

Tarporley CofE Primary School

Park Road, Tarporley, Cheshire, CW6 0AN

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Up until the end of the last academic year, the school had experienced a long period of declining standards.
- The proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 has not been high enough over a sustained period of time. Consequently, standards are not yet high enough.
- Not all pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium make good enough progress in English and mathematics. Some pupils with special educational needs, especially those in Key Stage 2, are still behind where they should be.
- There is still a legacy of underachievement present in some years, for example in Year 4 in writing and mathematics and in Year 3 in reading.
- Not all pupils are sure of their targets, or what they need to do to improve their learning.
- More-able pupils are not always challenged enough and some pupils are not confident enough learning on their own.
- The best practice in marking pupils' work is yet to be shared and implemented across the whole school and in all subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is led by a highly motivated new headteacher who is working tirelessly to ensure that standards for all pupils are rising.
- Together with a reformed strong senior leadership team, the support of the overwhelming majority of teachers, parents and the local authority, the headteacher has transformed the school and greatly improved the quality of teaching.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They are immensely proud of their school and behave well. They, and all other members of the school community, talk about the school being on a journey and say that they are very excited about improvements made over the last year.
- The governing body is effective with a strong presence in school. Governors are conversant with how the school needs to further improve and are challenging yet supportive.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons as well as small group activities, parts of lessons and the teaching of phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they make). One joint observation took place with the headteacher, and two whole-school assemblies were observed.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 1, 2, 4, and 5 and held discussions with two groups of pupils from across the school.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised during lessons and separately with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors took account of 57 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own surveys of parents' views. Questionnaires completed by 25 members of staff were taken into account, as well as two letters from parents.
- A meeting took place with the local authority School Improvement Advisor.
- Two meetings were held with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Various school documents were examined. These included, monitoring records of the quality of teaching, external school evaluation reports, development plans, school data on pupils' progress, minutes of the governing body meetings, records of pupils' attendance, behaviour records and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Maureen Coleman	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average, and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Two pupils are educated part time at special schools, one at Dorin Park and the other at Hebden Green.
- The school offers pre-school and after-school services, both of which are managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection the school has undergone significant staffing changes, including the appointment of two different headteachers. The current headteacher has been in post for just over an academic year. Several teachers and teaching assistants have left the school and a number of new staff have been appointed, including two newly qualified teachers. The senior leadership team has been restructured and a new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed.
- At the request of the new headteacher, the local authority carried out a full school review in November 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding, in order that all pupils reach the higher standards in English and mathematics of which they are capable, by:
 - ensuring pupils who have special educational needs, especially at Key Stage 2, and those for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium, quickly catch up with their peers and gaps in their learning are filled
 - making sure that the underachievement identified in Year 3 in reading and Year 4 in writing and mathematics is swiftly eradicated
 - ensuring that all lessons move along at a swift pace and engage and challenge all learners, particularly the more able
 - making sure that all pupils in Key Stage 1 know their targets and what they need to do in order to improve their learning
 - sharing the best practice in marking pupils' work in English and mathematics across all year groups and subjects
 - ensuring that all pupils, especially in Years 3 and 4, are confident learning on their own and finding things out for themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because taking into account their starting points, the proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected progress has not been high enough over a sustained period of time and standards in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are not yet high enough.
- Most children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities which are above those expected for their age. They make good progress because adults have very high expectations of them and provide a very stimulating environment.
- The school has identified that some pupils with special educational needs, especially those in Key Stage 2, are still catching up with their peers. Specialist training and good planning are now helping these pupils to make better progress, particularly in writing, but there is still some way to go. Some pupils with special educational needs are making accelerated progress in reading. Those pupils with complex learning needs who also attend other schools make good progress in all subjects.
- Not all of the few pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals make good enough progress in English and mathematics. However, small group teaching activities are helping to ensure that their achievement is now improving and that they are quickly catching up with their non-free school meals classmates. They are still up to a term behind in English and mathematics.
- There is still a legacy of underachievement present in some years, for example in Year 4 in writing and mathematics and in Year 3 in reading. However, better achievement is now seen in lessons and is confirmed by the work seen in pupils' books.
- In Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils are now making expected progress in all subjects, with a significant proportion making better than expected progress in writing. Current standards in Year 6 are above average, with an increased proportion of pupils than in previous years working at the higher levels in mathematics. This is due to highly effective small group and one-to-one support for pupils with a range of abilities. There are currently more pupils reaching the higher levels in reading in Year 6 than in previous years.
- Up until the last academic year progress had slowed through Key Stage 1, with too few pupils attaining the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. However, due to good quality teaching, pupils are now making better progress in all subjects.
- All teachers now take responsibility for tracking the progress of all pupils. As a result, they are able to effectively target support where it is most needed.
- The school does all it can to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. It has effectively reduced previous gaps that existed between the achievement of boys and girls in both Key Stage 1 and 2 and is working hard to reduce other gaps in learning for special educational needs pupils and those receiving the pupil premium.
- The school has very few children from minority ethnic groups, and few who speak English as an additional language. These pupils are achieving at the same rate as their peers.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained to deliver phonics (the sounds that letters make). Pupils who read for inspectors said that they enjoyed reading a broad range of authors and genres. Less-able pupils showed an impressive ability to break-up, sound-out and read unfamiliar words.
- Focused support and effective use of performance data to pinpoint weaker areas are enabling the school to target small group activities to improve reading where it is most needed, particularly in Year 3.

