

Waterside Primary School

Eastwood Road, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST1 3JS

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Early years provision | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Teaching is good. As a result, pupils make good progress in lessons and over time.
- By the end of Year 6, attainment in both mathematics and English is above average. Pupils' progress from their various starting points is good in both English and mathematics.
- Carefully tailored support for pupils with special educational needs, pupils at the early stages of learning English and disadvantaged pupils, enables these pupils to make good progress and to participate fully in activities.
- Behaviour is good and attendance has improved to broadly average. Pupils have positive attitudes, enjoy coming to school and have good relationships with each other and with adults. They feel safe in school.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteacher and governors, provides outstanding direction. Senior leaders have an excellent understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further. In the very short time they have been in post, they have acted swiftly and decisively and this has already had a significant impact upon standards and progress. The headteacher has rapidly gained the confidence and respect of staff, pupils and parents alike.
- The good promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables them to thrive in a supportive learning community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Work is not always precisely enough matched to pupils' needs and capabilities so that some pupils do not always achieve their full potential.
- Pupils are not always given good guidance about how to improve their work, particularly their spelling.
- Pupils are not always given enough opportunity to use their initiative or to learn on their own.
- Subject leaders are not yet fully involved in driving improvement in teaching and learning in their subjects and across the wider curriculum.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons and made short visits to other activities led by teachers and trained assistants. Eight of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Two groups of pupils met with inspectors. Discussions were also held with staff, including senior leaders. Meetings were conducted with the Chair of the Governing Body and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils’ work with senior leaders and read a range of documents. These included documents about the school’s strategies to enable leaders to gain an accurate view of its performance, school improvement plans, pupils’ current progress, policies and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Judith Tolley, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Louise Murphy | Additional Inspector |
| Ben Cox | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- Waterside Primary School is a larger than average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is much higher than that usually found.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is higher than average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.
- The school has a number of awards, including Healthy School status, Science Silver Quality Mark, Artsmark Silver Award and Silver Kite Mark Award.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes in staff; several new teachers have joined the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up post in September 2013.
- The school works in collaboration with other schools to develop the teaching of reading within the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding across the school and thereby raise standards and further increase pupils' rate of progress in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring tasks are always set at just the right level to challenge pupils to achieve the best they can
 - making sure pupils are always given precise guidance about how to improve their work, particularly the accuracy of their spelling and that teachers check that pupils respond to the advice or further challenge they are given
 - increase opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and learn on their own.
- Further develop the role of subject and curriculum leaders by ensuring they are fully involved in improving the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects and across the wider curriculum.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Although the headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post for a very short time, they have an accurate view of what the school does well and what needs to be improved. This evaluation is based upon regular and rigorous monitoring procedures they have introduced, both in terms of the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make.
- Leaders have acted swiftly and decisively to improve the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, there has been a significant improvement in the standards pupils reach in writing, mathematics and, particularly, in reading over the past year. Regular and rigorous monitoring procedures effectively hold teachers to account and identify training needs. The school has placed great emphasis upon training for teachers and this, together with the introduction of whole-school policies for assessment, has been an important factor in securing recent improvements in teaching and learning.
- Pupil premium funding is used to good effect to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, gaps in the performance of disadvantaged pupils have closed. Similarly, primary school sports funding is used to good effect to improve the quality of teaching in physical education across the school. This has led to increased participation rates in extra-curricular and sports activities across the school.
- Subject leaders are involved in the school's self-evaluation and school improvement planning procedures but, although they monitor the work in their subject areas, they are not yet fully involved in working alongside teachers to improve their practice or to drive improvement in their subjects across the wider curriculum.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, meets pupils' needs and aspirations well and prepares them well for citizenship in modern Britain. It is enriched by music, drama and French. Pupils also benefit from working alongside visitors, such as authors, and all take part in regular trips and visits which extend their learning outside the classroom.
- The teaching of reading is effective and children enjoy their reading. They read fluently and with understanding, able to explain in detail what they have read in a variety of texts and to make inferences. However, although the school has the information required to determine next steps for individual pupils, at the beginning of the year, pupils are taught phonics (the sound letters make) and reading skills in groups which contain a wide range of ability. As a consequence, time is lost for some who, initially, find activities too easy or too difficult. Leaders have identified this as an area for improvement and are already taking steps to ensure pupils' needs, particularly those of the least and the most able, can be better met from the very beginning in these subjects.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet government requirements.
- The school works closely with parents and actively encourages them to be involved in the school's work and their children's learning through, for instance, workshops and other activities and the school improvement forum. The school and the home-school link worker have worked closely with families whose children do not attend regularly enough. As a result, over the last year, persistent absence has decreased significantly and attendance and punctuality have improved.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas which need to be improved. Its members regularly check the school's performance, including data that show pupils' standards of attainment and progress. They talk confidently about how the school is narrowing gaps in the performance of different groups through successful additional support. They have recruited governing body members with a broad range of expertise. Governors regularly visit the school with a focus for each visit. They, therefore, have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and the performance of staff, including how good performance is rewarded and any underperformance is tackled. The efficiency of spending is scrutinised, for example, the effectiveness of the use of primary sports funding and of the pupil premium funding. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and have strong, positive relationships with senior leaders, built on mutual respect and trust. As a result they are able, through open and honest challenge and support, to hold leaders very effectively to account.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school's work to keep both pupils and staff safe and secure is also good.
- Pupils are courteous and considerate to each other and work and play very well together. They take

responsibility very seriously and are proud of their contribution to the school, for example, as school councillors and as members of the Eco team, monitors and mentors for other children.

