

# Whittington Primary School

Common Lane, Whittington, Lichfield, WS14 9LG

**Inspection dates** 16–17 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, have a good understanding of the school's strengths. Their analysis of pupils' attainment and progress helps to ensure that teachers know what to focus on to ensure pupils make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress through the school, leaving Year 6 with high standards.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers value the way school leaders monitor and challenge their performance.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress.
- Pupils behave well. They are safe and secure as they understand how to stay safe around the school.
- The school sets out its values clearly and they are well supported by the parents. This helps to promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders are effective in both developing their new curriculum and in implementing their preferred ways of assessing pupils' performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching does not always ensure that pupils are given enough challenging work.
- Pupils do not consistently apply what they learn in literacy when writing in other subjects.

### Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in every year group and jointly observed lessons with either the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair and other members of of the Governing Body, staff and a local authority adviser.
- Inspectors took account of the 82 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and referred to recent parent survey information from the school. They also spoke with parents and carers.
- The views expressed in questionnaires returned by 22 members of the school staff were considered.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school, looking at a range of documentation. This included an examination of pupils’ books from last year as well as the pupils’ work in books this year.
- The school’s child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.

### Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lynda Townsend	Additional Inspector
Roary Pownall	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Whittington is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of a part-time Nursery and full-time Reception class.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The school has strong links with Defence Medical Services, Whittington. Pupils arrive and leave the school at various times due to the relocation of personnel at the barracks.
- At 5%, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils, that is, those eligible for the pupil premium, is well below the national average. 15% of pupils are related to Service personnel. These pupils are also eligible for the funding.
- With 6% supported at school action and 5% supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, these proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are below the national average.
- The headteacher is a Local Leader of Education.
- An external provider manages a before and after school childcare facility. This was not included in the inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement to outstanding by ensuring that:
  - teachers provide pupils with more challenging work as soon as they are ready
  - pupils consistently apply the literacy skills they learn in English when writing in other subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and leadership team ensure that the governing body is kept informed about the performance of both staff and pupils. Leaders provide accurate information about school performance, including how well pupils are progressing, to parents and the governing body.
- Subject leaders understand their role and help the school to make further improvements. An example is how these staff have developed the school's new curriculum. Its topics interest and motivate the pupils and it prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- The school is implementing its preferred approach to assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels. It has developed an assessment system which demonstrates what pupils have to do to make more accelerated progress. This is in the process of being introduced.
- The school makes effective use of its pupil premium funding. Pupils whose parents serve at Defence Medical Services, Whittington attract a significant proportion of this funding. School leaders and governors have ensured that these pupils quickly get to know the school routines and, as a result, make good progress.
- The system for managing the performance of teachers is effective in ensuring that teaching is consistently good throughout the school. Teachers, including those who are newly qualified, value the way their performance is managed. They understand how the process supports them in developing their skills further. Teachers continually question how their teaching enables pupils to make the best progress of which they are capable. They appreciate the advice given by school leaders and adapt their teaching accordingly.
- The local authority has a good overview of the school's performance. Its evaluation is consistent with the school's own view. Through her Local Leader of Education role, the headteacher currently works with two primary schools. She supports the leadership teams in their school improvement work.
- The school has made effective use of primary school physical education and sport premium funding. It has used the funding to encourage more pupils to take part in sport. More pupils are now engaged in a variety of physical activities. One pupil commented, 'It's a great school. There's lots of sports to do, including after school.'
- School leaders ensure that pupils are tolerant and respectful. Pupils understand and value difference and this helps to encourage all pupils to take part in various school clubs and activities. This also helps to ensure that discrimination does not occur.
- Leaders ensure that all staff are familiar with safeguarding procedures. All relevant policies are kept up to date and reviewed in the light of local and national guidance. The school identifies training needs and meets them, with all relevant staff and governors attending.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body works in close partnership with the school's leadership team. It understands the needs of the school as it is well informed by documents and presentations by leaders.
  - The governing body continually considers how to improve its working practice. For example, it is acting on the findings of an external review of its governance which took place in February 2014.
  - Governors are informed about the performance of teachers, with decisions about pay based on pupils' progress. They support the training of all staff including the headteacher.
  - Governors work with subject leaders on developments regarding the new curriculum. They understand the school community and support these leaders in their work by ensuring that the school's values are at the centre of the developments.
  - The governing body understands how the school promotes tolerance of, and respect for, people of all faiths and those of no faith. It works with school leaders to ensure pupils have a wide range of cultural

experiences.

