

Cuddington Primary School

Ash Road, Cuddington, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 2NY

Inspection dates

28 February–1 March 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and her team have established a caring learning environment where pupils are encouraged to do their best.
- Senior leaders have been effective in putting strategies in place to secure good and improving progress, especially in English and mathematics.
- Current pupils are making good progress across most year groups and in a wide range of subjects.
- Governors provide strong challenge to senior leaders to ensure a good quality of education.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan and deliver lessons effectively.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe. They behave well and show confidence and good manners.
- Children in the early years enjoy their learning and make good progress from their starting points.
- The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the work it does to support their children's development.
- While current progress in English and mathematics is good, progress is not sufficiently rapid to enable pupils to reach above-average standards by the end of key stage 2.
- Leaders of subjects other than mathematics and English do not have a clear view of pupils' achievement.
- Key stage 2 pupils do not have a firm understanding of spelling patterns, but what they know about phonics allows them to make reasonable attempts at harder words.
- While the most able pupils are often provided with work that stretches them, especially in mathematics, they do not consistently experience challenging work in their writing.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure even faster progress for pupils in English and mathematics by implementing the improvement strategies that leaders have put in place to bring about higher attainment by the end of Year 6.
- Provide more consistent challenge for the most able pupils in writing by giving them more opportunities to make their own decisions on the layout and content of their work.
- Ensure that leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics have a clear overview of standards in their subjects by introducing efficient systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress.
- Establish effective strategies to improve key stage 2 pupils' understanding of spelling patterns to help accelerate their improving writing skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher took up her post in September 2015. Since her arrival she has managed some instability in staffing well and has created a dynamic senior leadership team that is securing rapid improvements in a number of areas across the school.
- Leaders have created a nurturing and safe atmosphere in school. Staff take good care of their pupils and cater well for their needs. There is a clear sense that all are proud of their school community and are happy to be a part of it. This can be seen in the warm relationships and the inviting environment that contains high-quality displays of pupils' work.
- School leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They have taken effective action to address issues that arose in the most recent published assessment information and are ambitious to ensure ever-increasing success. As a result, progress across almost all current year groups and in a wide range of subjects is good.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and has recently been evaluated and redesigned to account for mixed-year groups. Subject leaders have worked with external consultants to ensure there is good coverage of topics and clear progression of skills across the subjects. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported by a range of activities, such as visits to different religious settings, including the local church, a mosque and a Jewish museum.
- There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which contributes well to pupils' development. Pupils enjoy clubs, such as sewing, young engineers and sugar craft (which involves making models and sculptures from sugar). Many clubs are the result of effective use of the primary school physical education and sport funding. Increasing numbers of pupils take part in sports such as hockey, rugby and athletics and specialist coaches develop teachers' confidence and skills in delivering physical education activities.
- Staff prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain and promote fundamental British values effectively. Pupils understand democracy and can talk in simple terms about Parliament and ways that democracy takes place in school, such as in voting for members of the school council. Lessons in philosophy for children present opportunities for pupils to discuss tolerance and respect, and a planned programme of assemblies focuses on British values every week.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding. They have focused on breaking down barriers to learning and they spend the money on, for instance, support for pupils who have speech and language issues or who need to catch up in English and mathematics. In most year groups, current pupils who are disadvantaged make good progress from their starting points.
- Senior leaders make effective use of their funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The headteacher is the special needs coordinator and has introduced some effective strategies, such as methods of encouraging pupils to work more independently. Consequently, these pupils make good progress from their starting points.

- Senior leaders check on the performance of teachers effectively. They set targets that focus on pupils' achievement and on teachers' own professional development. Staff appreciate the planned programme of training that they receive, which is linked to the school's improvement priorities and develops their skills well.
- Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning. If there are areas for improvement, they share the required actions with staff and check that they carry them out. As a result, teaching and learning are good and improving.
- The local authority has formed a good relationship with the school. There is typically a 'light touch' approach, but advisers have been effective in providing extra support while leaders have successfully addressed the issues identified in the 2016 assessment information.
- Parents are highly complimentary about the work of the school and its staff. They appreciate the quick and effective responses to issues that they may raise and are happy with the progress their children make. Typical comments describe the school as 'fantastic' and mention happy children who 'bounce in at the start of the day and bounce out at the end'.
- Senior leaders have developed appropriate action plans to secure continuous improvement. However, in some instances, focus lacks precision on evaluating the impact of their actions on pupils' achievement.
- Subject leaders are as ambitious as senior leaders to secure good quality in their subjects. They have a good understanding of how to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to acquire the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. They make regular checks on the content of the provision and, if there are areas that need to be improved, these are shared with staff and checked again at a later point. However, subject leaders, other than those with responsibility for leading English and mathematics, do not have a strong awareness of ways of assessing standards within their subject.

