

Adswood Primary School

Garners Lane, Adswood, Stockport, Cheshire, SK3 8PQ

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher is an inspirational leader who, together with the senior leadership team, enthuses staff with her vision and passionate drive for continual development and improvement.
- Strong respectful relationships are at the heart of the school's work. All staff show the same level of care and concern towards all pupils and their families. Pupils feel they are looked after very well.
- All adults throughout the school do an excellent job of enabling pupils to improve their confidence, resilience and view of themselves as successful learners.
- Teaching and the progress made by children in the early years is outstanding because of extremely effective leadership.
- Teaching is good. Well-planned and often exciting activities engage pupils in their learning.
- Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins the school's strengths.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They work hard to meet the high expectations set for them by all staff. Pupils enjoy being in school and say they feel extremely safe, secure and well cared for.
- Governors are extremely well informed about the school's work. They use their detailed knowledge to provide a strong level of challenge and support to the school's leadership.
- The school is held in very high regard by the local authority. The overwhelming majority of parents hold the school in high esteem.
- The school is extremely well placed to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, the work set is not hard enough to enable pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not always adjust their teaching well enough or re-shape activities to ensure that pupils receive sufficient challenge throughout lessons to enable them to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving activities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons. In addition, they made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read. They also gathered other evidence relating to the quality of teaching over time.
- Inspectors observed three lessons jointly with the headteacher and two with the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and senior and middle leaders. They also met with five governors and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 32 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, the discussions with parents who brought their children to school and of the 23 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and scrutinised the work in pupils' books, the school's own data on pupils' current progress, improvement plans, planning and monitoring information and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors also reviewed records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

Anthony Kingston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Frances Farnorth

Additional Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Adswood is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There have been many changes in staffing since the time of the previous inspection, including the leader of the early years unit and the appointment of three newly-qualified teachers in September 2014.
- The school provides training and support for other schools in the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for support through the pupil premium, is more than twice national average. The pupil premium is additional funding that the school receives for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are in the care of the local authority.
- Virtually all pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school other than at the usual time is well-above average.
- Children attend part-time in the nursery in the morning or afternoon and full-time in the Reception class.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and increase pupils' progress further by ensuring that:
 - work is always hard enough to enable pupils to reach the highest possible standards in reading, writing and mathematics
 - teachers regularly check learning in lessons and adjust activities so that pupils are continuously challenged and can move onto the next steps in learning more quickly
 - pupils are provided with more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving activities.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leadership is outstanding because leaders work extremely hard and successfully to create an exceptionally strong climate for learning, which makes a significant contribution to meeting pupils' needs academically and personally.
- The headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, provides inspirational leadership. She leads the school with passion and energy, relentless in her drive to ensure the highest levels of attainment and progress for pupils. Her ambitious vision is shared by senior leaders, governors and staff, who constantly challenge themselves to improve the school's provision for learning.
- The provision and outcomes of the early years have improved since the time of the previous inspection.
- The wholly positive responses to the staff questionnaire show that staff fully support the headteacher. This was exemplified by one member of staff who said, 'Adswood is the best place in the world to work. Being a member of staff here is not just a job but a way of life.' This enthusiasm from all staff has helped to create an extremely positive ethos and culture within the school. As a result pupils' progress is increasing rapidly, standards are rising and pupils learn to manage their behaviour extremely well.
- Leaders manage staff performance extremely well. They check the quality of teaching very carefully and give staff challenging targets that reflect the school's high expectations. Leaders give staff, including new staff and newly qualified teachers, very good support towards meeting these targets. As a result, teaching and standards are improving rapidly.
- Teachers feel extremely well supported by the headteacher and senior leaders and welcome feedback about their performance in lessons. Feedback is sharp and focused. Targets are set and training and support are given to ensure that they are met. This process has played a significant role in current rapid improvements in teaching, progress and standards.
- Middle leaders are effective. They contribute to the monitoring of teaching and regularly check on progress shown in pupils' books, as well as half-termly assessments and pupil progress meetings. They have helped to make sure that staff have a good knowledge of their subjects, thereby ensuring that the school has been prepared well for the implementation of the new National Curriculum.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new system of assessing pupils' achievement in line with the new National Curriculum's higher expectations. They use this new approach well to meet individual pupils' needs.
- The local authority has a very strong partnership with the school. The school welcomes the monitoring of its provision and outcomes by the local authority. The school is highly respected by the local authority and plays an important role in providing training and support for other schools.
- The school checks that all pupils have equality of opportunity to succeed. The needs of all groups of pupils, especially those who have special educational needs and those who join the school mid-year are identified promptly and well targeted support is provided where it is most needed.
- The curriculum is carefully planned to meet pupils' interests and provides them with many memorable experiences. This is reflected in the vibrant displays of pupils' work in classrooms, corridors and communal areas of the school. They show the richness of the curriculum, celebrate pupils' achievements and contribute to the extremely positive climate for learning in which pupils are eager to learn, work hard and try to do their very best.
- The whole staff team make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is underpinned by a caring and nurturing culture resulting in outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons, around the school and on the playground. Staff do not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- Safeguarding procedures are very secure and training is given a high priority. The school's procedures for the vetting of staff, governors and visitors are rigorous.
- The school promotes values, such as kindness, friendship, respect, determination and equality extremely well. For example, pupils cite Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King as some of their role-models. Pupils understand about democracy and the rule of law and fairness. They are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The pupil premium is spent very effectively. Each pupil is identified, their needs evaluated and funds used to provide additional support for individual and small groups of pupils. This ensures that disadvantaged pupils make at least similar progress to that of their classmates. Any remaining gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school and pupils nationally are closing rapidly.
- The primary school sports funding is spent extremely effectively on specialist coaching, training for staff and a wide range of additional sports. These include cross-country running, tennis, street dance and