The quality of teaching is good

- All teaching observed during the inspection was at least good, with some that was outstanding. A detailed examination of books in all year groups confirmed that teaching has improved and is now typically good over time.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very strong. Teachers are well-trained and very conscientious. As a result, they are having a significant impact on raising levels of achievement, although there is still work to do. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, but not all planning takes account of the needs of more-able pupils.
- In an outstanding Year 1 mathematics lesson pupils skilfully worked by themselves, drawing pictograms plotting their favourite ice-cream flavours. Later they were able to assess how well they thought they had done. However, not all pupils are as independent, and some pupils in Year 3 and 4 rely too heavily on their teachers instead of thinking through questions and solving problems for themselves.
- The best lessons move along at a swift pace, they are engaging and ensure that pupils are constantly alert and making good progress. However, the pace of some lessons slows when teachers unnecessarily explain the tasks planned for different groups to the whole class. This means that some pupils sit through explanations they do not need to.
- In a highly charged Year 5 English lesson pupils took great pleasure in thinking about questions to ask an alien. The class teacher and teaching assistant were careful to ensure that pupils developed their own ideas and were fully engaged in discussions.
- Teachers are quick to celebrate, praise and display pupils' work as soon as possible. During the inspection, outstanding work in mathematics that lower-attaining pupils had produced on symmetry was displayed immediately.
- The school has worked hard to ensure that marking is a strong feature of teachers' practice. When discussing their learning, one Key Stage 2 pupil commented, 'things have changed, we can have a good conversation with teachers in our books, and talk to them after lessons'.
- A scrutiny of pupils' work confirmed that older pupils are adept at commenting in books, assessing their work and that of their classmates. However, such good practice in English and mathematics is less evident in other subjects and is not yet consistently shared across the school.
- The majority of pupils, especially those in Key Stage 2 can say how well they are doing, and what they need to do in order to improve their learning further. Younger pupils are less secure in this area and their understanding of how to improve is still developing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attendance is above average, they are punctual, well behaved and they enjoy learning. Pupils say that the things they like most about their school are their friends and teachers, and that they particularly enjoy residential opportunities and trips to Pекforton and Beeston Castle.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good most of the time, and that incidents of bullying are very rare. The school's behaviour log confirms that behaviour is typically good over time and that there have been no exclusions of any type for a number of years.
- The overwhelming majority of parents who completed the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) strongly agree that behaviour is good, as do all staff.
- All pupils say that they feel safe at school. Younger pupils say that the school's new locks and adults make them feel especially safe. All pupils are appreciative of their new play area, allotment, orchard, pond and the school field and grounds generally.
- Older pupils say that there are now new ways in which they are praised for their hard work. They like getting stickers for good work, house points, competing for the star of the week and they enjoy celebration assemblies.

- Pupils enjoy collective worship and relish any opportunity to celebrate the achievements of their fellow classmates. This was evident in a whole-school assembly where the Key Stage 2 drama group gave an outstanding performance on the theme of worrying, to a captivated audience.
- Behaviour in lessons is good and sometimes outstanding. The vast majority of pupils have a very positive attitude towards their learning. However, not all pupils take the time to think things through for themselves and can at times become distracted.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe while using the internet, and know not to disclose personal information to strangers. Pupils say that their teachers and visitors talk to them about safe and unsafe situations.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of different forms of discrimination. They say that there would be 'very serious consequences' if anyone were to be discriminated against on the basis of race or colour and that it would never happen in school because 'we are Christian and welcoming.'

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is very determined and highly ambitious. Her aim is to ensure that all pupils achieve to the best of their ability and that the school continuously improves. Together with a strong senior leadership team she has transformed the school since her arrival.
- Significant improvements have been made over the last year following a very turbulent period in the school's history.
- Because of her concern about standards and the quality of teaching, the headteacher enlisted the support of the local authority in November 2012 and requested a full school review. This confirmed the headteacher's view that pupils had been underachieving over a long period of time before her arrival.
- With the full backing of governors and the local authority, the headteacher is successfully working closely with all teachers to improve their performance.
- As a result, all teaching is now at least good. The overwhelming majority of staff are very supportive of the headteacher and the reformed senior leadership team. They are appreciative of the professional development that they have been offered and of the opportunities that they have had to work with outstanding schools. Middle managers who spoke to inspectors explained that they had identified that few pupils were confident enough to work independently. They were able to share with their colleagues good practice that they had seen in outstanding schools. Teachers and teaching assistants are in the process of applying this in their classes, realising it is working better in some classes than others.
- The senior leadership team regularly assesses the effectiveness of teachers and teaching assistants and sets them challenging targets. As a result, all staff work together and are clear about what they need to do to ensure that all pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning.
- Pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced by the curriculum which provides many memorable experiences. The senior leadership team has ensured that all teachers focus on the development of numeracy and literacy skills, while allowing pupils opportunities to say what they enjoy learning most.
- The school successfully extends pupils' knowledge and understanding of different cultures by linking with a number of different schools with very different pupil profiles in other parts of the region, and through the links that it has established with a school in Uganda.
- The school works in close partnership with the local authority in a number of areas. This has resulted in improvements to teaching, pupils' attitudes to learning and in ensuring good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school's safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are fully committed to working with the headteacher, staff and parents in ensuring

that the school's 'journey' to good and outstanding is laid out as clearly as possible. From their recent planning day with senior leaders, they know exactly what they need to do to ensure that all pupils are successful. Governors know that the quality of teaching is good, because as part of their governor-of-the-month initiative they come into school to observe teaching. Teacher's accountability is very clearly defined and pay awards are tightly linked to very succinct targets.

- Governors receive regular progress reports from the headteacher, and they value the support that the school has received from the local authority and ensure that they are up to date with their training. Governors know that the school uses pupil premium funding to ensure that those pupils entitled are able to take part in all aspects of school life. They are aware that the small-group teaching activities that these pupils benefit from are raising their levels of attainment, while understanding that there are still some gaps in learning that need filling.
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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	111260
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	412919

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gill Tyler
Headteacher	Kerry Forrester
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2010
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