

Whaley Bridge Primary School

Buxton Road, Whaley Bridge, High Peak, Derbyshire SK23 7HX

Inspection dates

20–21 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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

- Although leaders are improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, it is not yet consistently good.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics in key stage 2 varies between year groups and too few pupils make consistently good progress.
- Curriculum planning for mathematics does not identify well enough how teachers will develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills in key stage 2.
- The learning activities that some teachers prepare for different groups do not meet their needs well enough. As a result, boys and the most able pupils do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils, especially boys, do not sustain their concentration in lessons when work does not challenge or motivate them.
- Pupils do not have a good enough understanding of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles, particularly in key stage 2.

The school has the following strengths

- Good leadership by school leaders and governors is strongly improving the quality of teaching and speeding up pupils' progress, particularly in writing.
- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors provide effective support and challenge to school leaders.
- Children make good progress from their starting points in the early years.
- This is an inclusive school. Pupils are proud of their school and say that they feel safe.
- Strong links have been established with parents and carers and outside agencies which help support pupils well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and hence pupils' learning and progress, especially in mathematics across key stage 2, by making sure that teachers consistently:
 - match learning tasks well to the range of abilities in the class so that overall, pupils make good progress, particularly the most able
 - ensure that work is sufficiently challenging and tasks are suitably engaging, particularly for boys
 - improve rates of pupils' progress from their different starting points in mathematics in key stage 2
 - give pupils enough opportunities to explain their reasoning and demonstrate their understanding in mathematics
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge and skills across different subjects.
- Strengthen curriculum planning for mathematics in key stage 2 so it identifies:
 - how investigative and problem-solving work will develop systematically
 - a range of opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding to help them think and reason mathematically.
- Improve pupils' understanding of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles in key stage 2 so that pupils are prepared effectively for life in modern Britain.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders are ambitious for all pupils in the school. Senior leaders have a strong determination and a relentless focus on improving progress for all pupils. They have high expectations of what pupils and staff should achieve. Staff abilities are recognised and developed well and weaker areas of teaching are tackled. As a result, the quality of teaching is now improving.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and a strong leadership team, sets realistic targets and key priorities for improvement. Leaders, including those responsible for subjects, check the effectiveness of what they do and introduce new approaches to aid improvement. For example, the teaching of mathematics has been reorganised and new approaches to teaching implemented. These changes are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment. For instance, Year 6 pupils enjoyed the challenge of solving a complex calculation set by a rap artist.
- Leaders have a track record of securing improvement. The leader of English has successfully improved outcomes in writing since the last inspection. Attention rightly focused on improving pupils' achievement in mathematics last year. Strategies for improvement have been successful in the early years and in key stage 1 but have yet to have full impact in key stage 2. This is partly because curriculum plans do not provide clear enough guidance for teachers about how to build on pupils' thinking and reasoning skills, and problem-solving activities from one year to the next.
- Leaders make sure that staff know how to improve their work and use a range of ways to check the quality of teaching. They monitor staff performance frequently and set targets for staff to work towards. Although the quality of teaching is improving quickly, it is not yet consistently good and leaders' work has not yet had a sufficiently positive impact on outcomes throughout the school, particularly in mathematics.
- Leaders provide opportunities for staff to develop their skills in line with the school's priorities. They enable staff to share expertise with each other and with teachers in other schools. Good support from the local authority helps the school to develop these links and to establish the new approaches to teaching. All staff who completed the questionnaire believe that the school has improved since the last inspection and are proud to be a member of staff at the school.
- Leaders use effective systems to check pupils' progress and involve staff in understanding and using assessment information to speed up pupils' learning. The information is used well to decide which pupils need extra help and to evaluate the effectiveness of any extra support.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide individual and small-group tuition. It is also used to aid pupils' personal development and improve attendance. This is having a positive effect on the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, and differences in performance between these pupils and other pupils nationally from their different starting points are diminishing.
- Funding for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively. This is leading to good improvements in pupils' attainment and progress in both the enhanced resource unit and in the main school.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the physical education (PE) and sport premium is

used well. Involvement in the sports school partnership has improved teachers' specific skills in PE. Teachers are now more confident to teach aspects of PE such as gymnastics and dance. The school's onsite swimming pool is used well to promote healthy exercise. An increasing number of pupils now participate in a range of after-school and High Peak School sports events such as cross country, netball, football and rounders.

