

Havannah Primary School

Malhamdale Road, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 2DF

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- Pupils behave well and say they feel very safe in school because, ‘Everyone is really protective’, and their parents agree. This has helped raise attendance levels to above average.
- The way the school cares for every pupil is outstanding and is particularly effective in removing any obstacles to learning for vulnerable pupils and their families.
- The early years provision gives children a good start to learning.
- All groups of pupils achieve well, including those with disabilities or special needs and those supported through the pupil premium. When pupils leave the school, attainment is significantly above national averages in reading, and matches national averages in mathematics and writing.
- Good teaching captures and stimulates pupils’ imagination, for example the current ‘Heroes and Villains’ theme.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the rich curriculum that offers a very wide range of experiences.
- The school works extremely well with parents. Those who responded to questionnaires and talked to inspectors were very positive about everything the school offers.
- Leaders, staff and governors are totally committed to make the school even better. Their dedication has maintained standards, raised attendance and forged even stronger links with parents and the local community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching does not yet result in outstanding achievement. Pupils who find learning easy are not always fully challenged to extend their reasoning and understanding so they attain higher levels.
- Across the school, pupils do not progress as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in all classes and in small group sessions.
- They looked at pupils' books, observed pupils at break times and listened to pupils reading from Years 1 and 2.
- Inspectors met with pupils, parents, staff, school leaders and members of the governing body and held a telephone discussion with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors examined current achievement data, school systems to gather an accurate picture of pupil performance and how the quality of teaching and learning is checked and monitored.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils were scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at the 70 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), outcomes of the school's own recent survey of parental views and the 17 questionnaires returned by members of staff.
- A pre-arranged workshop entitled 'Heroes and Villains' for Key Stage 1 pupils and their parents took place on the first morning of the inspection.

Inspection team

Kathleen McArthur, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Pamela Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average sized primary school. Pupil numbers have increased considerably since the previous inspection.
- Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is similar to the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Recently, there have been a higher than usual number of staff changes. An acting deputy headteacher is leading the school in the headteacher's absence, and three teachers are on long-term temporary contracts.
- The school holds a number of awards including Investors in Pupils, the Inclusion Quality Mark, Artsmark Gold and Eco-schools Silver.
- A private pre-school provision shares the school site. This is inspected separately by Ofsted.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so that achievement becomes outstanding in all subjects by:
 - ensuring the best teaching skills and practice already found in school are shared and implemented by all staff
 - ensuring staff plan and provide even greater challenge for pupils who find learning easier in order to stretch their reasoning skills and deepen their knowledge and understanding so more attain higher levels.
- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - embedding and building on the recently introduced strategies to help pupils talk about, plan and organise their writing
 - further boosting pupils' knowledge of spelling, grammar and how to punctuate their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The acting deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher are a strong, effective partnership and staff morale is high. Working closely with staff, middle leaders and governors, they have a clear focus on improving the school with the highest priority given to providing equal opportunities for every pupil to do well. Consequently, all pupils make at least good progress, and leaders can demonstrate that progress is speeding up across the school.
- The school has an accurate view of what it does well and what needs to be improved. Careful analysis of how well pupils are doing results in appropriately focused action plans, which include, for example, the aim to improve pupils' writing skills. However, although beginning to show results, these actions have yet to become fully effective.
- Leaders regularly and rigorously check the quality of teaching and use the outcomes to provide professional development to raise staff skills and knowledge. Staff report that this is valuable, and know they are held fully to account for their pupils' progress. Leaders have yet to fully use the existing high quality practice in teaching demonstrated by senior leaders as a model for other staff.
- Middle leaders are increasingly effective. Observing teaching, checking data and scrutinising the work in pupils' books enables them to contribute fully to development planning, such as the focus on improving writing.
- Good leadership in the early years ensures children make a secure, happy start in school and progress well.
- School leaders use pupil premium well, seen in the way any gaps between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and their classmates are rapidly closing. Additional sports funding has been used effectively and pupils are enjoying the greater variety of sporting opportunities.
- Excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development fosters good relationships at all levels. Pupils assimilate traditional values, and become considerate, tolerant and responsible individuals. They fully understand the difference between right and wrong and gain a firm basis to mature as useful members of society. They respect different lifestyles and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The rich curriculum is carefully adapted to ensure every pupil can progress well in all subjects and acquire the literacy and numeracy skills they need for their future. Using these skills across the curriculum makes learning more purposeful, for example when pupils measure the area and perimeter of an ancient Egyptian sarcophagus in history or describe crops and foodstuffs in geography.
- The wide range of additional activities and after-school clubs are very popular and really enhance pupils' experiences. Examples include learning to play an instrument, gardening or working with professional sports coaches. From Year 1 onwards, every pupil is offered a residential visit which promotes their independence and social skills most effectively.
- Parents say they are kept well informed through regular newsletters, information evenings, the website and reports. Staff welcome parents and work hard to involve them, such as at Workshop Days that start each new termly topic.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet current statutory requirements and are effective. Training is up-to-date and staff understand child protection procedures.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good school, and has assisted during recent changes in leadership and staffing.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly committed and well informed, providing valuable skills and good links within the local community. They are pro-active, making full use of their good knowledge and understanding of data on the school's performance and the quality of teaching along with other school issues to challenge and question leaders to further improve the quality of teaching and raise standards. For example, they challenge leaders about what is being done to ensure more pupils exceed the progress expected of them.
 - Finances are carefully directed to support areas identified for improvement. Governors check that leaders use pupil premium funds to good effect. They hold leaders to account for successfully narrowing any small gaps between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils.
 - Governors understand how the results of staff performance management are used to provide professional development to improve teaching and leadership skills. This has successfully equipped staff to undertake senior leadership roles in school. Careful management ensures salary rewards are only given when staff help their pupils to learn well.