Governance of the school

- Governors have received appropriate training and are knowledgeable about safeguarding issues.
- Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development and understand the actions that senior leaders are taking to secure continuing improvement.
- Governors ask searching questions to challenge leaders, especially in the area of pupils' achievement. They hold leaders to account effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's record of safeguarding checks on staff is compliant.
- Senior leaders have well-organised safeguarding procedures in place. There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school because staff are knowledgeable about the possible

risks of harm and have warm and caring relationships with their pupils. They make sure that pupils understand the different forms of bullying and they give them the information they need to help them keep safe when using the internet.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan lessons well and have good subject knowledge. As a result, current pupils are making good progress, especially in English and mathematics. Teachers make sure that, for the large majority of the time, pupils enjoy their work and remain engaged in their tasks. In mathematics, for example, there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning skills, with teachers regularly asking pupils to explain their answers.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work and pupils show good attitudes to their learning. Pupils' relationships with staff and each other are warm and positive. While there are occasions when pupils lose concentration and become distracted, these are short-lived and teachers are able to bring them quickly back on task again.
- Teachers demonstrate good questioning skills that allow pupils to explain their thoughts and justify their responses. They show that they can assess well by reshaping tasks successfully if pupils begin to struggle.
- Across a wide range of subjects, teachers follow the school's feedback policy consistently, allowing pupils time to respond to their comments. Consequently, pupils learn from their mistakes and improve their work, which contributes well to the good progress they make.
- Teachers give pupils good opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects. For example, in key stage 2, pupils produce extended written pieces when investigating light. In key stage 1, they write about events beyond living memory, such as the Great Fire of London. While there are examples of mathematical skills being used in science, these are not evident in other subjects.
- Class teachers make good use of teaching assistants. They contribute to teaching well and often demonstrate good questioning skills to check pupils' responses and explore their thinking. However, some questioning does not provide an extra level of challenge, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Pupils receive regular homework that supports their learning in English and mathematics and contributes well to the good progress pupils make in these subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are articulate and confident. They are happy to have conversations with trusted adults.

- Pupils feel safe in school. They appreciate the security of the environment, including its safe entry procedures for visitors. They are confident that teachers will help them if they need to do so.
- Older pupils know about different forms of bullying, such as homophobic or racist bullying, but say incidents are very rare. They understand the importance of respecting people's characteristics and have a good sense of equality. Pupils know that, if they have any concerns about any kind of aggression, they can talk to an adult in school.
- Pupils understand the risks that they can face on the internet and know how to stay safe online because staff provide regular guidance and information to support them.
- Staff provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility through, for example, the 'buddies' system for Year 6 pupils and Reception children.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils show good conduct around school. They are consistently polite and respectful.
- Pupils behave well in class for the majority of the time, although a little learning time is lost because of occasional disruptions.
- Pupils say that some of them misbehave from time to time. However, teachers make effective use of the recently revised behaviour policy, which includes an online rewards scheme, and pupils respond positively to it.
- Conduct in the school's enrichment club and at lunchtime is good. Staff make expectations clear and there is good social development in the various groups into which the pupils are organised.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, the large majority of current pupils make good progress from their starting points. Teachers use effective methods to ensure that pupils acquire appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. In writing in Year 5, for example, pupils make their sentence structures more complex and they try more adventurous words. Sentences such as, 'I was walking around the forest' develop into a more engaging style, such as, 'It smelt like effluence. Terrified, I got out.'
- Disadvantaged pupils in the current year groups make good progress from their starting points. This is because leaders have used the pupil premium funding effectively and have, for instance, provided support to boost pupils' achievement in English and mathematics.
- Typically, a large majority of pupils in Year 1 achieve the expected standard in the phonics check. Although the proportion of pupils achieving the standard dropped below the national average in 2016, current pupils are making good progress. The school's own assessment indicates that three quarters of the current year group are already at the required standard, based on the most recent phonics check materials, and leaders anticipate continued improvement.