- The governing body makes sure that all statutory responsibilities are met, including those relating to safeguarding. It has clear lines of responsibility and this ensures all relevant policies and procedures are monitored and kept up to date.
- The governing body checks that funding is used effectively. A clear strategy to make best use of pupil premium funding has resulted in this group of pupils making similar rates of progress to other pupils in the school. The governing body has used sports funding to ensure more pupils take up and enjoy sporting activities.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils display considerate conduct around the school. During play times, they demonstrate care and concern for each other with or without direct supervision by staff. 'We would behave ourselves even if there wasn't anyone around because it's the right thing to do,' one pupil commented. Parents, staff and pupils agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils work and play well together. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, and are happy to talk about issues involving making the right choices. Pupils' positive attitudes contribute greatly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils regularly display positive attitudes to their learning. Where this is best, pupils are expected to tackle harder work earlier in their lessons. Very occasionally, some pupils can lose interest when they are given work that is too easy for them.
- The school has developed effective ways to ensure that pupils who come into the school partway through the school year quickly understand the school routines and expectations of their behaviour. Other pupils understand their role in supporting these newly arrived pupils by ensuring that they are included in playground games.
- In recent years, attendance has declined. During the spring term 2014, the school reviewed the way it tackled poor attendance. Examples of improved practice include each class being challenged to achieve good attendance, which is celebrated in school assemblies. As a result, the school has succeeded in reversing the decline so that attendance is now above the national average. There is no significant difference in the attendance rates of different groups.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils are safe and feel safe. This is as a result of the very clear safeguarding arrangements, which are adhered to by all staff. Any incidents are appropriately logged, with actions followed through without delay.
- The school is rigorous in ensuring that all staff have completed the required training and checks are made by school leaders that school policies are implemented consistently. All staff, including those working with pupils outside of the school day, are checked to ensure they are suitable to work with pupils.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe and how to get along with their peers. Parents support the school in ensuring the pupils are tolerant and respectful. At various times of the school day, pupils demonstrate their understanding of what tolerance means. For example, in lessons, pupils collaborate and reflect on each other's opinions. They are very respectful of each other and of their school environment.
- Pupils talk about bullying, understanding what it is and how it can be tackled when it occurs. They value the school's approach, stating that any issues are dealt with quickly and effectively. Almost all parents agree that their children are very safe in school with one parent commenting that her child 'bounds into school every day because she loves school'.

**The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching is good in every year group and in every subject. Pupils benefit from teachers skilfully asking questions. In Years 5 and 6, for example, very able mathematicians were presented with high-level problems to solve, and they made accelerated progress as the teacher posed questions which enabled the pupils to think about their own ideas and suggestions.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Effective dialogue can be seen in lessons and in the marking of work. Marking is effective because teachers set out for pupils clear points for improvement and encourage pupils to practise new skills. This leads to good progress for pupils of all abilities.
- Parents and carers welcome the partnership with the school. They work with the school to seek the best ways to support their children, particularly when they are at an early stage of learning to read. Teachers use feedback from homework activities to help them plan for new classroom tasks.
- Reading is taught well in all year groups. Teachers and teaching assistants expect pupils to use and apply the strategies they have learnt through sessions on phonics (letters and the sounds they make) to tackle unfamiliar words. Recent changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which include the use of new reading schemes, have led to children being very well prepared for the higher reading expectations in Year 1.
- Pupils are taught in ability groups in both Key Stage 1 and 2. In each group, teachers use accurate information about the current performance of the pupils to ensure that all groups make good progress in all subjects. Pupils do not make outstanding progress because they are not provided with more challenging work early enough in their lessons. This means they have less time to work on tasks which make them think harder.
- Teaching of writing is consistently good through the school. Teachers use marking to show pupils where they are using newly acquired skills effectively and also to challenge pupils to use harder skills. As a result, pupils make good progress. This progress is not as rapid as it could be as pupils are not expected to consistently apply their writing skills across all subjects. For example, in their reading journals pupils do not always apply their recently acquired skills, such as effective use of grammar.
- Mathematics is taught well to all ability groups. As with writing, teachers use marking to ensure progress is at least good. Occasionally, pupils are expected to spend too much time consolidating their understanding – for example, with calculations – rather than tackling more challenging problems. This prevents pupils from making more accelerated progress.

