

Whitehill Primary School

Whitehill Street West, Heaton Norris, Stockport, Cheshire SK4 1PB

Inspection dates

18–19 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not yet secured consistently good teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils are not making good progress in all year groups.
- Some teachers do not challenge the most able pupils to extend their learning and deepen their thinking.
- In some year groups and subjects, boys' achievement lags behind that of girls.
- Teaching does not consistently interest and engage pupils. As a result, pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- The roles of some middle leaders are not fully established. Subject leaders have not had enough impact on improving the quality of teaching and raising standards.
- Not all staff have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- Attendance is below the national average and the rate of persistent absence is higher than the national average.
- Systems to check pupils' progress do not ensure that leaders have the most accurate view of the amount of progress made.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently established leadership team has high expectations and has already brought about improvements to teaching and behaviour. Pupils are now making faster progress.
- Children in the early years make good progress and are well prepared to transfer to Year 1.
- Governors have a good knowledge of the school's key priorities and provide effective support and challenge to the headteacher.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching for all pupils, by:
 - ensuring that teachers set more challenging tasks for all pupils, particularly the most able
 - ensuring that teachers' questioning consistently extends pupils' learning and deepens their understanding
 - focusing on activities that engage pupils, particularly boys, more effectively in learning so that all pupils make good progress and gaps in attainment and progress between boys and girls are closed
 - making sure that expectations for pupils' behaviour are always high.

- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management, by:
 - improving the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' work
 - developing the roles of subject leaders so that they play a bigger part in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in their subjects
 - redoubling efforts to work with pupils' families to improve attendance and reduce rates of persistent absence, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not ensured that the quality of teaching, behaviour and pupils' achievement are consistently good throughout the school. This is partly because the systems and initiatives put in place by the recently appointed headteacher and the leadership team have not had sufficient time to have an impact on pupils' learning.
- Better checks by leaders on the quality of teaching and rigorous training for teachers have ensured that the quality of teaching, particularly of mathematics, has improved. As a result, pupils in some year groups are making good progress. This good progress is not, however, consistent in all year groups or across subjects.
- Leaders have a generally accurate knowledge of the school and have identified the main priorities for improvement. Assessment systems are developing and do not always give a clear picture of the progress of pupils in each year group. This means that leaders and governors do not have a fully accurate view of pupils' current progress throughout the school.
- Most subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) are new to their roles and are becoming established in them. Their involvement in checks on the quality of teaching and progress in their subjects is still limited. This means that they have not been as effective as they should be in improving the quality of teaching and raising standards.
- The recently appointed headteacher and the deputy headteacher have a clear vision and determined drive for improvement and for high-quality teaching and learning. This vision is supported by the class teachers, most of whom joined the school at the same time as the headteacher in September 2015.
- The curriculum provides a broad and interesting range of activities for pupils. Pupils' learning is enriched through a wide variety of 'Friday academy' activities such as a film club, cross-country running and learning Japanese. They also benefit from after-school clubs, for example in creative writing, mathematics, cheerleading and rounders.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well catered for and staff promote British values well. Pupils learn about democracy through elections to the school council. They learn to show tolerance and to respect the beliefs of others through learning about a range of faiths.
- The majority of parents express positive views of the school. Many parents who spoke with inspectors praised the improvements to the school, particularly in communication and in the safety of the premises since the arrival of the new headteacher.
- The local authority has provided considerable support to the school since the last inspection. This is reducing now, owing to the confidence that the local authority has in the current school leaders to bring about further improvement.
- Pupil premium funding is generally well spent. Additional staff help pupils with their learning. As a result, gaps are closing between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils. Leaders have also allocated funds to provide staffing to tackle below-average attendance and above-average persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils. This work is beginning to have an impact but is in the early stages of development.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is used well to employ a specialist coach and purchase additional resources. More pupils have participated in competitive sports as a result of this investment.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are passionate about the school and committed to bringing about further improvements. Since the last inspection, they have developed their own skills and provided a good level of support and challenge to the headteacher. Governors know the school and are aware of the areas in which it needs to improve further.
 - Governors have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching. They ensure that pay increases are only awarded where teaching is good and that any underperformance is identified and acted on to improve pupils' learning.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school works well with parents and external agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Staff have up-to-date training and are vigilant over pupils' safety. Leaders have ensured that the safety of the school site has improved since the last inspection.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because, although the quality of teaching and learning is improving, it is not consistently good in all year groups and subjects.
- Teachers do not always provide activities that extend pupils' learning sufficiently or ask questions that challenge and deepen pupils' thinking. For example, pupils of widely differing abilities are sometimes given the same activity to complete. Consequently, pupils are not always fully engaged in their learning, as the task is too easy for some. This affects the progress pupils make, and particularly slows the progress of the most able pupils.
- Expectations for pupils' good behaviour are not always high enough or reinforced well. For example, pupils continue to talk when the teacher is talking and do not always respond to the school's policy of awarding 'dojos' for good behaviour. At these times, pupils' learning slows as they lose focus on the task.
- At times, staff do not use what they know about pupils' interests and ways of learning to provide activities which interest and engage pupils. This means that pupils quickly lose focus on their learning. For example, some Year 2 pupils were not fully engaged in a geography lesson. As a result, their behaviour declined and a small minority of pupils interrupted the learning of others.
- Staff have received training in teaching mathematics and this is reflected in their increased confidence in teaching. Rates of progress have increased but are not yet consistently good across all year groups.
- Some staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils in Year 4 focused well on a mathematics activity where they were challenged to find lines of symmetry in a range of two-dimensional shapes. They responded well to a further challenge to recognise and explain a pattern between the number of equal sides and the number of lines of symmetry.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is generally well taught. Sessions are carefully matched to pupils' skill levels and staff question them appropriately to build on and reinforce learning. As a result, pupils in key stage 1 and children in the early years show growing confidence in identifying letter sounds and applying them in their reading and spelling.
- Teachers give feedback to pupils so that they know how to improve their work. They apply the school's marking policy consistently well in English and mathematics so that pupils know about their next steps and complete tasks to reinforce their learning.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support small groups and individual pupils. They work well with disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability to promote their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are keen and confident to talk about their school. They typically comment that school is 'very friendly and like a family'. This is seen in the positive relationships that exist between staff and pupils, and between pupils.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. As a result, they show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. They say that they feel safe in school and that there is always an adult to turn to if they have any concerns.
- Behaviour records indicate that bullying is rare. Pupils say that bullying seldom happens and, if it does, it is dealt with well by staff. They understand what bullying is and the range of different forms it can take.
- Pupils show pride in their school and enjoy their responsibilities as school councillors, monitors, and eco-councillors. They show respect for each other's viewpoints.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils do not consistently settle quickly to their tasks or listen carefully to their teachers, teaching assistants and each other. At times, where teaching does not engage pupils sufficiently, or the expectations of staff are not high enough, pupils drift into off-task behaviour such as fidgeting, talking or not listening to the teacher.

