

Westmorland Primary School

Westmorland Drive, Brinnington, Stockport, Cheshire, SK5 8HH

Inspection dates 2–3 July 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils are very happy and proud of their school. They attend regularly and pupils and their parents agree the school is very safe.
- Pastoral care is a strength. Staff always 'go the extra mile' for their pupils and families and work extremely well with external agencies, especially to support those whose circumstances might put them at risk.
- Progress is good and attainment is rising. By the time pupils leave Year 6, their attainment matches national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those covered by the pupil premium progress as well as, and often faster, than their classmates. This is because they receive very well-organised help for their individual needs.
- Consistently good teaching captures pupils' interest, so they are eager to learn and work hard.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Behaviour is good and pupils are considerate and keen to take part in the extra activities on offer.
- Outstanding leadership, inspired by the headteacher's commitment, aims to make the school the best it can be and offer 'The brightest future for every pupil'.
- Senior leaders and staff share this vision and have been highly effective in raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching so more is outstanding. This gives the school a very strong basis to build on and improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching does not result yet in outstanding achievement for pupils.
- Progress in writing still lags behind that of reading and mathematics because pupils often misspell common words, do not always use grammar, punctuate their work correctly or write neatly.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 19 lessons, visited small group sessions, observed pupils during break times and listened to readers from Years 1, 2 and 6.
- Inspectors met with pupils, staff, parents, school leaders, members of the governing body and the local authority’s representative
- The team looked at pupils’ books, the school’s current achievement data and the systems used to gather an accurate picture of pupils’ performance.
- They looked at how the school checks the quality of teaching and learning and examined the arrangements for safeguarding pupils.
- A pre-arranged transition day took place on the second day of the inspection, where pupils moved up to their next class in preparation for the academic year starting in September.
- Not enough responses were recorded online in Ofsted’s Parent View to show the results so the team looked at the school’s most recent parent survey and the 31 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Kathleen McArthur, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steve Rigby

Additional Inspector

Elaine White

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than most primary schools.
- The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Almost three-quarters of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium funding, which is well above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school is below the national average and the proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of their special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school offers a breakfast club and a wide range of after-school activities.
- The number of pupils on roll has increased considerably since the previous inspection. Ongoing building work to complete extensions to the school are due for completion this year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching so that it is outstanding in order to boost pupils' attainment and progress by:
 - sharing the expertise and best practice already found in school even more widely.
- Improve the quality of pupils' writing by:
 - ensuring pupils know how to use grammar, punctuation and spelling correctly and always write and present their work neatly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below those typical for their age, especially in language and mathematics. The very caring, welcoming atmosphere ensures they feel secure and make good progress in all areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year, skills are below those typical for their age, but children are ready to for the transition into Year 1.
- All groups of pupils progress well through Key Stages 1 and 2. Very nearly all make the progress they are expected to make, and inspection evidence shows that progress is speeding up in all subjects and more pupils than found nationally are making good progress. Pupils also progress well in subjects, such as science and physical education, where they very much enjoy the practical activities.
- Pupils' progress is faster in reading and mathematics than in writing. Misspelt common words (even when these are displayed) inaccurate use of grammar and punctuation and careless handwriting lower the quality of pupils' writing. The recent focus on talking and discussing before writing is proving effective, helping pupils plan and organise their writing, and consequently standards are rising rapidly.
- Pupils' workbooks and school data show those currently in Year 6 are on course to reach national levels in reading, writing, mathematics and English, grammar, punctuation and spelling. Pupils leave the school with the skills needed to continue their education.
- Additional support challenges and extends the most able pupils and those with particular talents, for example higher level work in very small groups. A greater proportion is now reaching the higher levels in reading and mathematics.
- Those supported by the pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, progress as well, and often more rapidly, than their classmates and their attainment is only around a term behind. School data show this gap is rapidly narrowing due to very well-considered additional support, including precisely targeted support and much specialised input, such as speech therapy.
- Well managed and organised help with learning for pupils with special educational needs enables them to progress as well as their classmates. Sign language, known in school as 'Sign and Shine', is used from nursery throughout the school and provides valuable support as pupils learn to read, especially for those with speech and language difficulties.
- In the 2013 phonics screening check, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard was below the national figure. School leaders responded promptly by completely reorganising the way letters and sounds (phonics) lessons are taught so strategies are taught consistently. School data show outcomes for 2014 are very close to national levels.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Younger pupils say simple actions help them to remember to 'sound out' and 'blend it together' when they meet new words. Pupils read with good understanding, discuss their favourite genres and authors and many put expression in their voices to make reading aloud interesting.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good or better. High quality professional development ensures all staff use the same strategies and techniques, for example, when teaching phonics. Calm, well-organised classrooms with attractive displays of aids to learning and pupils' work encourage them to aim high.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, well-planned, stimulating activities in all areas of learning capture children's interest so they are keen to investigate and progress well, for example, buying tickets and packing suitcases for an imaginary train journey.
- Pupils say, 'The teachers help us all the time.' Staff always expect the best from their pupils,

and make full use of their own good subject knowledge. Carefully phrased and challenging questions stimulate thinking skills; pupils like to be challenged and enjoy working out and explaining their answers.

