

Ladybridge Primary School

Councillor Lane, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 2JF

Inspection dates

27–28 November 2018

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good across the school. The progress that pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics varies between different year groups.
- Teachers do not challenge the most able pupils well enough to excel in all subjects.
- The attainment and progress of pupils in key stage 1 have been low for several years.
- Governors do not have the knowledge that they need to challenge leaders well enough about pupils' performance. The self-evaluation of the school is over-generous.
- Attendance is lower than the national average. The rate of persistent absence is above average. Leaders have not analysed attendance data well enough to know how best to secure improvement.
- Pupils become disengaged in their learning when they are not sufficiently challenged.
- Middle leaders do not have a good understanding of how well pupils do in subjects other than in mathematics and English.
- Teachers do not plan activities that build on pupils' knowledge and skills effectively in geography, science and history.
- Pupils' handwriting and presentation across the curriculum are often of a poor standard.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' welfare is at the centre of leaders' work. Safeguarding is effective.
- Children make good progress in early years. Children thrive in the nurturing environment.
- The school provides good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, they make good progress.
- Leaders promote well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Many trips, visits and visitors to school enrich the curriculum further.
- Pupils' achievement in phonics is increasing every year. Pupils apply their skills with increasing confidence.
- Leaders use the pupil premium fund well to ensure that disadvantaged pupils do as well as their peers.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and thereby the outcomes of pupils, by:
 - ensuring that an increased proportion of Year 2 pupils achieve the expected standards in English and mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers plan activities to challenge the most able pupils to excel in English, mathematics and other subjects
 - ensuring that teachers plan activities that ensure that pupils acquire and use subject-specific skills in geography, science and history
 - setting even higher expectations for pupils' behaviour in lessons and the quality and presentation of pupils' written work.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, by:
 - sharpening the analysis of attendance data to identify where improvements can be made
 - providing middle and subject leaders with the skills to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in their subject areas and ensure that pupils make at least good progress
 - providing governors with the knowledge that they need to challenge leaders about the actions they take and their impact on improving outcomes for pupils
 - raising school attendance and reducing rates of persistent absences to be in line with national averages.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders show a dogged determination to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The headteacher has effectively dealt with teaching that was not good. Several teachers have been appointed to the school since the previous inspection. Significant changes in staffing, particularly in key stage 2, have had a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Effective leadership has ensured that children make good progress during their time in early years.
- Members of staff share the headteacher's vision for the school and welcome the stability and improvements that she has brought. The headteacher has identified appropriate ways to improve this school. A well-thought-out plan to raise attainment and improve outcomes for pupils was developed with leaders and action taken. However, pupils' outcomes and attendance and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are not yet good.
- The introduction of the new behaviour policy has seen a dramatic fall in the number of fixed-term exclusions. There has been no fixed-term exclusion in this academic year, and the previously high number of incidents of disruptive behaviour has significantly reduced. However, when some pupils are not sufficiently challenged, they sometimes become disengaged from their learning in lessons.
- Senior leaders' and governors' evaluation of the school's effectiveness is over-generous. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school is not securing good progress for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups.
- Leaders have successfully put systems in place to continue to develop the welfare of pupils in the school. They have created a safe and caring environment, where pupils and their families can receive prompt and effective support. Partnerships with external agencies to safeguard and provide support to families are effective.
- Parents and carers have mixed views about the quality of leadership and management at the school. Information gathered from parents during the inspection and the responses to the school's own parent questionnaire were at odds. There is a minority of parents who feel that behaviour in the school is not good enough.
- Leaders for mathematics and English have a realistic understanding of standards in these subjects. They have regular opportunities to check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. New systems have been introduced for the teaching of writing and mathematics.
- These subject leaders have accurately identified that there are groups of pupils across the school who are not making good progress. For example, in the previous academic year, pupils in Year 4 made much better progress in reading than pupils in Year 3. Pupils in Year 5 made much stronger progress in mathematics than they did in writing. Pupils in Year 1 made much better progress in mathematics than pupils in Year 2. New systems for the teaching of writing are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' writing. Pupils are developing skills to help them edit, refine and improve their work with increasing care.