sports hall athletics. Participation rates have increased considerably with 100% of pupils being engaged in at least one activity. The school is enjoying a growing success in a range of sports across the Stockport Borough. For example, the school has been crowned borough champions in athletics, dodgeball, rounders and basketball.

- The partnership between the school and parents is excellent. Parents hold the school in very high esteem saying that it is the cornerstone of the community. Virtually all parents who responded to Parent View said they would recommend the school to other parents.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have a passionate commitment to the school and pupils. They are fully involved in checking on teaching and behaviour and looking carefully at how well pupils are doing. They understand the use of data and know how the school compares to all schools nationally. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses very well. Consequently, they are able to provide strong challenge and excellent support.
- Governors provide a wide and relevant range of experience and expertise. The Chair of the Governing Body provides strong leadership. Together, governors strengthen the school leadership, sharing the ambition of all senior leaders to take the school forward.
- Governors regularly access training to ensure that they can fulfil their roles to the best of their abilities and check that the school meets its statutory requirements. They ensure the pupil premium is used appropriately to make a significant difference to individual pupils, resulting in good or better progress.
- Governors ensure that there is a clear link between staff performance and pay. Governors monitor all safeguarding procedures robustly to ensure they are effective and meet requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- There is an extremely welcoming, calm, purposeful atmosphere throughout the school. Staff have very high expectations of learning and behaviour and pupils respond exceptionally positively. They have excellent attitudes to learning and are happy, engaged and eager to please.
- Pupils love school, describing it as amazing, fantastic and brilliant. A common reason for this strongly held view is, as exemplified by one pupil, 'because we think our teachers are fantastic for everything they do for us. They make learning fun and give us opportunities to have experiences which we wouldn't have without them.'
- Pupils willingly take on responsibilities, such as helping to keep the school clean and tidy, taking on the role of sports leaders or acting as ambassadors when escorting visitors around the school. One pupil explained that it was important for everyone to take on responsibilities.
- The school staff, including the learning mentor, have rigorous procedures to monitor and improve pupils' attendance. Action is taken when poor patterns of attendance are noted. As a result, more pupils are now arriving to school on time. However, the high level of pupils who leave the school mid-year, whose parents do not register them at another school, results in attendance remaining below average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Parents and staff speak highly of the guidance and support to families and pupils who may be particularly vulnerable. Staff supervise pupils closely at all times.
- Pupils have excellent relationships with adults and show kindness and respect towards each other. They are courteous and polite to visitors and are confident to go to any member of staff if they feel worried about anything.
- Pupils say that they are not aware of any bullying in school. In discussions, pupils show that they have an excellent awareness of different types of bullying, including prejudiced-based, cyber-bullying and homophobic bullying. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to use the internet and social networking sites safely.
- Parents place a very high value on the school's work. All parents who met with inspectors and virtually all parents who responded to Parent View say their children feel very happy and safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching throughout the school is typically good with some that is outstanding. This was confirmed by school records, inspection evidence and the work in pupils' books. This good and better teaching enables pupils to learn well in all year groups.
- Teaching is characterised by high levels of enthusiasm, high expectations, thoughtful and probing questioning and excellent relationships. This approach to teaching has resulted in developing a climate in which pupils can learn and feel safe. Consequently, pupils are inspired to learn and are prepared to work hard because they are not afraid of making mistakes.
