

Wild Bank Community School

Demesne Drive, Stalybridge, Cheshire, SK15 2PG

Inspection dates 22–23 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 diligent leadership of the headteacher, supported by talented and conscientious senior leaders, ensures that all aspects of this school are improving. This has resulted in many pupils making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children have a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes, where the support provided by all staff ensures that children are ready for work in Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good and is improving. This is because staff have clear guidance and focus to help them improve their teaching. The quality of support for pupils by teaching assistants and extra teaching staff is of a high standard.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. They have a variety of leadership roles. Many pupils have shown significant improvements to their behaviour over time.
- The efficient governing body has an acute understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Knowledgeable governors ensure rigorous checks are made on the quality of teaching.
- Experienced subject leaders have a good understanding of their areas of responsibility and carefully check improvements regularly.
- From their starting points, pupils make good progress so that by the time they leave Year 6, the attainment of most pupils is average.
- The school provides a rich and interesting curriculum that ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress of some pupils slows when they work on their own without adult support.
- Pupils' progress in writing does not match that in reading and mathematics.
- The behaviour of a very small minority of pupils is not always managed as skilfully as it could be at all times.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons or parts of lessons, of which one was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and reviewed the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, pupils, parents, members of the governing body, teaching staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took into account the responses to the school's recent parental surveys and 23 responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire. Responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were too few to be accessed.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including plans for improvement, records of the school's checks on pupils' and teachers' performance, safeguarding and attendance documents, minutes of meetings of the governing body, and school policies.

Inspection team

Faheem Chishti, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Wild Bank Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is high.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also high.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is much smaller than that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The number of pupils on roll is increasing rapidly.
- Key Stage 2 comprises two classes, one containing pupils from Year 3 and Year 4, the other containing pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The early years provision comprises of a Reception class in which children attend fulltime and a Nursery class which children attend in the mornings only.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school works collaboratively with other local schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding overall, by:
 - ensuring when pupils are working on their own without adult support, they have clearly focussed tasks, especially during reading sessions
 - ensuring the marking of work is of a consistently high standard across all subjects.
- Provide pupils with greater opportunities to write at length in order to raise their achievement in writing so it matches that of mathematics and reading.
- Ensure that all staff have the necessary skills to manage the infrequent incidents of poor behaviour successfully, and that records of incidents are logged in an even more efficient and rigorous manner.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is led well by the headteacher, ably supported by talented and conscientious senior leaders. They have ensured that the school has continued to improve since the last inspection, resulting in good progress for most pupils.
- The school's actions to improve teaching have proved successful and have raised standards further. Having clear action plans and a sharp focus on what needs improving, leaders take firm steps to ensure all teachers improve their practice through effective training. Subject leaders work together to check on how well pupils are doing in their learning through formal observations, the scrutiny of pupils' books and through discussions with pupils. Teachers' targets and their performance-related pay awards are closely tied to strengths and weaknesses in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. A cycle of themes over four years ensures that topics are not repeated for pupils in this small school. Topics such as, 'Would being a Roman drive you round the bend?' ensures that pupils are motivated, interested and enjoy their learning in school. School visits to places of worship, as well as those related to topics, ensure that pupils have a good understanding of other cultures and religions so that they are prepared well for life in modern Britain. This, along with a good sense of justice, ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school has identified a preferred approach to assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels. This is particularly advanced for the assessment of mathematics.
- The primary school sports funding is used effectively. It is used largely to provide specialist coaches to develop lunchtime activities, as well as teach physical education lessons. Teachers observe sessions in order to improve their teaching skills in physical education. Extra activities, during lunchtime in particular, have led to many pupils' increased participation in sports.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well, for example, through whole-school assemblies, charitable events and pupils' involvement in the decision-making process in some matters relating to the school and its curriculum.
- Parents have a high regard for the school and most speak highly of staff and pupils. They often access resources at the school, such as help with finding public services and facilities. The school goes out of its way to support parents in these matters.
- The local authority values the school's contributions to cluster meetings and its collaborative work with other schools locally. The support offered to the school by the local authority has had a good impact on improving pupils' achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - A highly effective governing body, with skills in education and the public sector services, ensures the school meets all statutory requirements. Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet current requirements.
 - The governing body has the relevant skills to provide sufficient support and challenge to the school's leaders. Members carry out their statutory duties well, have up-to-date knowledge of pupils' achievements and have a good understanding of the key areas for improvement. Governors are aware of the progress made by different groups of pupils. They analyse school performance data effectively, including that which is publicly available and that which is internal to the school. Governors are aware of the quality of teaching and often involve themselves in curriculum walks alongside school leaders. They make good use of performance management to tackle aspects of weaker teaching. Named governors take an active role in checking the progress of pupils in their subjects.
 - Governors make appropriate use of information to plan the use of funding, such as the pupil premium and primary sports funding, which is starting to have an impact on standards, especially in Key Stage 1. The promotion of tolerance and respect for people of all faiths is effective and ensures pupils are appropriately prepared for life in modern Britain.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are well cared for by the school's staff.
- During lessons, most pupils work well with each other, discuss their ideas with their peers and are not afraid to discuss learning openly and freely with their teachers. Outside lessons, overall, pupils are well

behaved and are actively engaged in various activities, such as participation in sports or lunchtime clubs. The recent addition of the sports coach who provides lunchtime sporting activities has had a beneficial effect on pupils' behaviour.

