

Lower Heath CofE Primary School

Lower Heath, Prees, Whitchurch, SY13 2BT

Inspection dates

27–28 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage. They learn well, developing social and communication skills, and make good progress.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection.
- All groups, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics during their time in school.
- Teaching is good. Teachers provide lesson activities that take good account of pupils' abilities and help them to build on what they already know and can do.
- Good relationships result in a positive atmosphere. Pupils say they feel safe in school.
- Behaviour is good around school and in class.
- The headteacher provides clear leadership and has successfully raised standards and the quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
- Governors ensure that they are well informed, and challenge the school's leaders as well as supporting them.
- Pupils experience a wide range of additional activities, particularly in sports, which ensures they have a rich and varied experience of school life.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Additional adults do not always support pupils' learning effectively.
- Pupils' writing is sometimes let down by inaccurate punctuation and spelling.
- Teachers do not change work quickly enough when pupils are ready to move on to something new or more difficult.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in 10 lessons or part-lessons, a number of which were seen jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with other leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took into account the 34 responses to the online Parent View survey and discussions with parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspector considered the views expressed in survey responses from 14 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Lucy Maughan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller 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 above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. This is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority or from a family with a parent in the armed services.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress by improving the quality of teaching through ensuring that:
 - additional adults are always used effectively in lessons to support learning
 - teachers check learning closely during lessons, and change tasks when pupils are ready to learn something new.
- Increase pupils' progress in writing by improving their ability to write sentences with accurate punctuation and spelling.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school in Early Years Foundation Stage with skills typical of those expected for their age. During their time in Reception class, children make good progress, so that a higher than average proportion start Year 1 with a good level of development.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 1. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics rose in 2013 to above average.
- By the time pupils leave the school, an above-average proportion reach the expected standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Current school data show an increasing number of pupils on track to achieve the higher levels of attainment, particularly in mathematics.
- Taking account of their different starting points, the proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics compare favourably with national averages. This represents good achievement.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the well-targeted support provided, particularly in one-to-one and small-group sessions.
- School data show that the attainment gap is closing in reading, writing and mathematics between pupils supported by the pupil premium and other groups of pupils. They make similarly good progress. There were too few eligible pupils in Year 6 last year to comment on their attainment without identifying them.
- Pupils' reading skills are developed well. They enjoy reading and speak with enthusiasm about authors they like.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good.
- Teachers know pupils well, carefully track their progress and provide extra help for any who may be in danger of falling behind.
- Lessons are planned to meet the different needs of pupils taught in mixed-aged classes. Tasks are devised to challenge the more-able pupils. For example, in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class, pupils were given a range of activities to explore how different materials could be used to make a boat for a toy figure. The pupils were successfully challenged according to ability and age, resulting in them making good progress.
- Teachers make clear to the pupils what they are going to learn in each lesson, and pupils commented that they find the individual targets set for them very useful. Pupils were able to explain what their next steps will be to reach the next level of learning.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and helpful comments are added, particularly in English and mathematics books. Pupils are told how they can improve their work. They often reflect on how well they feel they have achieved and add their own comments.

- There are occasions when teachers do not check pupils' work within a lesson carefully enough to identify when pupils are ready to be moved on to a new or harder task.
- Teaching assistants form a strong partnership with teachers. They provide valuable additional support to individual pupils who are struggling. However, in some lessons the additional support available is not maximised when they observe teaching rather than working with pupils.
- Pupils' work in books is usually well presented with neat handwriting. However, although teachers' marking highlights errors in punctuation and spelling, they do not make sure that pupils take note of their corrections, and so they repeat the same mistakes in their writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and this contributes to the good progress they make. The school has a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is good and they are courteous and considerate to each other.
- Relationships between pupils and adults, and among pupils themselves, are very good. Pupils listen well to each other and to staff. Just occasionally, in lessons where work is not moved on swiftly enough, pupils begin to lose interest and their attention drifts.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding requirements are met. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, and feel safe at school. They feel confident in lessons to offer ideas and share their learning with each other in an atmosphere free from discrimination and without fear of making a mistake.
- The pupils understand different forms of bullying, including how to stay safe when using the internet. Pupils said that there is no bullying at their school, and said confidently that teachers would help them if they had a problem.
- All parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire agreed that behaviour and safety in the school are well managed and that their children are safe, happy and well looked after.
- Attendance is above average and pupils enjoy coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- Effective leadership has successfully improved teaching and raised achievement since the previous inspection. The headteacher knows the school well. She has addressed weaknesses in teaching and created a united team of staff whose morale is high.
- The school's own evaluation of its strengths and areas for improvement is accurate. Regular checks on the quality of teaching, coaching and support, together with internal and external training, as well as changes to staffing have all brought about improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Annual targets are set for teachers, based on the school's priorities and linked to pupils' progress. Pay increases are only awarded where teachers can demonstrate that they have met the targets set.
- Senior and subject leaders make checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in

their subjects. They have targets to improve pupils' progress further which link directly into the whole-school development plan.

- The school promotes equality of opportunity successfully. This is demonstrated by the way that all groups of pupils make good progress.
- The range of subjects and exciting topics taught helps to promote pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills well. During the inspection, pupils in Reception and Year 1 presented a delightful class assembly to parents and carers which demonstrated the knowledge and skills they had learnt about the topic 'Africa'.
- Leaders are using the primary sports funding to help staff plan and teach physical education lessons more effectively and improve pupils' physical well-being. It has also helped to raise attendance at sports clubs, including by offering pupils opportunities to experience more unusual sports such as fencing and orienteering.
- Parents are increasingly involved in the school and appreciate the learning events which support them in helping their children with their learning.
- The local authority provides the right level of support for this good and improving school. The school is part of support network with other local schools that often works collaboratively to share best practice, for example in developing a strategy for raising standards in mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very committed to the school and its success, and have a thorough knowledge of its strengths and areas for development. This is achieved through their regular visits to the school and the good information they receive about the performance of staff and pupils. They support and challenge the school in equal measure. They have a good understanding of how leaders have used the pupil premium and primary sports funding to support learning.
 - Governors are proactive in developing their skills further and undertake training to enable them to question school leaders about pupils' progress. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They carefully assess the headteacher's performance, and are clear on how pay rises and promotion are linked to teachers' performance.

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	123483
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	431135

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Rastelli
Headteacher	Cathy Rutherford
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2012
Telephone number	01948 840524
Fax number	01948 840524
Email address	head@heath.shropshire.sch.uk

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