

High Legh Primary School

Wrenshot Lane, High Legh, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 6NW

Inspection dates

14–15 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

- Pupils make good progress in all subjects during their time at the school. However, in writing, the most able do not make as much progress as other ability groups.
- The achievement of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good because tasks set for them are sharply focused on their needs.
- The leadership of the school, including governors, is committed to ensuring a good-quality education for the pupils.
- Teaching is good. However, on a small number of occasions, teachers do not challenge some of the most able sufficiently.
- Pupils apply themselves well to their work, presenting it neatly and taking a pride in its appearance.
- Pupils behave sensibly at lunchtime and breaktimes. The inspector found children to be well mannered and polite.
- The early years provides high-quality experiences for children to thrive. They are taught well and the setting is well led and managed.
- The curriculum is good and gives pupils a broad range of experiences across many subjects. However, pupils do not write at length in their topic work.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. They have rich opportunities to learn about other cultures and faiths. Consequently, pupils are very respectful towards each other and adults.
- Pupils are safe and secure. They are confident that staff deal with any reported cases of bullying, should it occur.
- Governors challenge and support school leaders well. They have a good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Parents are appreciative of the support that the staff give to their children.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise achievement in writing by:
 - ensuring that more pupils achieve at above the expected level at key stage 2 in writing
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write in detail across all subjects.
- Further raise the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently provide tasks that challenge the most able
 - ensuring that teachers check the progress of pupils and move them on in their learning if necessary.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, including governors, show great commitment to all within the school community. Relationships are of a very high standard. This is reflected in the way that all staff work as a team to do their best to support all of the pupils.
- Leaders have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use this information effectively, as a basis for improvement planning. Leaders monitor the implementation of their plans each term, making adjustments where necessary to increase the impact on pupils' achievements.
- Achievement information is analysed well by school leaders, who use it to inform regular meetings with teachers to hold them closely to account. This practice has led to high levels of attainment in reading and mathematics. However, it could be sharper when analysing progress in writing, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Most of the checks on teaching and learning are carried out by the headteacher and her deputy. They follow up these checks with clear guidance, training and support. In this way, they have been successful in improving teaching and learning across different subjects.
- High Legh is a small school, which means that all staff have to take on leadership responsibilities. The newly appointed special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) coordinator has made a significant difference to the quality of experience and outcomes of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Additional funding for these pupils is spent effectively and supports their good progress.
- The headteacher has created an environment where good teaching practice is shared regularly among all colleagues. The staff's continuous professional development is given a high priority at the school. Staff are appreciative and committed to their professional development within their local cluster of schools. As a result, the quality of teaching is good and improving, and staff morale is high.
- Leaders use the additional pupil premium funding effectively. Direct adult support within the classroom and for specific interventions, including pastoral support, is carefully targeted to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils are appreciative of the curriculum provided by the school. This includes significant additional and extra-curricular experiences, including residential visits. Music is a real strength and a significant number of pupils benefit from brass, guitar and piano lessons. Performing at the Cheshire Show is a highlight for the pupils. Leaders have prioritised the improvement of writing further. At the moment, pupils do not apply their writing skills in all subjects consistently.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium for primary schools is used effectively, so that staff are able to observe and work alongside experts and so improve their own skills. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in a range of sports and competitions, including athletics and football. Involvement in these activities has a very positive impact on their general well-being.
- The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is evident in their

positive attitudes to their work and how well they get on together. Pupils are enthused by interesting and active learning across the school and this is often shared with their families and the community. There are many community events, such as the recent 10km run. The school has good links with other schools within the Knutsford cluster and the pupils appreciate the link with St John's C of E Church.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious and their commitment to the school is very clear. They share the determination of school leaders to secure high-quality education for all pupils.
- The governing body is well organised and uses the governors' range of skills and expertise to add value to overall leadership.
- Governors have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, particularly the need to improve the quality of teaching and progress for all pupils. Development plans are scrutinised closely by governors. Challenging questions are asked in meetings to hold school leaders closely to account, in order to improve outcomes for all pupils in all aspects of their education.
- Financial management is sound and governors are involved fully in making decisions about how to spend additional funds, including that allocated for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They are aware of the difference that the use of these funds is making to pupils' progress and their physical well-being.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The governor with responsibility for safeguarding has significant expertise and meets regularly with the school staff to review the school's work.
- The culture of safeguarding in the school is evident in children feeling safe and parents' confidence in this. Learning about how to keep safe is woven into pupils' learning across the school curriculum.
- The school's records are detailed and show that the school works well with a range of external agencies to support pupils.
- All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, receive high-quality training on recognising any potential signs of risk. They know what to do should they have any concerns.
- The school's website contains all the necessary information on safeguarding, which is useful for parents.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The leaders of the school have worked hard to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in all classes. Teachers plan lessons that the pupils find interesting. During the inspection, pupils benefited from stimulating resources and useful tools that helped them to learn. For example, Year 4 pupils developed some effective language as they were fascinated to learn about the rainforest.

