

Cheswardine Primary School

Glebe Close, Cheswardine, Market Drayton, TF9 2RU

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in reading, writing or mathematics.
- Teachers, when talking to individuals, do not make sure that other pupils have work to do.
- Teachers do not consistently correct errors in pupils' spelling punctuation and grammar.
- Leaders do not provide enough support for parents of less-able pupils in Year 2 who do not practise their reading outside of school.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement. Children in the early years do not make consistently good progress in reading, writing and number work.
- Leaders do not use information about pupils' progress to find out exactly why pupils make more progress in some classes and subjects than in others.
- Plans for improving teaching are not sharply focused on addressing the weaknesses in each class and subject.
- Governors do not use a wide enough range of information when evaluating the school's effectiveness.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving. Pupils now make good progress in some subjects in some classes.
- Leaders and governors have improved the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the last inspection.
- Leaders and governors have used the extra sports funding outstandingly well to improve pupils' skills and promote competitive sport.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and are exceptionally well mannered. Their behaviour outside of lessons is excellent.
- Leaders have successfully established a strong culture of respect for others. Pupils' understanding of British values is outstanding.
- The school has good procedures for keeping pupils safe.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, all of which were seen jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector listened to pupils reading and analysed the work in their books.
- Discussions were held with staff, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector considered the 11 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. He spoke with parents informally and also considered the views that parents expressed in a recent school questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school's work, including arrangements for keeping pupils safe. He looked at a number of documents, including: the school's own information on pupils' progress; the school's evaluation of its performance; records relating to attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

David Driscoll, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children attend the Reception class full time.
- All pupils are White British.
- An average proportion of pupils is disabled or has special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked-after children) is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- With the exception of the headteacher, all teachers have changed since the school was last inspected. Two of the three teachers, including the literacy manager, joined the school in September 2014.
- The school is supported by the headteacher of Woodfield Infants School, who is a National Leader of Education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all pupils make consistently good progress by ensuring that teachers:
 - keep other pupils engaged and learning when talking to individuals, including in the early years
 - point out errors in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar and make sure that pupils correct, and do not repeat, them.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - analysing data on pupils' progress in greater depth
 - using the results of such analyses to decide which lessons to observe in order to pinpoint which aspects of teaching are preventing pupils from making good progress
 - developing more sharply focused plans for improvement that are firmly rooted in the findings from lesson observations
 - ensuring that governors use an appropriately broad range of data when evaluating the school's performance in order to get to the detail of how well pupils are progressing in each subject and class.
- Provide greater encouragement and support for parents whose children do not read outside of school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although the school's leaders, including governors, have made improvements to teaching and achievement across the school, they are not yet getting to the heart of why pupils make more progress in some subjects and classes than in others.
- Leaders analyse data to gain a clear sense of the school's main strengths and weaknesses. However, the analyses do not go deep enough to identify the detail of which groups of pupils fall behind others in each class and subject.
- Leaders do not use the results of their analyses when deciding which lessons to observe in order to find out which aspects of teaching are most in need of improvement.
- Plans for improvement identify those aspects most in need of improvement, but only in broad terms. For example, the falling standards at Key Stage 2 have been tackled successfully. However, the priorities do not focus on, for example, why pupils in some classes still make slow progress in mathematics, while in others they make outstanding progress.
- Where weaknesses in teaching are identified, leaders take effective actions to secure improvement. Staff have received training and support in whole-school aspects of reading, writing and mathematics so pupils' progress has improved in each of these subjects. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved each year for the last three years.
- There is variability in the effectiveness of those with subject and other leadership responsibilities. The early years leadership requires improvement because the precise weaknesses in teaching are not being pinpointed. The new literacy manager has made a good start. She immediately identified inaccuracies in the assessment of pupils' skills in phonics (the sounds that letters make) that led to the low results in tests at the end of Year 1 in 2014. The manager has introduced new assessments that are far more rigorous and standards are now much improved as a result. She has plans for several workshops to help parents understand how to help their children learn, especially in order to encourage those parents whose children do not read outside of school.
- The headteacher has established a culture where good behaviour is the norm and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well. He ensures that all pupils are treated equally. The subjects that pupils are taught have a common theme of respect running through them; respect for life, the environment, other cultures and beliefs. As a consequence, the school promotes equal opportunities and pupils are taught to challenge discrimination and any lack of fair play.
- The curriculum prepares pupils well for life after school. Pupils' understanding of British values is outstanding and they are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. They discuss aspects of democracy, for example, with great maturity. Pupils in Year 3 do not just know how voting works, but also discuss the reasons behind why some people do not vote. Older pupils give persuasive arguments for why voting should not be compulsory, using their understanding of fair play and the rule of law to justify their views.
- The many school trips take pupils to some less obvious places across Britain and abroad. Pupils visit Slough, for example, to experience life in a commuter town, and countries such as the Czech Republic to learn about less well-known European cultures.
- Leaders and governors have used the extra sports funding exceptionally well. Previously, pupils had to be persuaded to represent the school in competitions. However, the funds have been used to both widen pupils' participation in sport and boost their enthusiasm. Now, far more pupils want to take part, and the school has area champions in several sports.
- Leaders have used the pupil premium funds effectively. The number of eligible pupils in the school is small, but they make similar progress to others. Standards vary from pupil to pupil; some are the highest attainers in their year group, while others have special educational needs and are lower attaining.