- Governors make sure leaders use the primary school sports funding effectively to provide additional physical activities, such as Activity Days and sports events with local schools, and for staff training. They know that staff will continue to build on and use this training and give pupils the basis for a healthy lifestyle.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Inspection observations and school records show this is typical over time, with no exclusions in recent years. Parents and staff agree with this positive picture of pupils' behaviour.
- Behaviour is usually good, say pupils, with just the odd 'falling out'. Staff, pupils and parents helped draw up the 3-step behaviour code. Pupils understand the need for rules and are very keen to gain a place on the 'rainbow' instead of being 'down on a cloud'. During a lunchtime football game, pupils were seen sensibly sorting out something that arose without needing adult intervention.
- Good relationships between staff and pupils underpin the good attitudes to learning seen in all lessons. Pupils show respect for others and are always helpful and polite to visitors, staff and their classmates.
- Excellent pastoral care features close working links between the school and external agencies and sensitive support for pupils who may be vulnerable and their families. Consequently, they can fully participate and progress as well as their classmates.
- Attendance is above the national average because the school rigorously checks and follows up any absence.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Records are meticulously maintained, staff are fully trained and risks are carefully assessed. The recent local authority audit commended the school's health and safety arrangements as exemplary. Governors fulfil their safeguarding duties very well, for example ensuring safe recruiting requirements are fully met.
- Pupils do not regard bullying as an issue and the very large majority of their parents agree. Pupils know they can talk to any of the staff if they have any problems and say they always listen and help. Anti-bullying week covers different forms of bullying, such as cyber-bullying and how to deal with it.
- Pupils learn and play in a clean, very safe environment. Outside, well-supervised activities keep them busy and active, or they can access places for quiet play.
- High quality care in the early years makes children feel safe and secure so they behave well and are eager to learn.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils told inspectors they are expected to work hard, and they enjoy lessons because 'the teachers always help us'. They behave well, are keen to learn, cooperate with their classmates and consequently progress well.
- Classrooms are bright and well organised with lots of prompts to help pupils, such as new words or mathematical symbols. Staff make full use of all resources to make learning interesting for pupils of all abilities. They manage their classes well and use the rewards system skilfully, so pupils are kept busy learning and make good progress.
- Good teaching ensures pupils progress rapidly in reading. Daily reading lessons from reception onwards helps pupils to become familiar with letters and their sounds; pupils make full use of this understanding when they meet unknown words. Older pupils have daily guided reading sessions where they discuss the text and learn to 'read between the lines' to deepen their understanding. They enjoy choosing from a wide range of books and other reading material.
- Mathematics is taught well. Staff training on questioning skills has helped them to ask questions that demand detailed answers. This stimulates pupils' reasoning and ideas and keeps them actively involved. This was particularly successful when pupils were challenged to calculate numbers that add up to 10, then 20 and on to 100, which prompted a lively response. However, pupils who find learning easy are not always given tasks that really stretch their thinking skills and enable them to attain higher.