- In the main, the school's broad and balanced curriculum helps develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. However, curriculum planning for mathematics in key stage 2 does not provide enough detail for teachers about how they can develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills progressively. Moral and social provision and development are strong. Pupils recognise the importance of respect and tolerance because these values are central to the school's ethos. They learn about key British institutions, events and people – both past and present.
- Pupils learn about various faiths and cultures in lessons and during assemblies but their knowledge and understanding are stronger in key stage 1 than in key stage 2. Older pupils do not demonstrate a secure enough knowledge of different faiths, cultures or lifestyles to prepare them effectively for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have established positive relationships with parents. Most parents speak highly about the school. The large majority of those who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, thought that their children made good progress and were well cared for.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Governors are committed to ensuring the school's improvement. Since the last inspection, they have undertaken training to improve their skills and abilities in supporting and challenging school leaders. They now provide a good level of challenge and support.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school. Governors visit regularly and have an informed view of teaching and learning. They have a good understanding of the progress different groups make and the quality of teaching throughout the school.
- Governors carry out the performance management of the headteacher and know how teachers are helped to improve their work. They forge positive links with parents and the community.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including governors, frequently review the school's safeguarding procedures and keep themselves informed of the most recent legislation. They make sure that staff receive the training they need to keep pupils safe including updating their knowledge of how to protect pupils from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. The school works effectively with parents to keep their children safe.
- The school's systems, including the vetting of adults who work with children, are thorough. Any concerns about a pupil's welfare are followed through. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure in the school and parents agree.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving strongly, it is not yet consistently good across all classes and year groups. On occasions, teachers do not match work well enough to the range of ability in the class. Sometimes, all pupils are provided with the same task. This means that the learning activities do not challenge the most able to reach their full potential.
- Much of the work seen in mathematics books in key stage 2 required pupils to solve calculations. Evidence that pupils had undertaken problem-solving activities was rare. Teachers do not provide more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge and skills across different subjects.
- In some lessons observed, pupils were not encouraged to explain or extend their thinking when responding to mathematical questions. However, some good examples of pupils applying their skills were observed. For example, in a Year 4/5 lesson pupils were able to practise their calculation skills and increase their understanding of place value by solving problems using two, three and four digit numbers.
- The teaching of reading and writing is improving rapidly. Phonics is taught well in key stage 1. Pupils respond well to regular sessions that are tailored to their needs and abilities. During the inspection, most pupils listened to read with confidence and accuracy. They used their knowledge and skills well to read unfamiliar words. As pupils progress through the school, their reading fluency increases. Pupils talk keenly about the range of books they enjoy reading.
- Where teaching is engaging and stimulating, pupils respond well. For instance, in a Year 3/4 literacy lesson, pupils gasped with excitement when they were informed by the class teacher that their 'Flanimals' would meet. Pupils are provided with opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Work in books shows that regular opportunities are provided for pupils to extend their writing skills and apply what they are learning in English lessons in other subjects.
- Staff, including teaching assistants, have good relationships with pupils. They suitably reward and praise effort. They expect good behaviour and concentration during lessons. However, there are occasions when the activities provided for pupils are not matched well enough to their needs. When this happens, some pupils, mainly boys, lose concentration, which prevents them from making the progress which they are capable of.
- Pupils in the enhanced resource unit are well known by all staff and their individual needs are well met. Adults in the unit provide appropriate small-group work that is matched to pupils' specific needs. For instance, pupils use a range of suitable resources such as using dough when matching objects to numbers. Adults sometimes miss good opportunities to develop pupils' skills or understanding. For instance, opportunities were missed to develop pupils' speaking or counting skills during snack time.
- Staff provide feedback which makes it clear to pupils what their next steps are and pupils respond positively. The school's marking policy is implemented consistently and as a result, marking helps promote pupils' progress.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There are a number of pupils in the school whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Staff and leaders work hard to create a nurturing environment both in the enhanced resource unit and in the main school. This ensures that pupils are safe and well cared for. The school has effective links with outside agencies which contribute well to pupils' happiness and well-being.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They say that most lessons are fun and they enjoy trips out. The school's spacious grounds are used to full advantage. For example, a Year 5 class collected insects and worms from the school's environmental area to study. Pupils were so engaged in this activity that many missed their break because they said, 'this was better!'
- Pupils relish taking part in school productions. Pupils respond well to positions of responsibility such as school or eco-councillors.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They show a good understanding of the different types of bullying and know what to do should they experience bullying, including cyber bullying. They say that bullying is extremely rare and where it happens it is dealt with well by staff.
- Pupils have positive relationships with staff and each other. They cooperate well together in lessons to share ideas. The school is harmonious and inclusive.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because when teaching is not engaging, some pupils, mainly boys, lose interest, are distracted and fidget. Consequently, this slows the pace of their learning.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors and are keen to talk about their school and their achievements and interests. They show care for others. In the main, they demonstrate self-discipline but occasionally when pupils are unsupervised movement around the school is not orderly.
- School leaders have worked hard to improve attendance. It is now above the national average. There are robust systems in place to ensure regular and punctual attendance. This is given high priority in newsletters and in assemblies. The school works with parents and the education welfare officer to raise the attendance of those whose attendance is below average levels. This has led to some improvement for individuals. The attendance of a few pupils who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities is adversely affected due to illness or the need to attend medical appointments.
- The large majority of parents believe the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils are not yet making consistently strong progress in all classes. Progress is more variable and weaker in mathematics compared with other subjects, particularly in key stage 2.
- The rate of progress of different groups of pupils varies from year to year in different year groups. This is dependent upon the quality of teaching that pupils receive. The progress of disadvantaged pupils in different year groups is improving and the differences between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally from their starting points are diminishing. The progress of the most able pupils varies across year groups because work is not always matched to their needs. Sometimes it is too easy.
- The unvalidated 2016 key stage 2 outcomes show that significantly fewer pupils were working beyond the national standard and achieving a high score in mathematics compared with the national outcomes. Provisional 2016 data shows that the proportion of pupils working at the national standard was above that found nationally in both reading and writing at both key stages 1 and 2. The proportion working beyond the national standard was close to the national outcomes in both subjects.
- The 2015 national results showed an improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels at the end of key stage 2 in reading and writing but it was lower in mathematics. At the end of key stage 1, there were strong improvements in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015. The focus on improving writing and mathematics is having a positive impact in this key stage.
- Evidence from pupils' books, observations of teaching and analysis of the school's data show that in some year groups current attainment is rising. Nevertheless, throughout key stage 2, attainment in mathematics lags behind that of reading and writing.
- Progress in writing has improved significantly since the previous inspection in both key stages.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is closely monitored. They receive a good level of support both in the enhanced resource unit and main school. The school's data indicates that this is having a positive impact and these pupils are now making good progress compared with all pupils nationally from similar starting points.
- In the early years, children make good progress and the progress of current pupils in key stage 1 is steadily rising. Consequently, more pupils in Years 1 and 2 are reaching age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Outcomes in phonics have shown year-by-year improvement until last year where there was a slight dip to below the national average. This cohort contained a high proportion of summer-born boys. Strategies are in place to help them catch up in Year 2.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the school with skills that are below those typical for their age, particularly in communication, language and number skills. Since the last inspection, there has been a year-on-year improvement in the number of children attaining a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. In 2016, the proportion attaining this standard was above the national average, which represented good progress for most children from their starting points. Boys achieved better than the girls in 2016 which is a reversal of previous trends. Children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- The early years is well led. The leader has an accurate view of provision and has implemented changes to the environment, teaching and assessment which have had a positive impact on children's progress.
- Children thrive in the stimulating environment provided. For example, one class investigated the outdoor learning environment to look for different shapes. The children were active, curious, excited and engaged as they recorded their information as a tally.
- Children's number skills are promoted well and staff question children effectively to challenge and extend their thinking. When asked what a particular shape was, one child replied, 'I know this is a square because it has four corners and four straight lines'.
- Despite being in school full time for just two days, children behave well and are familiar with class routines. They show confidence in talking to adults. They manage to spend time in assembly and most are able to sustain their concentration for a period of time.
- Staff make regular assessments of children's learning. For example, the detailed early years folders show good evidence of a wide range of work completed by children and strong evidence of good progress from each child's starting point. This includes disadvantaged pupils where funding has been used appropriately to support learning and the most able.
- Parents are welcomed into the setting and a variety of information is gathered from parents before the children start school. This is supported by information from the feeder nurseries. This good liaison helps children settle quickly when they first join the school and helps promote their good progress.

