

Guilden Sutton CofE Primary School

Arrowcroft Road, Guilden Sutton, Chester, Cheshire, CH3 7ES

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2014

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.

- Pupils make good progress in their school work and achieve well. The standards reached by pupils are consistently above average.
- The quality of teaching is typically good. Teachers know their pupils well and plan interesting activities for them.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, not only in lessons but also around the school and in the playground.
- The school looks after its pupils very well. Pupils and their parents say this is a very safe school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They develop well as considerate and thoughtful young people.
- The school is well led. Leaders at all levels check the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils are making. As a result, teaching and pupils' achievement are both good, and the school is well placed to improve further.
- Governors are well informed and have a detailed understanding of the school. This means they effectively support and challenge school leaders to improve the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small number of boys in Key Stage 1 do not develop their writing skills as rapidly as other pupils.
- The school's most able pupils do not get work in every lesson which makes them think hard.
- Some pupils in Key Stage 2 make slower progress in reading than in writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 part lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. They attended an assembly, listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' work. They spoke to pupils informally about their views of the school and observed them at play during breaks.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils and with staff, school leaders and governors. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with the School Improvement Partner and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with a small number of parents at the start of the school day, and the lead inspector spoke to a small number of parents on the telephone. Inspectors looked at the 67 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and at the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents including: the school's own review of its strengths and weaknesses; its plans for improvement; records of the quality of teaching; school information on pupils' progress and nationally published results. Inspectors also looked at records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and at how the school keeps pupils safe.
- All pupils in Year 6 were out of school on a residential visit for both days of the inspection.

Inspection team

Michael Phipps, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michelle Ravey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their home language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. (The pupil premium is the additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below that usually found.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- A breakfast club and an after-school club operate on the school site. They are privately run and separately inspected. The inspection reports are available on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of writing of some boys in Key Stage 1 by providing more chances for them to write at length for different purposes across a range of subjects.
- Improve the reading skills of some pupils in Key Stage 2 by giving them a wider range of books which are at just the right level of difficulty.
- Improve the quality of teaching by planning tasks for the school's most able pupils which make them think hard in every lesson, and which also make them think more for themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the school in the Reception Year with skills in line with those typical for their age. By the time they leave school in Year 6, their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average and sometimes significantly so. This represents good achievement over time.
- Checks of pupils' work in their books carried out by inspectors confirm that pupils are making good progress in all subjects and in all year groups.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the end of the Reception Year, many children are above the expected level of development in all areas of their learning.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress. Their standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are above average, usually significantly so.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2, particularly in writing and mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 are on course to reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are likely to be well above average in 2014.
- Pupils' skills in mathematics develop well. They can use and apply their skills to solve mathematical problems. The proportion of pupils making and exceeding the progress expected of them is consistently high compared to that of pupils nationally.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium progress well across the school. Pupil premium funds have been spent appropriately on support for literacy and numeracy, on a family liaison consultant and on subsidising music tuition and educational visits. There were too few supported pupils in 2013 to comment on their attainment without identifying them, but in general they reach standards in line with, and often above, those of other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as their classmates, as do pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, because their progress is checked regularly and effective help is given when it is needed.
- The school's most able pupils generally achieve well, though they are not consistently given work that makes them think hard in every lesson. The proportions of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are well above average in reading and mathematics, and well above average in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils learn to read well. Younger pupils understand phonics (the sounds that letters make) very well, so they can confidently work out unfamiliar words. In the 2013 screening check in phonics, all pupils reached the expected standard. Pupils continue to enjoy reading widely as they move through the school, though the progress of some pupils slows in Key Stage 2 because there is not a wide enough range of books for them to read which are at the right level of difficulty.
- Pupils' writing skills develop well, especially in Key Stage 2, where they make excellent progress. The writing skills of a small number of boys develop less rapidly in Key Stage 1 because they have too few opportunities to write at length across a range of subjects.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good across the school and, on occasions, outstanding. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent.
- There are high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils are clear about their targets and how to reach them. In English, for example, pupils write their own targets for improvement, based on teachers' comments, on sticky notes which they refer to while they work. This helps them produce their best work.
- Pupils who need extra help are effectively supported by teaching assistants. This takes place both in classrooms and out of class in extra one-to-one sessions or in small groups, dependent on need.
- Reading is taught well, particularly in Key Stage 1 where pupils are taught very effectively the sounds that letters make.

