class with skill levels lower than those typical for their age, particularly in communication skills. Children make too little progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and by the end of the Reception Year only a small minority reach the expected levels for their age. Inspection evidence shows that children currently are making better progress in their personal, social and emotional development than they did in 2013. They are happy and busy and have positive attitudes to learning. However, they are not yet making rapid enough progress in establishing early skills of reading and writing.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been broadly average but have shown a declining trend over the last three years as a result of teaching which has not been strong enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. Too few pupils reach the higher levels. Only a very small proportion of pupils met the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening test in 2013. In the current Year 2, the teaching of early reading skills is not yet good enough to enable pupils to make rapid progress. As a result, gaps in reading skills from previous years remain.
- Overall standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are low and have fallen since the time of the previous inspection, because of weak teaching. Pupils do not make enough progress from their individual starting points during their time in Key Stage 2. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 was below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils have not been supported well enough for them to achieve their potential; consequently, very few pupils reached the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 in 2013. Currently across the school too few pupils are working at levels above those expected for their age.
- The achievement of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for support through the pupil premium is inadequate. In Year 6 in 2013, for example, the attainment of these pupils was at least one year behind other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress of this group from their starting points is inadequate. Leaders' and teachers' checks on how well these pupils are doing are not thorough enough to provide an accurate picture of their progress.
- The school's promotion of equality of opportunity is ineffective because pupils make inadequate achievement and hence are not prepared adequately for their next stage of learning.
- Standards in reading are variable across the school but are often below average. This is largely because many pupils have not established the early skills they need to tackle reading with confidence; it is also because pupils in Key Stage 1 and those in Key Stage 2 who are still not competent readers do not have the chance to practice their reading often enough. Recent changes to the teaching of reading have improved pupils' attitudes and increased their interest in books. However, these actions are yet to have a marked impact on improving pupils' progress in reading.

**The quality of teaching is inadequate**

- Work in pupils' books, the school's records and inspection evidence all clearly confirm that too much teaching either requires improvement or is inadequate. Currently, there is not enough good teaching in the school to accelerate pupils' learning and raise standards quickly enough to ensure pupils achieve well.
- In too many lessons teachers have low expectations about what pupils can achieve and fail to take account of pupils' different abilities, including the most able. There is often not enough challenge in lessons to enable pupils to learn as well as they should.
- Teachers do not use information about what pupils have already learned to identify where pupils are falling behind or what they need to do next. On occasion, some teachers' understanding of subjects including English and mathematics, for example when developing reading skills, is not secure enough to enable them to address pupils' misconceptions when they arise. This means gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills remain.
- Although training has been provided by leaders to help staff improve their skills this is not always built on by teachers. Leaders do not check quickly enough that teachers and teaching assistants, including those new to the school, are able to make accurate judgements about pupils' attainment or are clear about how to move their learning on.
- Although there are clearer guidelines about what teachers should include in their marking, such as using pupils' individual targets, the quality of marking is not always good enough to help pupils improve quickly. Even where useful next steps are provided by teachers pupils have little opportunity to correct their work or act on the advice given.
- In the small minority of lessons where teaching and learning are good, teachers ask questions that probe pupils' understanding and provide activities that challenge their thinking well. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils were eager to meet the challenge set by their teacher to calculate the sale price of some of the latest games consoles. The teacher regularly checked how all were doing and quickly helped those who were stuck and set more challenging questions for those who coped well with the work. As a result, all enjoyed the activity and successfully improved their ability to calculate percentages.
- Improvements in the range of activities available in the Reception classroom are beginning to capture children's imagination well. They enjoy exploring and writing about the things that interest them. However, the range of activities in the outdoor area is too limited and this prevents children from learning as well as they are able.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' behaviour has started to improve as a result of improvements to the curriculum. Pupils say lessons are now more interesting than they used to be. They are especially pleased that there are now more regular information communication technology (ICT), music and art lessons. Nonetheless, behaviour continues to require some improvement because of some inappropriate behaviour in lessons, mainly due to ongoing chatter when the teacher is talking. This interrupts pupils' learning in a few lessons.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils spoken to say they feel safe and well cared for in school. They say that bullying does not happen often and if an incident does occur they trust the staff to quickly 'sort it out' effectively. School rules are clear and everyone understands the sanctions that are the consequences of poor behaviour. Pupils think that adults apply the rules fairly and deal with any issues promptly. Around school and in lessons relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are positive.
- Pupils usually behave well around school and in lessons, showing that they are increasingly keen to learn. Occasionally, however, pupils can become distracted and lose concentration when teaching fails to capture their interests. Staff provide sensitive support for the relatively small number of pupils who sometimes find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. Classrooms are well organised and the school is tidy and free from litter. Pupils take good care of their

possessions. They wear the school uniform and are neatly presented.