- Published assessment information up to 2015 showed that the achievement of pupils, including those who were disadvantaged, was broadly in line with the national average. School leaders are keenly aware that the information for 2016 showed a number of percentages that were lower than national averages. They have been quick to take action, and the good progress that current pupils are making in English and mathematics demonstrates its effectiveness. There is room for even faster progress to secure improved attainment by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils read with a good degree of fluency and comprehension for their age and stage of development. Lower-ability pupils readily use their knowledge of phonics to help them to read unfamiliar words. The most able pupils use well-judged expressiveness in their voice to show understanding. Teachers focus on developing strong comprehension skills and provide plentiful opportunities for pupils to investigate different texts in depth and give thoughtful written responses.
- Although current pupils make good progress in English across almost all year groups, in key stage 2 pupils are not as confident in their knowledge of spelling patterns. They can, however, make reasonable attempts at more complex words based on their knowledge of phonics. Leaders are aware of this and have made spelling in key stage 2 a focus for improvement.
- Teachers provide work in mathematics that challenges most-able pupils well. For instance, in Year 5, pupils explain accurately why examples of addition of mixed fractions are incorrect. However, there is less challenge in writing. For example, sometimes teachers structure the task in such a way that the most able pupils do not get the chance to make their own decisions on the content and format of their writing.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in Reception. She has recently reviewed assessment and tracking in the provision, particularly with regard to assessment on entry to Reception, and has liaised with local private nurseries to this end. As a result, there are more rigorous and accurate assessment processes in place. A consequence of these was a slight decline in the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development in 2016. Nevertheless, the percentage was still in line with the national average and current pupils are making strong progress.
- Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age and stage of development. They make good progress from their starting points because of effective teaching, and the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is typically at or above the national average. Consequently, a large majority are ready for Year 1 each year.
- The curriculum in the early years is broad and teachers plan interesting and exciting activities that develop children's learning well. Staff have high expectations of children and use questioning well to probe their understanding. For example, staff challenge children by asking them to estimate how many of the playdough pancakes they have made will fit on a plate.

- Children are developing their phonics skills well and they use them to support their writing to good effect. They can write simple sentences with plausible attempts at spellings. Using 'The Gruffalo' as their stimulus, they write sentences such as 'I wil eet yo' ('I will eat you') and 'I am the mas' ('I am the mouse').
- Leaders make good use of the pupil premium funding to secure good progress for disadvantaged children. For example, they use part of the money to provide speech and language support for those children who need it.
- There are good relationships between staff and parents, and communication channels are effective. Early years staff carry out home visits before children begin in Reception and they regularly keep parents informed about their children's progress once they have started. There are weekly 'stay and play' sessions for parents and there are opportunities every half term to attend a group activity in school. The school's online tracking system also allows parents to see their children's progress throughout the year.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff are knowledgeable about signs of abuse and keep children safe. There are no breaches of the statutory welfare requirements. Children behave well and they show that they feel safe in the trusting relationships they have with adults in the setting. They were confident enough to approach inspectors and proudly show them work that they had been doing.
- The learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, is purposeful and bright. The outdoor area allows children to play imaginatively and to develop physically, with a selection of equipment that children use to climb and balance. While there are plenty of opportunities to develop writing and language skills independently across the provision, there are fewer opportunities for developing number and problem-solving skills.

School details

Unique reference number	111059
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10002900

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Butcher
Headteacher	Suzanne Mills
Telephone number	01606 288150
Website	www.cuddington.cheshire.sch.uk
Email address	head@cuddington.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 December 2011

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support in school for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding is close to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

- The school operates a daily 'enrichment club' before and after school. This provision was included in the inspection.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations of learning in most classes, covering all year groups. Some of these were joint observations between the headteacher and the lead inspector. The headteacher was also present at inspector team meetings.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation summary, action plans for school improvement, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, minutes of meetings of the governing body and records connected with the safeguarding of children.
- Inspectors had discussions with various stakeholders, including the headteacher and other senior leaders, subject leaders, other members of staff, governors, a representative from the local authority, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and analysed pupils' writing and mathematics, as well as their work in other subjects. They also looked at the work of children in the early years.
- The lead inspector evaluated 80 responses received through Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. There were no other survey responses.

Inspection team

Mark Quinn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Curtis

Ofsted Inspector

Vanessa MacDonald

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017