**The achievement of pupils** is good

- Children joining the school in the Nursery and Reception classes have skills which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, leaving Reception with skills above national averages. Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 1. Pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2 and their attainment is well above average.
- In 2013, boys' attainment was better than that of the girls at the end of Key Stage 2. Boys also made better progress. This performance gap is no longer apparent as both groups of pupils are making similarly good rates of progress.
- The school provides well for disadvantaged pupils. In 2013, there were too few such pupils to make a comparison with national figures. Current data show that disadvantaged pupils make the same good progress as their classmates. Over the past year, the school has seen an increase in the number of pupils joining the school at other times than at the start of Nursery or Reception. The school quickly identifies what these pupils already know and can do, and ensures that they make at least good progress.
- The most-able pupils make consistently good progress through the school. By the time this group of pupils

leave the school, they have reached higher standards in reading and mathematics than in writing; their progress being particularly strong in these subjects. This group of pupils relish challenging work, displaying excellent attitudes to learning when they are set work that they find challenging.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because the provision for these pupils is led and managed well, so that individual pupils' specific learning needs are quickly identified. Clear action plans are drawn up for teaching and support staff to follow. Pupils' work is monitored and evaluations are shared with parents and relevant staff. Subsequent work is then adapted accordingly.
- Reading standards are high in all year groups. Pupils are secure in their understanding and use of phonics, and they demonstrate this when reading aloud. In Year 1, almost all pupils reach the required standard in the phonics screening check. This proportion is well above the national average. In Key Stage 2, pupils talk about how much they enjoy reading. They value the partnership between their home and school, understanding how reading records help them to improve their reading skills.
- Progress in writing is good across the school. This can be seen in pupils' literacy books, with effective support and challenge provided by the teachers and the pupils then responding appropriately. Such good progress is not always seen in writing in other subjects.
- In recent years, standards in mathematics have been above average. These standards are improving further with the school reporting that pupils left with high attainment in 2014. For example, the proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 or above is above average and increased from just over half the pupils in 2013, to just over two thirds of the pupils in 2014.

### **The early years provision** is good

- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. There is a clear system for identifying children's individual learning needs early in the school year, with staff adept at assessing the skills and talents the children bring with them when they start at the school.
- Leaders know how well different groups of children are making progress. All groups make good progress, including disabled children and those who have special educational needs. Staff ensure that children who are showing signs of not making at least good progress are supported to help them to do better. There is an effective partnership with parents, with parents commenting how much they value the school's interest in their views about their child's learning.
- Teaching is good. The staff team constantly think about how to make the teaching better. Leaders identify training needs and promptly implement these to ensure the benefits can be seen with the groups of children they are currently teaching. This results in children being ready to tackle the greater challenges in the Year 1 curriculum.
- There is effective provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This can be seen in the tolerance and respect shown by the children. Strong relationships between staff and children have a good impact on behaviour.
- Where staff questioning has best impact on children's learning, it probes their understanding, and staff expect them to come up with answers themselves. When children choose activities for themselves, there are a few occasions, however, when staff do not take the opportunity to discuss with them what it is they are learning. On these occasions, children's learning slows.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124140
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	448562

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	305
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Colin Carter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Wilmot
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 April 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 432487
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