- Pupils are pleased that a school council has been formed and feel more confident that their views will be listened to. Some pupils said that they feel that their opinions have not always been taken into account in the past and that they welcome this development.
- Attendance steadily declined to below average after the last inspection and too many pupils were not attending school regularly. Because of the concerted efforts of the acting headteachers, staff, parents and pupils, attendance has improved and currently it is in line with the national average. Very few pupils now miss school.
- The breakfast club ensures that pupils are provided with a happy and secure start to the day and is beginning to contribute to improvements in attendance.

### **The leadership and management are inadequate**

- School leaders, including governors, have not taken effective action to tackle weaknesses in teaching since the previous inspection. For example, subject leaders do not yet play a role in improving teaching. Consequently, the school has not moved forward and pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have declined.
- Training has been provided for teachers to bring about improvements in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics and to increase the accuracy of checks on how well pupils are doing in lessons. This has however had too little impact so far, partly because of the many changes in staff that have taken place. As a result the quality of teaching is not strong enough to bring about the rapid progress needed to help pupils catch up and reach the standards expected for their age.
- Plans for improvement lack a sharp focus and clear way forward for improving the school. There are many priorities and actions to enable leaders to focus clearly on what needs to be done or to make systematic checks on how well the school is improving.
- The acting headteachers previously leading the school worked with the local authority to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result of this current leaders now have a more accurate understanding of the reasons behind the school's inadequate performance. More thorough systems for observing lessons, checking pupils' assessments and holding teachers to account have been introduced. These changes are at a very early stage and are not yet having sufficient impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Subjects are taught in topics and pupils are very happy that they have more opportunities to play music, create art and use ICT. However, the curriculum is not planned well enough to ensure that all pupils are consistently supported or challenged. The primary sports funding has been used to provide increased opportunities for pupils to participate in competitive sports events. It is helping pupils to engage in regular, active sessions of physical education which are promoting an increasingly healthy lifestyle well. However, changes in staffing means that this has not had the full impact on improving teachers' skills.
- Parents are overwhelmingly loyal to the school and appreciate the spiritual ethos present. Parents who spoke to inspectors said that their children are happy and are enjoying the changes, for example the brighter environment and improvements in behaviour they now see in the school.
- In her first two weeks in post, the new headteacher, with the support of the deputy headteacher, has quickly gained a clear view of the school. However, the school's capacity to improve rapidly is limited because leadership at other levels is ineffective and because teaching and pupils' achievement continue to be inadequate.
- The local authority knows that the school is not performing as it should and has provided some extra support which began early in 2013 and is ongoing. The governing body enlisted the help of the local authority to secure the temporary support of local headteachers during the absence of, and subsequent resignation of, the school's headteacher. The local authority has helped leaders by providing training for teachers. However, partly because of changes in staffing, this support

has not yet led to sufficient improvements in teaching nor raised pupils' achievement.

■ The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers at this time.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors do not have a clear overview of how well pupils are doing and do not hold leaders fully to account for the performance of the school. They have not measured the impact of how the pupil premium funding has been spent on the achievement of those pupils for whom it is intended. Although additional governors have only now been appointed by the local authority, this is a very recent development and the governing body is not currently in a position to support the leadership of the school effectively.
- The governing body has been successful in appointing a permanent headteacher at the earliest opportunity. Systems for managing the performance of teachers are now in place and pay increases are linked to pupils' achievement.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.



## 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>	111262
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	432111

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	184
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Acting Chair</b>	Councillor David Armstrong
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Natalie Tomlinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 October 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01606 288040
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	admin@stchadsce.cheshire.sch.uk

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