- In writing, some errors are still found, but clear guidance and checklists are helping pupils use grammar correctly. For example, in an English lesson, pupils described the monster they had created on the computer and used the checklist to make sure they included two adjectives, sentences and adverbs. Pupils have many opportunities to discuss ideas and develop their writing in subjects such as geography or history.
- Classroom assistants work closely with teachers to move all groups of pupils on in their learning by providing regular and timely intervention and support.
- Staff are fully accountable for pupils' progress. High-quality systems provide a wealth of accessible information about how well pupils are learning. Staff make full use of this when planning lessons and in their frequent progress reviews, acting swiftly if any pupils are falling behind.
- Pupils say their work is marked regularly. They understand the marking code and inspectors saw good evidence of pupils, even the younger ones, responding to their teacher's points for improvement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. School records, inspection observations and discussions with pupils, parents and staff show that this is typical. The school has a happy atmosphere, and is a calm place indoors and outside.
- Pupils behave well in all classes. Most are willing learners, although a very small proportion of pupils sometimes just wait for direction rather than 'having a go' or joining in with group tasks, which slows their progress.
- Staff use the behaviour management and reward system skilfully. Pupils are keen to move up the ladder to earn 'Westies' as rewards and say school rules are 'sensible'.
- Pupils respect and show consideration to staff and each other. Older pupils, keen to undertake responsibilities, such as school councillors or head boy and head girl. They are very caring towards younger ones, and enjoy their roles as reading buddies using the 'Story Sacks'.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. This has been recognised beyond the school and used by the local authority as an exemplar of good practice.
- Pupils feel safe and secure 'because staff are always around', and they have a strong awareness of how to keep themselves safe, for example, when using the internet.
- A few parents felt bullying occasionally occurs but pupils disagree, saying odd incidents of name-calling happen, but bullying is not a problem. The Anti-bullying Week helps pupils deal with different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying. They were unanimous that staff, especially the headteacher, always sort out any problems very quickly, saying, 'If we fall out, teachers help us make friends.'
- The work of the outstanding safeguarding team is much valued and offers sensitive, confidential help for pupils and parents. They know there is always someone who listens, and The Den is a quiet haven for any troubled pupils and those with complex needs. Extremely strong links with external agencies bring a wide range of support to pupils who may be vulnerable and for their families. Consequently, these pupils progress as well as their peers.
- Attendance is average and the great majority of pupils arrive in good time each day. The well-attended breakfast club offers healthy food and activities, ensuring pupils are ready for learning. Very popular extra-curricular clubs offer pupils a variety of sports and activities.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The outstanding leadership team successfully provide equal opportunities for every pupil to

make good or better progress. Improvement plans focus on further boosting attainment and progress, particularly in writing, and the rising trend in achievement, especially for vulnerable pupils, shows the effectiveness of leaders' actions.

- Leaders have yet to fully use and extend the outstanding teaching skills already found in the school but the appointment of a teaching and learning leader shows deep commitment to do this. Thorough arrangements for staff appraisal and performance management lead to priorities for professional development, and staff say this is valuable. School monitoring and inspection evidence show the proportion of teaching judged outstanding is increasing.
- Senior staff are very good role models for middle leaders and develop their skills, resulting in better outcomes in English and mathematics.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully promotes pupils' respect for others, good behaviour and attitudes to learning whilst providing opportunities they might not otherwise experience. Pupils enjoy frequent visits out of school, learning an instrument or dressing up for Book Week.
- The curriculum captures pupils' interests, for example, using the World Cup as a theme to link subjects. Careful adaptations meet pupils' different needs and abilities, ensuring they acquire literacy and numeracy skills needed for future learning. Using these skills in other subjects, reading and researching on the internet or calculating the outcomes of science investigations, support pupils' good progress.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet all statutory requirements. The four designated safeguarding officers ensure all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and roles in protecting pupils.
- Good relationships between home and school add to pupils' well-being, and staff make sure parents feel valued as partners in their child's education.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good school and has shared the school's safeguarding procedures as a model for other schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The very supportive, highly committed governing body provides an impressive range of knowledge and experience. Governors fully share the ambitious vision for ongoing school improvement and carried out a skills audit as a basis for training to equip them for their roles and responsibilities.
 - They are well informed, understand data, attend pupils' progress meetings and compare the school's performance with others by asking challenging questions of school leaders. For example, they have consulted about what is being done to improve pupils' writing.
 - Priorities in the school improvement plan are supported by very carefully managed finances. Rigorous checks ensure the pupil premium funding is used effectively and governors know that small gaps between the performance of pupils supported by that funding and others have rapidly narrowed.
 - Staff performance reviews are shared with governors who make sure any salary rewards are awarded only when staff help pupils to learn well. New staff are expected to contribute not just to their class but to the wider school community.
 - Professional development is used to improve the quality of teaching and develop leadership skills at all levels, for example, the appointment of an assistant headteacher to develop teaching and learning.
 - Governors ensured that the primary school sports funding provides a wide range of physical activities available to pupils across the school. They report that pupils are enjoying the additional activities, and that those provided at lunchtime have improved behaviour so pupils are ready for learning in the afternoon.

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	132121
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	444194

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	495
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Thompson
Headteacher	Martin Henderson
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2010
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