- Parents hold the school in good regard. They are particularly positive about how friendly and safe the school is. Leaders ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met in full, so pupils are safe.
- The local authority has an accurate evaluation of the school's performance. It has provided good support, especially through brokering the services of a National Leader of Education.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved since the last inspection but it still requires further improvement. Following the last inspection, governors commissioned an external review of their effectiveness. They implemented its recommendations and are now better informed and ask more searching questions of the headteacher. They have a good understanding of published performance data, such as that on the *Data Dashboard*. However, they do not use all of the data available to them when evaluating the school's performance.
 - Governors gain a clear picture of the main strengths and weaknesses in teaching through their visits to lessons and checking the work in pupils' books. They have a good understanding of how teachers' performance is managed, including what is done to reward the best teaching. Governors understand the procedures that would be necessary to tackle inadequate teaching.
 - Governors manage the school's finances well and have played a strong part in ensuring that the sports funding has been used to best effect.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Outside of lessons, pupils' behaviour is often impeccable. They are exceptionally well mannered towards each other and visitors. They hold doors open as a matter of course and quickly move to help anyone who may be struggling with a pile of books, for example.
- Pupils are proud of their school and show respect for the school's environment and resources. They keep to paths to avoid damaging flowerbeds, for example, and use the extensive play equipment in the way in which it was designed.
- Pupils' attendance has improved each year for the last three years and is now above average. Pupils are punctual to school. They quickly respond to the bell at the end of breaks, so no time is wasted in returning to lessons.
- Most pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils are very focused on their work. Some younger ones daydream a little in lessons or sometimes play with equipment instead of getting on with their work.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met. The record keeping for checks on staff and volunteers is exceptionally detailed and records are kept securely when adults leave in order that any questions about their service can be answered, should they arise.
- Pupils feel very safe at school. They are totally confident in staff to deal with any concerns that they may have. Incidents of name-calling, bullying or discriminatory behaviour are very rare indeed. There have been no exclusions for several years.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a wide range of situations, including by water and when using the internet. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to stay safe outside in their 'Forest School' lessons. However, they are sometimes a bit silly when playing with mud and sticks. They do not, for example, always think about what is happening to one end of a stick when they are holding the other.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching varies in quality from subject to subject and across classes. In one year group, for example, pupils make rapid progress in reading because the subject is taught so well. In mathematics, however, the same pupils make slow progress because they sometimes spend too long on a piece of work.
- There are clear signs that teaching and pupils' achievement are improving. Teaching is good for Year 6 writing and mathematics, for example. In other aspects, such as Year 3 reading, and writing in the early years, teaching is still not good, and pupils' achievement requires improvement.
- One of the key weaknesses in teaching where it is not good is teachers' failure to ensure that all pupils have work to do. Frequently, when pupils work in small groups with a teacher or teaching assistant in reading, writing and mathematics, the adult focuses on one pupil who is struggling. However, other pupils in the group simply have to wait because they have nothing to do, and so they lose valuable learning time.
- Teachers do not mark pupils' work well enough. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not corrected consistently and teachers do not remind pupils to check spellings for themselves. Pupils often spell words incorrectly, even when they are written on the whiteboard. Words that are specific to a subject, such as 'estimate', 'equal' and 'calculate' in mathematics, are often uncorrected when they are misspelt.
- When teachers do point out such errors, they do not always insist that pupils correct them, so pupils continue to make the same mistakes, such as always using a capital B at the start of 'because' regardless of its place in a sentence.
- There are some common strengths in teaching. Teachers have good expectations of behaviour and they command respect from pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons and want to do well for their teachers.
- Teachers generally make good use of assessment data to plan tasks that build on what pupils have previously learnt. Most of the tasks are of a suitable level of difficulty, and the most-able pupils are given work that deepens their understanding well in mathematics.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress as they move through the school. They make good progress in a subject in one year, but then make slower progress in the next.
- Children join the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. At the end of Reception, Year 2 and Year 6, their standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 had fallen since the last inspection and were below average in 2014. Leaders have taken steps to improve the teaching, and standards are rising again across the school. The standard of work in Year 6 currently is average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's accurate assessments show that pupils are on track to reach average standards by the end of the year.
- Standards in the phonics check for Year 1 pupils in 2014 were low. Teachers had not assessed pupils' skills accurately, so were unaware of their underachievement. The newly introduced assessments are much more rigorous and accurate. Pupils now make the progress expected of them in the early years and Year 1, and pupils are on track for average or better results this year. Almost all of the pupils who fell below the expected standard in Year 1 in 2014 are now on track to achieve it in Year 2.
- Lower-attaining pupils in Year 2 use their phonics knowledge well when sounding out unfamiliar words, such as 'difficult'. However, they lack confidence in their abilities to read, so use phonics to read even the simplest of words, such as 'was'. Reading books are well matched to such pupils' abilities, but few read at all outside of school so do not get enough practice in reading.