- The pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons and this is resulting in high outcomes in all classes. Staff have high expectations. Pupils are taught systematically about key mathematical concepts and are then asked to apply their learning in tackling practical problems. For example, Year 3 pupils had great fun learning about fractions and then being provided with a practical problem to check out their understanding.
- Reading is a strength of the school. Staff are committed to doing everything they can to instil a love of reading in the children from a very early age. Similarly to mathematics, outcomes in reading are high. Phonics teaching is of high quality. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils benefited from very effective teaching. The teacher used her subject knowledge well to help the children spell, read and write some tricky words, such as 'jockey' and 'donkey'. Most pupils become proficient readers very quickly. Pupils read confidently from their work to the inspector.
- Writing is now taught effectively across the school. The leaders have provided staff with significant support and training, so that they can ensure that the teaching of writing is of the same quality as reading and mathematics. However, opportunities for all pupils to write extensively in their topic work are not consistently provided to extend pupils' skills. This is particularly the case for the most able.
- Teachers create a very positive climate for learning through their effective questioning. Pupils say that they usually find the work hard enough. However, on a small number of occasions, some of the most able pupils are engaged for too long on activities that do not challenge them to achieve the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and, in particular, make good contributions to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school is very inclusive, and the respect that all within the community show for each other is wonderful to see. This is enhanced by the willingness of pupils to take on responsibility, such as being a member of the school council. The older children are given responsibilities during the school day. They show great maturity in their role as 'playground buddies' and 'reading buddies'.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school because the adults look after them well. Pupils were also keen to point out how they look after each other. As one of the younger children said, 'Year 6 always take care of us and are always kind.'
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and feel very safe in school. They know whom to speak to in school if they have any worries. They understand the different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, and how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. Pupils said that bullying is rare, but were clear on what to do if it did occur.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils show courtesy and consideration towards each other and adults, including visitors in the school. They take care of equipment and behave well in the playground, corridors and dining room. Lunchtimes and playtimes are very pleasant experiences and the pupils enjoy playing with their friends.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. Pupils behave well in class and interruptions to learning are rare. Attitudes to learning are positive, as the pupils find the work interesting and engaging. Pupils are eager to learn, settle quickly to work without any fuss and cooperate extremely well.
- Pupils enjoy receiving rewards and they understand the school sanctions. They take responsibility for their actions and choices, due to a strong ethos of respect and active citizenship.
- Pupils are supportive of each other, and particularly of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They treat each other with great respect, demonstrating the school's effectiveness in fostering good relations and tackling discrimination.
- Attendance has continued to be good since the last inspection and is currently above the national average. Pupils say they enjoy learning, are happy and feel safe in school. Parents agree, and say that they are very happy with the ways in which their children are cared for.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- From their various starting points, pupils are making good progress and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- In 2016, national performance data showed that at key stage 2, pupils performed above the national average in reading and mathematics. There was a dip in performance in writing, but the school has convincing evidence that there were good reasons for this. The identified weaknesses are being addressed rapidly.
- In key stage 1, test results also showed strong progress since pupils emerged from the Reception class. In 2016, pupils achieved above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Reading is a strength and all pupils make consistently good progress across the school. From an early age, the children are engaging with sounds and beginning to read. By the end of Year 1, pupils are achieving above the national average in the phonics check. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the sounds that letters make and know how to 'break words down' when they are unsure about new vocabulary. They enjoy their reading across a wide range of literature and speak knowledgeably about different authors. Pupils are motivated to tackle challenging comprehension work and are attaining above the national average at the end of both key stages 1 and 2.
- In mathematics, pupils in key stage 1 quickly learn to work confidently with numbers, learning the key operations of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. Pupils learn their times tables systematically and then progress to solving problems fluently using their mathematics skills as they get older. By the end of Year 6, pupils are achieving above the national average.