- Attendance is below average but is showing some sign of improvement as a result of the school's recent efforts to improve it. Persistent absence is also higher than the national average, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. The school is working hard with families to reduce absence.
- Pupils generally behave well around the school, at breaks and at lunchtimes. Pupils report that behaviour has improved since the arrival of the new headteacher. Parents say that the school is now a more orderly environment.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- The school's current pupils are now making faster progress than has been the case previously, but they are not yet making good progress in all year groups and subjects. Too few pupils are making more than the expected progress. This is because the quality of teaching is inconsistent.
- The most able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable because teaching lacks challenge. Although improving now, pupils' attainment at the end of key stages 1 and 2 was below average in 2014 and 2015.
- In 2015, boys performed notably less well than girls in reading, writing and mathematics. School leaders have taken steps to tackle this issue and gaps have narrowed. However, in some year groups and subjects, outcomes for boys still lag behind those of girls.
- Lesson observations, checks on the work in pupils' books and analysis of the school's information about their progress show that most pupils are now making at least the expected progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. They are suitably prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Attainment is improving but remained below average at the end of key stage 2 in 2015. At the end of key stage 1, attainment improved to broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics from 2014.
- In Year 6 in 2015, the attainment and progress gaps narrowed for disadvantaged pupils. Current assessment information shows that disadvantaged pupils are making progress which is often better than others pupils in the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make similar progress to their peers.

Early years provision

is good

- Provision in the early years is good because it is well led and managed and teaching is good. As a result, children quickly gain new skills and knowledge in Nursery and Reception classes and are well prepared to begin Year 1. Children make good progress from starting points which are below those typical for their age.
- In 2015, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development rose to 75%, which was above the national average.
- Staff have created a stimulating indoor and outdoor environment in which to promote effective learning. Pupils engaged well in role play on the indoor 'pirate ship', made treasure maps, and happily wrote a message in a bottle. Staff question children well to develop their understanding of initial letter sounds.
- Children behave well, cooperating to play a word-matching game and sitting and listening well during sessions to develop their phonics skills.
- Children are familiar with the early years routines and show a strong sense of security in their surroundings. Arrangements to keep children safe are effective.
- Adults are skilled at developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. They question children well to encourage them to explain what they are doing and why they are doing it. Children told inspectors about what they will do on board the pirate ship.
- The early years leader checks children's progress closely and makes sure any gaps identified are swiftly closed. Where children's starting points are lower in any area, support is provided to ensure that they catch up. A recent focus on promoting children's reading, writing and understanding of the world has led to faster progress and raised attainment in these areas.
- Staff establish positive relationships with parents and encourage them to be involved in their children's learning. This contributes to children's good progress.

School details

Unique reference number	106084
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10012106

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Thompson
Headteacher	Steven Hall
Telephone number	0161 480 2142
Website	www.whitehill.stockport.sch.uk
Email address	admin@whitehill.stockport.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 February 2014

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is well above the national average. Pupil premium is the additional government funding used to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals or children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- In 2015, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school operates a breakfast club for pupils.
- Since the last inspection, there have been a large number of staff changes. In September 2015, the current headteacher took up post, along with six other new staff members.
- The school meets the requirements for publishing information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning throughout the school. Two observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the chair of the governing body and two other governors, the headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors also held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information produced by the school, including information on pupils' progress and attainment, behaviour and attendance, procedures for safeguarding and the school's own evaluation of its work. They considered reports to the governing body, minutes of their meetings and the school's plans for further improvement.
- Inspectors considered the 18 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the views of 13 parents who sent text messages to Ofsted. Inspectors also spoke with some parents as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors also took account of the 20 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire to consider.

Inspection team

Elaine White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Clare Nash

Ofsted Inspector

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