- Teaching in writing has been less effective, so leaders acted swiftly to remedy this. Newly introduced strategies help pupils to discuss, plan and organise their writing and ensure they always use correct punctuation and spelling. School data show these strategies are becoming effective and standards in writing are rising throughout the school, but they have yet to be securely embedded.
- Good quality assessment strategies enable staff to keep a very close watch on pupil progress. They use this information to plan the next steps in learning and to provide additional support where needed. Leaders hold staff accountable for their pupils' progress at the half-termly reviews.
- Work is always marked, following the school's marking code and shows pupils what they have done well, and what needs to be improved. However, occasionally staff do not ensure pupils respond to their marking to ensure that pupils continue, for example, to remember to use full stops.
- The teaching assistants are highly committed to their roles and work closely with teachers to provide skilled support that moves learning on for all groups of pupils.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Progress is good for all groups of pupils in all key stages and school data show that progress is accelerating, due to leaders' aims and actions to raise standards for every pupil.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has gradually risen over time and now matches national averages in reading and mathematics but lags behind in writing.
- At Key Stage 2, attainment has varied over time but overall matches national averages when pupils leave at the end of Year 6. In 2014, the proportion attaining the expected level in reading and in spelling, punctuation and grammar was significantly above the national average. At the higher level of attainment, reading was also significantly above the national average and mathematics matched the national average. However, fewer pupils attained the higher level in writing or English, grammar, punctuation and spelling than pupils nationally.
- School data, the work in pupils' books and inspection evidence show that pupils currently in Year 6 are securely on course to continue the pattern of improved outcomes. In all classes, pupils present their work well and take good care of their books.
- School analysis shows that, in writing, pupils do not always organise their work well, spell words correctly or make good use of grammar and punctuation. Recently introduced strategies, such as spending time discussing their writing, are helping them to tackle this. These strategies are already having a positive impact but will take time to be fully effective.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. In Year 6 in 2014, their attainment was similar to other pupils in the year group in reading, about one term behind in mathematics and just over a term behind in writing. Compared to other pupils nationally, their attainment was over half a term ahead in reading, about one term behind in mathematics and just over two terms behind in writing and English grammar, spelling and punctuation. School data show that well focused support such as one-to-one sessions, a breakfast club and enrichment activities are rapidly closing any remaining gaps.
- The provision for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is well managed, ensuring they receive sensitive, carefully planned extra help and support with learning. Consequently, they progress as well as their classmates.
- The most able pupils receive extra challenges in lessons to stretch and extend their learning but occasionally, for some pupils, this challenge is not high enough. The local schools partnership provides additional activities for pupils with particular talents, such as 'Deep Learning' or specialist activities in music.
- Reading is taught well so pupils make excellent progress in acquiring reading skills, seen in the 2014 outcomes for Year 6 which were significantly above national averages. Pupils develop a love of reading, enjoy different authors and a variety of genres and have acquired the skills they need for future learning in all subjects by the time they leave.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the sounds and letters (phonics) check was just below the national figure. School data show this was not typical, and in 2015 the data show a rise in the proportion working above the level expected for their age.

Early years provision**is good**

- When children enter the early years, their skills vary from year to year but are usually below typical starting points, particularly in communication and language. Children make good and sometimes better progress and by the end of the Reception class, their skills match and in some cases exceed those typical for their age. They are well prepared for moving into Year 1.
- High quality care and concern for their well-being help children feel very secure and ready for learning. Behaviour is good. Children soon learn to take turns, make sure they put their name badge on the board and become increasingly independent in selecting activities.
- Good quality teaching ensures children are constantly involved in well-planned activities. Staff skilfully build on children's natural curiosity so they are keen to investigate everything on offer. Activities are well balanced between those chosen by the children, such as discussing and acting out stories in the 'fairy-tale' castle, and those led by staff, such as learning 'tricky words' ready for reading or playing different musical instruments.
- Staff place a strong focus on promoting oral skills ready for reading and writing and on developing children's knowledge of numbers.
- Children particularly enjoy working in the outdoor area. This has been extensively developed since the previous inspection with a large covered area so children can work outside whatever the weather, for example measuring how much water different sized containers hold in a mathematical activity.
- Very good working links with the on-site pre-school provision support and ease the transition into Reception class. Children from the pre-school share the outdoor area and have weekly story sessions with Reception children. Staff plan lessons together and early years staff make home visits.
- Good leadership in the early years ensures records are meticulously kept, and children's progress in all areas is checked frequently to ensure they are progressing well. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to contribute to their child's assessments by using the school system known as 'Proud Clouds'.

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	111044
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	453218

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Barrass
Headteacher	Martin O'Donnell
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2007
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