- Although pupils' progress in writing has improved, it is the weakest of the three key subjects, due to the slower progress being made by some of the most able pupils. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils are now making good progress. Pupils learn how to spell common words well, use a greater range of punctuation as they progress through the school and use correct grammar, both in their speech and in their writing. Teachers model good writing and speech at all times to pupils. Evidence in the pupils' books shows that pupils do not consistently produce the same quality of writing when working in subjects other than English.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to targeted extra help provided either by specialist support, a monitoring group or by teaching assistants in class. These other adults work alongside pupils and break learning down into manageable steps so that pupils can complete their work successfully.
- While cohorts are small, over time, the progress of disadvantaged pupils has risen in all subjects, so that there are diminishing differences between their progress and that of others nationally.
- While the majority of the most able pupils make good progress, a small number do not consistently work at the level that they are capable of, particularly in writing.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work in their books and in lessons. This shows that current pupils are making at least good progress and securing strong age-appropriate skills and knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- The leader of the early years is passionate about the children in the care of her team. The small team work well together to ensure that provision for all children is at least good, in all the areas of early learning.
- Children joining the school in the early years usually have skills and levels of understanding typical of what is expected for children of their age. The number of children achieving a good level of development has varied over the past three years. As a result of good teaching, an increasing number of children are now achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception class.
- When the children start in Reception, there are detailed checks on all aspects of their abilities. The adults in the setting observe children carefully and record children's achievements in their learning journals. Parents contribute to the assessment of their child and the journals provide a clear, detailed and accurate record of the child's progress. These checks continue throughout the time the children spend in Reception. This system ensures that the provision and activities that they are set are well matched to the children's needs and ensures that they make good progress.
- The current Reception class are on track to enter Year 1 with the percentage achieving a good level of development being well above the national average. Transition to Year 1 is very effective. Staff from both the early years and Year 1 engage in detailed discussion about every child to ensure that they settle quickly in the Year 1 class.
- The children benefit from a vibrant and stimulating learning environment. They experience a rich curriculum and are provided with many opportunities to develop their

imagination. Teaching is strong. For example, during the inspection, children developed some mature language in the 'veterinary surgery' role-play area. A small group developed an understanding of number as they posted letters in the outdoor area. Staff are committed to encouraging the children to have the confidence to explore learning with their friends, independently of their teachers. Two boys showed great resilience and concentration as they persisted in their task to match numbers on shells in the sand tray.

- Children are introduced to books from the moment they start. They progress to recognising letters and then linking letters to sounds (phonics). During the inspection, children in Reception were reading simple words fluently using techniques they had learned in phonics lessons, and then making good attempts to write these words in their books.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary because adults set high standards. Shouting out and running are very rare. At lunchtime, the inspector was impressed by how well children helped each other and chatted sensibly while eating their meals.
- Parents are rightly positive about the good start that their children make in the Reception class. Parents value the ongoing, good communication and opportunities such as parent workshops to help with early reading. They are confident that their children are safe and well cared for in this environment.

School details

Unique reference number	111096
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10032396

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	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Gerrard
Headteacher	Louise Tottle
Telephone number	01925 753713
Website	www.highlegh.cheshire.sch.uk
Email address	head@highlegh.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- High Legh is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is below average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below

average.

- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club on the school site. This is managed by an outside provider.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons, two of which were a joint observation with the headteacher.
- In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to classrooms and watched sessions where pupils were taught in small groups.
- Meetings were held with staff. The inspector also spoke to the school's school improvement partner on the telephone.
- A meeting was held with three members of the governing body
- A number of documents were scrutinised, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, minutes of governor meetings, the development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding information.
- The inspector took account of the 48 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. He also met informally with parents and took account of the school's own parental questionnaires.
- Inspectors spoke to staff and took account of the views of staff.

Inspection team

Andrew Morley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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