- Marking is detailed and provides pupils with advice on the next steps to improve their work. Pupils respond to this advice using a different coloured pen. This creates a useful dialogue between pupils and their teachers.
- Teachers use questions well to promote pupils' learning. For example, pupils in a Year 3 English lesson learned well because questioning made them think hard about a character in the book they were studying.
- Teachers plan interesting activities so pupils enjoy learning. In a Year 5 science lesson, for instance, pupils were highly motivated to learn about plant reproduction because the teacher brought into the classroom a number of large lily blooms, which pupils examined very closely with great fascination.
- The teaching of writing is effective and pupils enjoy writing in different styles. Some pupils in Key Stage 1 have too few chances to write at length in different subjects.
- Teachers know pupils well, and mainly plan work which matches their abilities. In some subjects, however, the school's most able pupils are not consistently given work that stretches them or makes them think for themselves. These pupils are well challenged in mathematics, for example, but not so well in science, or in history and geography topics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Pupils are committed and enthusiastic learners. As a result, no time is lost in lessons to poor behaviour. Pupils enjoy answering questions and offering their views.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school, at playtimes and lunchtimes, is exemplary. Pupils get on very well together, and take excellent care of each other. They are confident, articulate and friendly. They play really well together, take turns and share equipment.
- Pupils enjoy school and learning. They understand the importance of good behaviour and doing well at school.
- Pupils appreciate the rewards they get for working hard and behaving well. Sanctions for poor behaviour are rarely needed.
- Pupils enjoy taking on positions of responsibility such as membership of the school council and being friendship buddies. A group of pupils is working alongside teachers to plan the renovation of the school library.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel very safe in school. This view was echoed strongly by parents. All necessary checks needed to keep pupils safe are diligently carried out. The school site is secure. The school teaches pupils to stay safe, and they have a very good awareness of potential dangers, for instance those posed by roads, fire, strangers and when using the internet.
- Pupils say bullying is almost unknown. School records confirm this. Nevertheless, pupils have learned about bullying in its different forms, including cyber-bullying. Pupils are confident that if they told an adult, any bullying would be stopped rapidly.
- Racist behaviour is very rare indeed.
- No pupils have been excluded from the school for a number of years.
- Attendance figures are well above the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led by an experienced headteacher with a clear idea of how to improve the school. The headteacher is well supported by the recently restructured leadership team.
- School leaders at all levels make regular checks on the quality of teaching, planning and

marking. Systems to manage teachers' performance are robust. Teachers' targets are based on pupils' progress and are linked to salary progression. The headteacher tackles any underperformance in teaching effectively.

- Information about pupils' progress is collected each term. This assessment information is used to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress, to trigger extra help for pupils who fall behind, and to provide information for governors.
- The interesting range of subjects and activities helps pupils enjoy school, and develops their literacy and numeracy skills well. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of trips and visitors, and by a number of teams and clubs that run after school, such as the newspaper club, glee club, break dancing, art, hockey, judo and fencing.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding develops very well. Good links with the local church are supplemented by many opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures. This means pupils develop well as considerate, reflective and thoughtful young people who can, for example, explain the importance of raising money for charities.
- Much of the extra primary school sport funding is spent on membership of a local school sports partnership. This provides visiting specialist physical education teachers and extra-curricular sports clubs, and gives pupils the chance to take part in sports competitions. As a result, more pupils now participate in sport.
- Safeguarding and child protection arrangements fully meet statutory requirements.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well. Each pupil is known and valued as an individual. All staff are committed to making sure each child reaches his or her full potential.
- The local authority rightly has confidence in the leadership of the school, so provides only light-touch support.
- School leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their plans to improve the school are clearly focused on the right areas. The school is, therefore, well placed to improve further.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are regular visitors to the school. Many are volunteers who help with pupils' learning. Individual governors are linked to classes and subjects, and meet regularly with teachers with these responsibilities. Governors carry out book reviews of pupils' work, and a governor attends meetings of the school council. In this way, governors can gather first-hand evidence of the work of the school. They know how pupils are performing and about the quality of teaching, and they have seen the impact of the pupil premium spending for themselves.
- Governors set challenging annual performance targets for the headteacher. They are aware of the requirement that links teachers' pay with their performance, and they understand the processes for tackling underperformance in teaching. Relevant training means that governors understand what the data on pupils' performance suggest about how well the school is doing compared to other schools nationally, and they have a clear idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This means they are able to ask searching questions to hold school leaders to account.

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	111273
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	444336

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	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Davies
Headteacher	Kathy Crowe
Date of previous school inspection	30 September 2009
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