- On occasion, often when not fully interested, some pupils become distracted or lose concentration. A small number of staff do not always have the appropriate skills to manage such behaviour appropriately; however, most other staff use extremely positive methods to engage and motivate pupils to behave well at all times. For example, the behaviour of a small number of Key Stage 2 pupils has significantly improved as a result of excellent action plans and targets set for them by teachers.
- Pupils have a range of leadership roles around the school, of which the class 'ambassador' is a particularly favoured and respected role which earns a special uniform. Homework and reading 'champions' also provide good support and encourage a love for learning through being helpful role models.
- The pastoral support offered by staff to parents is very much appreciated by parents. Plans are in place to increase this support so that it can provide additional resources to vulnerable pupils on a more regular basis.
- Although attendance is still below average, scrutiny of the school's data shows it improved significantly in 2014.
- A well attended breakfast club ensures that many children enjoy a healthy start to their school day.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents and staff believe the school keeps children safe. Pupils have a good awareness of different forms of bullying, including physical, emotional and cyber-bullying. They understand the dangers and risks of the internet. Regular assemblies to promote good behaviour and a deep understanding of bullying are common place. Any issues are largely well managed, and usually resolved quickly.
- Staff are extremely diligent in their awareness of risks posed by visitors to the school. Tight physical security, as well as thorough checks, ensure that pupils are kept safe at all times.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Work in some of last year's books, as well as the work completed this term, show that the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. This matches the school's own checks on the quality of teaching.
- Teachers plan lively, engaging and interesting lessons, so that pupils are motivated to learn and want to share their ideas with each other or with adults. Pupils are clear about the next steps in learning and have aspirational targets.
- Teachers use daily reading sessions very well to ensure pupils' reading skills develop effectively. Most pupils read to an adult in school regularly and have a wide selection of books to choose from, either in class or from the school library. Whole-class reading sessions are most effective when pupils have the support of teachers or other adults. When unsupported they do not always make the progress expected of them.
- The teaching of writing has improved, with extensive support and training provided by school leaders and by external providers. Pupils have wide-ranging opportunities for writing in a variety of subjects and in a range of topics.
- The marking of English and mathematics is constructive and provides clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work; however, marking in other subjects is not always of the same high standard.
- Strong improvements have been made in the teaching of mathematics since the previous inspection. Practical resources and problem-solving activities are used well to capture pupils' interest. Teachers carefully explain difficult concepts to support pupils' ability to cope with more challenging tasks.
- The quality of support provided by both teaching assistants and extra teachers employed to assist with teaching, is of a high standard. In the best examples, teaching assistants confidently teach groups alongside class teachers. For example, in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, the teaching assistant was able to start working with the most able pupils, whilst the class teacher gave extra support to others in the room. Part way through the lesson, they swapped groups and took over from each other's teaching, enabling pupils to progress at a rapid pace with quality support at all times.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Many children begin school with skills lower than those typical for their age, but leave Year 6 with attainment that is usually broadly average, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Due to the changes caused by the large increase in numbers of pupils joining the school, there has been a dip in performance at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In addition, the number of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs has increased. However, the unvalidated national test results for 2014 show significant improvements, so that standards are now broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Many Key Stage 2 pupils' starting points were lower than those of pupils currently in the early years and Key Stage 1. The fact that they achieved average attainment overall in the Year 6 2014 national tests shows that they made good progress from their starting points. Current school data and other inspection evidence indicate pupils' progress and attainment continues to improve significantly throughout the school.
- Reading skills are taught well using phonics (letters and sounds they make) and pupils use these skills successfully in their initial efforts in reading and writing. Pupils make good progress from their starting points in reading to reach overall average standards in the Year 1 screening check. Although attainment in reading has fluctuated slightly, it is typically broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics has improved. Although standards dropped in 2013 at the end of Key Stage 2, scrutiny of the school's own performance data and the unvalidated national test results indicate that standards have risen sharply in 2014. Pupils make good progress in mathematics with many making better than expected progress.
- Pupils have made, over time, slightly slower progress in writing than in other subjects. Pupils' attainment in writing was below average at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013. The school has taken prompt action to address this situation, and the impact of such action is now seen in pupils' higher achievement in this subject.
- The most able pupils achieve well. For example, in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, some pupils in Year 6 tackled quite difficult computations. Similarly, in a Key Stage 1 lesson, Year 1 pupils were able to get to grips with difficult word problems, normally associated with work in Year 2.
- In 2013, the numbers of pupils in Year 6 were so small that any comparison between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils with non-disadvantaged pupils in the school or nationally are statistically unreliable.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils in the school. This is because planning, teaching and additional support from adults is closely matched to their needs. Currently, their progress in writing is faster than that found in reading or mathematics.

The early years provision is good

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make a good start to their education. This is because of good leadership, high expectations and excellent training for staff.
- Many children begin in the Nursery class with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age, particularly in the areas of communication, language, personal and social skills. By the time children leave the Reception class, however, many have caught up so that they often attain standards that are expected of them, particularly in their physical development and understanding of the world around them. The weaker elements are found in reading, writing, number and shape, space and measures.
- High-quality resources, carefully-planned activities and a busy timetable ensure that children are fully involved from the moment they arrive in the morning. Early morning activities ensure children have high-quality small group support which results in children making good progress in their writing and speaking skills. All staff are enthusiastic with the result that children are excited and interested in learning.
- The early years leader has trained other adults very well in the use of electronic systems to assess children's progress. The extensive information gained is efficiently organised and allows practitioners to plan the next steps in learning for children throughout the setting. This information is checked by leaders within the setting as well as by the local authority to confirm its accuracy.
- The outdoor area is used very well to promote children's social and physical development. Resources are used extremely well with clear labels and routines set up for their use. The prominence of reading, writing or mathematics activities are not as prevalent as they are indoors.
- The behaviour and safety of children, both indoors and outdoors, is good. This is because of good adult

supervision but, more importantly, because children understand routines and procedures well.

- Parents are welcomed and often join in with their child's learning and have regular and ongoing discussions with their child's teachers.

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	106194
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	448897

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	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	J ApThomas
Headteacher	S Lees
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2009
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