- Teachers provide pupils with work that is generally well matched to their needs. However, pupils' work is occasionally too easy. Sometimes teachers do not check learning sufficiently well during lessons to reshape activities so that the level of challenge consistently promotes good progress.
- The teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) sets pupils off enthusiastically on their journey to becoming avid readers. Particularly impressive in the teaching of reading, especially in the early stages, is the school's use of 'Sign and Shine' which harnesses the use of the signing of words to gain understanding. Pupils throughout the school are extremely competent in this approach.
- Reading is promoted well across the school. Pupils say they like reading and are given many opportunities to read in class. Pupils are able to describe with clarity how they would work out unfamiliar words using the different methods they have been taught.
- The teaching of writing is good throughout the school. Pupils write confidently and fluently, benefiting from the very effective use of frequent and well-planned opportunities to exchange ideas and talk through and plan how they intend to write. They skilfully apply their knowledge of punctuation and grammar to improve the quality of their stories.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to apply their skills, knowledge and understanding to problem solving activities both in mathematics and in other lessons so that real-life situations can enhance their mathematical understanding.
- Teaching assistants provide crucial support for learning. They routinely liaise very closely with teachers, assessing the effectiveness of their support to promote good standards of achievement. They are often responsible for specific group tuition, using an effective range of strategies to help pupils who have special educational needs or those who are in danger of falling behind. They are skilled and highly effective in giving pupils a boost to their learning. This is the reason why different groups of pupils achieve well.
- Pupils are given clear guidance by teachers and teaching assistants on how to move their learning on. This high quality guidance includes the continuous assessment of work by staff, explicit verbal feedback to pupils on how to improve their work and the setting and sharing of targets.
- The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View or spoke with inspectors believe their children are taught well, make good progress and are set appropriate homework for their age.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Although pupils make good progress from their starting points at the beginning of Key Stage 1, standards in 2014 were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing by the end of Year 2. This was largely due to the high proportion of pupils who entered Key Stage 1 with standards below those expected and the relatively high proportion of pupils who entered the school late in Year 1 and Year 2.
- In 2014, the standards reached by pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 were well below average in mathematics, average in writing and English grammar, punctuation and spelling. The weak results in mathematics reflected the composition of the cohort, especially the proportion of pupils who joined the school throughout Key Stage 2. The impact of this was on the proportion of pupils who reached the higher Level 5. Nevertheless, the proportion of pupils who made expected and better-than-expected progress was slightly above average in reading and writing, although below average in mathematics.
- Inspection evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work, observations of learning in lessons and school performance data on the progress made by each year group show that pupils who are currently in Key Stage 2 are making good or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, standards are rising and most pupils in Year 6 are working at a similar level to the national average or better.
- The teaching of phonics is enabling younger pupils to tackle new and unfamiliar words with greater confidence.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy reading. They make good progress but, because of their low starting points, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected level in the 2014 Year 1 phonics check was below

average. By the end of Year 2, however, the proportion reaching the expected level was close to average.