- There are no significant differences between the progress made by different groups. Most groups, such as those eligible for support through the pupil premium, are very small so the performance of one pupil can make a big difference to the group. The small number of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014 makes it impossible to report on their attainment without risk of identifying individuals. Overall, pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium make similar progress to others nationally and there is no consistent gap in their attainment when compared to other pupils, either in school or nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make steady progress. Teachers set them tasks that are appropriate to their ability and they make progress at the same rate as others.
- The most-able pupils make good progress in mathematics and in reading because they are set work that is appropriately challenging. In mathematics, for example, they are made to think deeply about mathematical concepts and how such concepts are used when tackling problems. Their progress in writing is slower. Despite writing in a creative way that demonstrates a good understanding of different vocabulary, pupils' work is let down by weak spelling, punctuation and grammar.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement because children do not make consistently good progress across the different areas of learning. They leave the Reception Year with average standards and ready to start Year 1.
- Progress in the key areas of reading, writing and number work requires improvement. Prior to this year, the assessment of children's early reading has not been accurate, so children have previously been moved on too quickly to new letters and sounds. Assessments are now more accurate and children are moved on at an appropriate pace.
- Teaching requires improvement. Teachers and teaching assistants often spend too long working with individuals in small groups, while other children have to wait. Sometimes, children rehearse a skill for too long before the teacher moves them on to the next task.
- Children make good progress in their physical development and understanding of the world. Teachers provide children with lots of 'real life' examples of what goes on around them. Consequently, children have a very good understanding of animals, plants and different environments for their age.
- Children's behaviour is consistently good. They quickly learn to share, listen and take turns. Children are very patient when having to wait for the teacher. Adults insist on good standards of behaviour and reinforce well the school's message of respect for others.
- Children feel safe and happy in school. They take care when moving equipment or resources around, and watch out for one another when riding bikes.
- Leadership and management require improvement. The early years leader has a clear overview of the strengths and weaknesses in children's achievement but has not pinpointed precisely what features of teaching bring about these differences.

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	123357
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	453524

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	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Otto Blank (Acting Chair)
Headteacher	Stuart King
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2013
Telephone number	01630 661233
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