

Ince CofE Primary School

Charles Street, Ince, Wigan, WN2 2AL

Inspection dates

16–17 October 2014

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.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher, ably supported by skilled and enthusiastic assistant headteachers and middle leaders, provide strong and focused leadership. This has ensured that the school has very successfully built on its strengths and is well placed to continue to improve teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Governors are very committed to the school. Staff morale is high and staff are proud to be part of the school community.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years provision because of the school's effective work in developing their social and communication skills.
- From their different starting points, all pupils make at least good progress. They leave in Year 6 attaining standards that are typically above the national average in reading and mathematics and at the average level in writing.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is outstanding.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and plan lessons that help to make learning interesting.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and their behaviour is good. Older pupils enjoy acting as 'play leaders' and provide good support to the younger pupils. Attendance is improving because pupils enjoy school.
- The school's provision for keeping children safe is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel very safe in the school, and this view is echoed by their parents.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and they benefit from a curriculum that provides them with a good range of experiences inside and outside of school.
- Parents are extremely positive about the school. They say that their children are safe and happy there, and the view that school represented a 'home from home', was typical of parents' opinions of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in writing, particularly for the most able pupils in Key Stage 1, is not as good as in reading and mathematics because pupils have limited opportunities to develop their skills in writing at length and across a range of subjects.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent. It does not always give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Governors rely heavily on information provided to them by the headteacher and, as a consequence, do not consistently ask challenging questions about pupils' progress and attainment across the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons or parts of lessons, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6, and held discussions with pupils from across the school and representatives of the school council. Work in pupils’ books was looked at during lessons and a detailed scrutiny of work was carried out jointly with the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with members of the school’s leadership team and a group of governors, and inspectors also spoke to a representative of the local authority and a consultant working with the school.
- Inspectors took account of 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the findings of the school’s own most recent parental survey; they also met with a group of eight parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors looked at 25 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- A range of school documents were examined. These included the school’s evaluation of its own performance, development planning, records of teachers’ performance management, data about the achievement of pupils both currently in the school and who had recently left, governing body information and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Neil Dixon, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Carol Machell	Additional Inspector
Peter Martin	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium funding is double the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of 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 in English and mathematics.
- The school offers flexible, part time Nursery provision. Children attend Reception class full time.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment and accelerate the progress that they make in writing by:
 - enabling them to apply and develop their writing skills across all areas of the curriculum
 - ensuring that the school's new marking policy is consistently and effectively applied across all classes and in all subjects so that pupils always get clear guidance about how to improve their work
 - providing more opportunities for the most able pupils in Key Stage 1 to write at length.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that governors become more robust in challenging school leaders about pupils' progress and attainment across the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

are good

- The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, ably supported by two assistant headteachers, middle leaders, governors and the staff team. Together they show a real determination to fulfil the school's stated aim, 'To develop the talents and potential of each individual child in a safe, secure and happy environment.' Their work has ensured that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved since the previous inspection.
- The school makes highly effective use of the pupil premium funding through providing additional support that ensures that this group of pupils typically make outstanding progress in their learning. This reflects the school's commitment to ensuring that every pupil is given an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The impact of school leaders in bringing about improvements in mathematics and English is good. Good systems are in place to track the progress that pupils make and to provide support for those pupils who need it through well-planned interventions. This has helped to bring about improvements in pupils' phonic skills (letters and the sounds they make) and mathematical understanding.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as is their understanding of fundamental British values such as democracy and the rule of law. Pupils enjoy having opportunities to learn about the lives and experiences of others, such as by studying where their school is in relation to other parts of Britain, Europe and the world, and by learning about festivals celebrated in different cultures, such as the Hindu festival of Raksha Bandhan.
- The curriculum provides good and engaging learning opportunities for all pupils, whatever their starting points or academic ability. It is very well enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, including sport, dance and music clubs, and visits out of school, such as a residential visit for the older pupils.
- The primary school sport funding is managed very well and provides a range of sporting opportunities for pupils through having well trained teachers and good resources. Pupils' sporting successes in a range of sports are celebrated, and an increasing number have the chance to take part in sporting competitions involving other schools.
- The headteacher ensures that targets set for teachers' performance are clearly linked to pupils' progress and attainment, and that there is a clear link between teachers' pay and performance. Regular checks are made on the quality and impact of teaching and the headteacher has an accurate view of the strengths in teaching across the school and ensures that all staff have access to quality training opportunities that further develop their skills and effectiveness.
- The local authority provides the school with 'light touch' support and encourages it to share its strengths with neighbouring schools.
- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. The school provides a safe and secure environment for its pupils, and the school's attractive website provides parents with useful information.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good understanding of the school's context, strengths and areas for development and, as a result of training that they have received, are developing their understanding of how well the school is doing compared with others nationally. However, their knowledge of pupils' progress data is not as detailed as their understanding of data around attainment and attendance and they rely heavily on information provided to them by the headteacher. As a result their ability to provide consistently robust challenge to school leaders is weakened.
 - Governors ensure that the school's finances are well managed and enhance the quality of learning for pupils. They have very successfully created a bright and well maintained school environment in which pupils feel very safe and well cared for.
 - Governors ensure that the statutory duties of the governing body are fulfilled, particularly with regard to safeguarding and checks on procedures for managing teachers' performance. They understand how teachers' performance is managed and any underperformance addressed, and ensure that teachers' pay awards are linked to pupils' progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. They say that poor behaviour in their school is very unusual and that

everyone in their school gets on well together. This can be seen at break and lunchtimes, where pupils mix well, with their play being supported very effectively by older pupils acting as 'play leaders'.

- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They take a pride in their work, as is evidenced by a range of attractive displays of art and written work in classrooms and around the school.
- There are few recorded instances of poor behaviour, and the school's records show that these are increasingly infrequent. On the rare occasions where pupils do misbehave, staff respond quickly and effectively so that learning is not interrupted.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in the school and can confidently explain how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when using the internet. The school council plays an active role in promoting safety around school and produced a presentation for the other pupils that very clearly illustrated key messages around how to keep safe in school. This helped to ensure that pupils' awareness of safety was outstanding.
- School leaders have created a very safe and secure learning environment. One reason pupils say they are confident that they are safe in school is that they know that the school's electronic signing-in procedures ensure that all visitors to school are checked before entering the building.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of different forms of bullying, including name-calling and racist bullying, but say that incidents of bullying in their school are extremely rare, and all are confident that the adults in school would deal effectively with any problems or concerns that they may have.
- Parents' responses to the 'Parent View' online survey, and discussions with inspectors during the inspection, show that the very large majority of parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour and safety in the school. Almost all of the parents who responded to 'Parent View' said that they would recommend the school to another parent.
- The school has established very effective links with the local police and magistrates that ensure that pupils are made aware of dangers outside of school, such as drugs and alcohol. This shows an outstanding commitment from the school to keep pupils safe in a wide range of situations.
- School leaders have worked tirelessly to improve attendance since the last inspection and their efforts are proving successful, with attendance rising year-on-year to be, at the time of the inspection, just above the national average.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Work seen in pupils' books and on display around the school, checks on lessons and the school's own detailed information about the quality of teaching confirm that teaching is good over time. As a result, standards are rising.
- Teachers, effectively supported by skilled and enthusiastic teaching assistants, demonstrate good subject knowledge across the curriculum. Pupils benefit from this and from working on tasks which interest and involve them whatever their ability or individual starting points.
- Reading is taught effectively, and pupils across Key Stages 1 and 2 are provided with plenty of opportunities to develop their reading skills across the curriculum, such as when conducting research about different topics. The teaching of phonics is closely matched to pupils' current levels of understanding and, as a result, pupils' progress in phonics is improving rapidly.
- The teaching of mathematics is highly effective. Activities are well planned and provide pupils with opportunities to use their mathematical skills in solving practical problems. Where pupils are identified as struggling with a mathematical concept, additional support is quickly put in place and, as a result, all pupils make at least good progress in mathematics.
- Writing skills are taught well and pupils develop a good understanding of the features of different types of writing, such as diary writing and writing instructions in literacy lessons. However, teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to write in different areas of the curriculum.
- School leaders have recently revised the school's policy and procedures for marking pupils' work and, as a result, the quality of marking has improved and typically pupils understand better how to improve their work. However, marking is not yet fully consistent across different year groups and subjects. Where it is less effective, it does not always make it clear enough to pupils how they could improve their work and, as a result, it does not accelerate pupils' progress across the school as effectively as it could do.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- Pupils make good progress in most subjects, including English and mathematics. This is due to a combination of good teaching and very well targeted input and intervention to support any pupils identified as being at risk of falling behind. As a result pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 having reached standards in reading and mathematics that are typically above the national average and which are broadly average in writing.
- The school's well-planned approach to teaching phonics has secured rapid improvement in pupils' knowledge and application of phonics, so that results of the 2014 Year 1 national screening check on phonics rose from being below average in 2013 to above the national average. This improvement was evident in the confident way in which pupils demonstrated their phonic knowledge when reading to inspectors.
- Over time, disadvantaged pupils make outstanding progress from their individual starting points and reach levels of attainment that are in line with their peers in school in reading, writing and mathematics. Their attainment is also at least in line with that of all pupils nationally in reading and mathematics but approximately a term behind in writing, although the most recent unvalidated test results from 2014 indicate that this gap is also closing rapidly. This represents outstanding progress from their starting points at the beginning of Key Stage 2, and from starting points on entry to school that are typically significantly below those typical for their age.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are provided with effective support by well-trained teachers and teaching assistants. Work is planned well to meet their needs and this has ensured that these pupils make at least the progress expected of them.
- Checks on pupils' books and published and internal attainment data show that the most able pupils make similar progress from their starting points as other pupils in school but typically reach higher standards in reading and mathematics than they do in writing. While attainment in writing for the most able pupils in Key Stage 2 rose significantly in 2014, attainment in writing for the most able pupils in Key Stage 1 was still lower than in reading and mathematics. This is associated with limited opportunities for these children to write at length.

The early years provision**is good**

- Most children start Nursery with skills and knowledge that are below those that are typical for their age, particularly in the areas of communication and language and personal, social and emotional development.
- Teaching is good over time. Therefore children make good progress during their time in the early years and, by the time they leave Reception, children's attainment is usually much closer to that typically expected for their age. While results for 2014 show that the proportion of children reaching the good level of development was below the national average, children's overall progress was good and they had caught up quickly in many areas of learning.
- The early years provides a safe and nurturing learning environment in which children quickly learn to play well with each other and where they are very well cared for and nurtured.
- Children enjoy using the attractive outdoor areas. One group of children showed good cooperative skills in playing together as 'builders' while others enjoyed taking part in counting activities.
- In the Reception class, staff place a strong emphasis on developing children's early phonic skills so that children begin to recognise and sound out words accurately. Children enjoy taking part in these well planned and engaging early reading activities and this helps to ensure that children are well prepared for moving into Year 1.
- The early years is well led and managed. The leader has a good understanding of how well children are progressing through careful recording and checking of their development. Parents are kept extremely well informed of their children's progress and achievements through regular meetings and the good-quality information shared between home and school.

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	106476
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	448318

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Wareing
Headteacher	Jillian Hyde
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2009
Telephone number	01942 704129
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