- Pupils come to lessons equipped and ready to work. They take pride in their school and take care of their classrooms and playground. They work responsibly and with enthusiasm. They support each other well, for example, when working with a partner. Pupils listen carefully to others and respect each other's views.
- Pupils have very good relationships with adults. Pupils feel safe and are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively. They are aware of the different forms of bullying, such as name-calling and cyber-bullying that can take place and know how to deal with it.
- Pupils know how to stay safe and have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy using the equipment in the playground and older children take responsibility for looking after special places, such as the 'Tardis' library. They are enthusiastic about the wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, that are provided and which have a positive impact on their health and well-being.
- Pupils who may have challenging behaviour are supported very effectively to make good choices and, as a result, they are able to learn effectively and make good progress alongside their classmates. Incidences of poor behaviour are very rare.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good across the school and there are examples of outstanding practice.
- Whole class, group and paired activities effectively increase pupils' confidence and their speaking skills. For instance, pupils regularly work in groups and pairs to share ideas and to solve problems. Pupils with English as an additional language rapidly improve their understanding and their speaking skills in English in this way.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together and ask pupils searching questions to see how much they have understood. They provide pupils with practical activities which enable them to experience things for themselves and discuss ideas with a partner. Year 6 pupils made swift progress with their work on ratios because activities were very well matched to their needs. Clear demonstrations coupled with very effective questioning enabled pupils to understand how to tackle a variety of problems and rapidly become confident in putting their own calculations down on paper. However, this is not always the case. On occasions, pupils find tasks too easy or too difficult because work is not always precisely matched to their capabilities.
- Pupils are confident when explaining their ideas to a partner but do not always have the opportunity to explore ideas for themselves or present their working to others.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are examples of outstanding practice. Where this is the case information about pupils' progress determines next steps for individual pupils and this feeds directly into lesson planning. Pupils themselves maintain a dialogue with teachers about what they need to do next and are given extra challenges to complete. However, marking and advice is not always to this high standard. Pupils do not always receive the specific guidance they need to help them improve their work, particularly the accuracy of their spelling.
- Reading is taught effectively and even the youngest take pleasure in applying their knowledge of phonics to read and write words and simple sentences or read out what they have written.
- The impact of teaching on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have frequent opportunities to increase their understanding of cultures other than their own.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The proportion of pupils making and exceeding the progress expected of them from their starting points compares favourably with national figures. Pupils enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge close to those typical for their age and are confident learners, well prepared for the Key Stage 1 curriculum.
- Overall, pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics, reading and writing are above average.
- Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards in reading, writing and mathematics have risen significantly over the last year and the rate of pupils' progress has also increased so that the proportion of pupils making more than the progress expected of them has also increased.
- The most able pupils usually make good progress from their starting points in mathematics, reading and writing, with some reaching the highest levels by the end of Year 6. However, there is scope to provide

even more challenge for these pupils.

- Pupils write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences and use a good range of vocabulary and structures. However, inaccuracies in spelling sometimes mar their work.
- Progress in reading is good. Pupils are taught phonics (letters and the sounds they make) effectively and are able to apply their knowledge in reading and writing.
- Pupils of all ages, even the youngest, are enthusiastic about their reading. By the end of Year 6, most pupils read a variety of texts with a good level of fluency and understanding. Most are able to talk in detail about what they have read, and can talk about books they have enjoyed.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers as a result of the extra help they are given, according to need, both in class and in groups. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English make good progress because of the extra help they receive and the strategies used across the school to help them extend their vocabulary and develop their confidence in speaking.
- The extra support, such as extra help in the classroom and support from teaching assistants, that the school provides with the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils enables these pupils to reach their targets and to make the same good progress as their peers. Gaps between the attainment of these pupils in English and mathematics and their classmates have closed. They reach the same standards as other pupils in the school and higher standards than disadvantaged pupils nationally.

The early years provision

is good

- Children make good progress and achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes, as a result of consistently good teaching. Many children start in the early years provision with skills that are well below those typical for their age. Many also begin school with little or no English.
- Because of very well-established routines and very effective procedures for making sure their transition from home or pre-school settings is a smooth one, children settle in very rapidly and behave well. They clearly enjoy the activities planned for them, take turns and learn and play well together.
- Because of the emphasis placed upon speaking and listening and the calm environment, they make particularly good progress in developing their language, communication and their personal and social skills.
- The provision is well led and managed. Adults work together very effectively to ensure all children are able to make good progress. They monitor individual progress closely on a daily basis and use this information effectively to plan next steps for children's learning.
- Activities designed to interest and encourage children to take the initiative are well planned and sustain children's interest. Activities change regularly and reflect themes in teaching and children's interests. There are lots of opportunities provided to allow children to explore and investigate and this they do with enthusiasm.

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

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| Unique reference number | 123993 |
| Local authority | Stoke-On-Trent |
| Inspection number | 448557 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 320 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Sally Vaughan |
| Headteacher | Joanne Knowles |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18 May 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01782 234630 |
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