- Promoting strong reading skills is a priority throughout the school. For example, as pupils move through the school they are encouraged to read widely and often. This results in instilling in pupils a love of reading. This was exemplified by a group of Year 6 pupils who agreed that, 'books let you use your imagination and feel the emotions of the characters. You can become so involved that time just vanishes.' They have well-developed skills to gain meaning from the books they read and relish opportunities to discuss the underlying ethical and moral issues in books such as *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins.
- Pupils' writing is helped by the emphasis that is given to reading which boosts the range of words they understand and can use in their writing. Pupils are encouraged to talk and explain their ideas in lessons. The success of these strategies is increasingly reflected throughout pupils' writing, enhancing the fluency and meaning of what they write.
- Pupils are competent mathematicians. They possess well-developed numeracy skills. However, opportunities are too few for pupils to further develop their skills by applying them to challenging, problem solving activities.
- Throughout Key Stage 2, the most able pupils make good progress. This is reflected in the much higher proportion of pupils who at Key Stage 2 reach the higher Level 5 than the proportion who reached the higher Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1. Inspection evidence supports the school's data which shows that the most able pupils are continuing to make good progress in all year groups.
- In 2014, the standards reached by disadvantaged pupils were in line with all pupils nationally in writing, slightly below in reading and three terms behind in mathematics. These standards are reflected in the progress they made. For example, progress was well above average for all pupils nationally in writing, above average in reading and below average in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils reached standards one term ahead of their classmates in writing, half a term ahead in reading but two terms behind in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress because the teaching and support they receive meets their particular needs.
- The school checks that all pupils have equality of opportunity to succeed. Current data and inspection evidence show that disadvantaged pupils throughout the school are continuing to make rapid progress and reach standards at least similar to those of their classmates. This demonstrates the school's success in narrowing the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils nationally.
- Pupils' well-developed skills in reading, writing and mathematics ensure they are well prepared for their future learning in secondary school.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- The overwhelming majority of children start school with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age in all areas of learning, but especially in speech, language, reading, writing and shape, space and measure.
- In 2014, although the proportion of children who reached a good level of development was well below average, their progress was good. However, changes to provision in the early years have brought about rapid improvements in children's progress and as a result, current school data and inspection evidence show that the proportion of children in line to reach a good level of development compares favourably with the national average. This reflects outstanding progress. Children are now well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- Indoor and outdoor learning areas are vibrant, inviting and capture children's imaginations. Resources are easily accessible to the children and are well chosen to excite interest.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding and provides a secure base for future learning throughout the rest of the school. Assessments are used well to plan future, exciting learning experiences that match children's needs and interests. This promotes rapid gains in their learning.
- Teaching assistants are an invaluable resource and skilfully support and nurture children to develop skills in all areas of learning. They work as a strong team to plan learning, to check children's progress and to record small steps of development.
- Children gain much confidence when they choose from the exciting range of activities for themselves. In small groups led by teachers, they successfully acquire skills such as a knowledge of phonics.
- Behaviour is excellent in the early years. Children are clearly happy and content. They thrive on the high expectations of how they should behave. These are consistently and sensitively communicated to them by all adults. They take turns when playing games, share toys and resources and cooperate and collaborate

extremely well with each other.

- The early years is exceptionally well led and managed ensuring adults constantly ask questions, while at the same time noting the children's emerging strengths and areas for further development. The leadership and management of teaching ensure the effective planning of additional and supplementary activities and resources which motivate and engage all learners.
- Early years staff have excellent relationships with parents and with other pre-school providers. They work with them extremely well to ensure that children are ready to enter school. All parents who spoke with inspectors praised the work of all adults in the early years.

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	106024
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	461585

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	304
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Hawkins
Headteacher	Kath Conwell
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2011
Telephone number	0161 4835003
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