School details

Unique reference number	112647
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10011735

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	256
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Winter
Headteacher	Fay Walton
Telephone number	01663 732354
Website	http://whaleybridge.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	info@whaleybridge.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 July 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is an averaged-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for 11 pupils who have complex learning needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' needs include moderate or severe learning difficulties, autism, emotional, social and behavioural difficulties and significant medical needs.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities support, a statement of special educational needs, or an education, health and care plan is above average. Speech and language and social, emotional and health difficulties comprise the main difficulties experienced by the pupils.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. Many of

these pupils have significant special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils learning in 18 parts of lessons. In addition, the inspectors made some short visits to observe learning at other times. Two observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work from all year groups, spoke to pupils about their work during lessons and listened to pupils read. Inspectors also attended two assemblies, spent time in the playground at breaktimes and observed behaviour in the dining hall at lunchtime.
- The inspectors held meeting with pupils, governors, leaders and staff. An inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The 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. Inspectors also considered reports to the governing body, minutes of their meetings and the school's plans for further improvement.
- The inspectors considered the 66 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the views of one parent as expressed in an email to Ofsted.
- The inspectors also took account of the nine responses made online to Ofsted's staff questionnaire along with the 12 completed by staff in school.
- There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire to consider. However, all pupils made a hard copy response during the inspection, and these were considered.

Inspection team

Paul Weston, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Jennifer Digges	Ofsted Inspector
Liz White	Ofsted Inspector

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