- Over time, the leadership of English has successfully overseen a large increase in the proportion of Year 1 pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Staff have benefited from regular professional development training to enable this aspect of the school's work to continue.
- The work of subject leaders in science, geography and history is not yet embedded. Leaders do not check the quality of teachers' planning or the work in pupils' books carefully to ensure that the pupils' knowledge and skills specific to these subjects are developed well over time.
- Leaders and governors use the pupil premium funding well to ensure that current disadvantaged pupils make the progress of which they are capable. The progress of disadvantaged pupils leaving key stage 2 has improved for three consecutive years.
- The leadership of SEND is effective. Pupils with SEND, and pupils in the resourced provision, receive secure support from staff, in line with their individual, specific plans.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that encourages pupils to have a say in their learning. Pupils ask questions that are considered as part of teachers' planning. For example, Year 6 pupils have learned about Ancient Greek gods and goddesses. They asked questions about where the Greeks lived or where they went to school.
- Leaders have given careful consideration to the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education within the curriculum. For example, a new library has been opened, which is also used as a multi-faith prayer room that can be accessed by pupils and staff. Pupils benefit from this rich resource that further establishes a good reading culture across the school.
- Leaders have created an environment that celebrates pupils' work in many colourful and vibrant displays around the school. Homework challenges are exciting and add enrichment and depth to pupils' learning. For example, a recent project for the older pupils involved them in creating survival backpacks in preparation for a natural disaster.
- Leaders have recently enhanced the outdoor environment. This area now provides pupils with many opportunities to engage in a range of physical activities. A newly installed firepit was used during a recent star-gazing evening. Each class learns about responsibility for others by taking turns to look after the school's hens.
- Leaders endeavour to prepare pupils to be good citizens. They learn about their place in the United Kingdom, and diversity is celebrated well. Recent whole-school theme weeks have focused on black history, racism, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender awareness. Pupils learn about other religions by visiting different places of worship.

Governance of the school

- Governors are committed to securing improvement. However, they have not sufficiently challenged leaders in relation to the evaluation of the school's effectiveness, or pupils' attendance. Recently, subject leaders spoke to the governors about their subject areas. Governors said that this helped them better understand the content in the curriculum for different year groups.

- The governors are knowledgeable about how the additional funding through the pupil premium and the physical education (PE) and sport premium is used. Governors have a clear understanding of how an improvement in phonics teaching has been secured. They are clear about how the PE and sport premium is currently being used to build strong links with a local football team and to develop pupils' skills and teachers' subject knowledge.
- Governors are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. The chair of governors checks the single central record regularly and is trained in safer recruitment.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All required checks are in place to ensure the suitability of adults to work in the school.
- All members of staff have received up-to-date safeguarding basic awareness training and 'Prevent' duty training to enable them to spot signs of potential radicalisation.
- The school has an effective safeguarding team that consists of the headteacher, the pastoral lead and the learning mentor. Together they work effectively with a wide range of external agencies, including children's social care, the police and school health, to safeguard pupils.
- Members of staff are aware of their collective responsibility to safeguard pupils. The process for reporting and recording safeguarding concerns is thorough and understood by staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Since the headteacher was appointed, significant upheaval in staffing has had a mixed impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time, particularly in key stage 1. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment differs in different year groups.
- As a result, the progress of pupils in English and mathematics varies between year groups.
- Where teaching is strongest, established routines, high levels of teacher interaction and effective questioning lead to pupils' better progress. Where teaching is less effective, pupils make less progress and sometimes become distracted and lose their focus.
- The presentation of pupils' work is erratic across the curriculum. Teachers do not expect enough from the pupils and often accept poorly presented work with little challenge. Good handwriting habits are not encouraged or reinforced.
- As a result of effective leadership in English, the teaching of phonics is a strength of the school. Pupils' phonic skills are well developed across key stage 1. Teachers and teaching assistants have received professional development training to ensure that standards are sustained, and teaching in this area remains strong.
- Leaders have worked hard to develop a new system for the teaching of writing. The training that teachers have received has helped them to enable pupils to think carefully about the writing process and to work hard to edit and self-correct their writing.

However, many pupils, especially the most able, do not make good progress because too often, the work is pitched at the same level for all and there is little opportunity to complete work of a higher standard.

- Pupils read well and have books that are well matched to their ability, providing appropriate challenge. Teachers promote reading well around the school and each classroom has a dedicated reading space for the pupils to use.
- Across the school, the teaching of mathematics is well developed. Often work is pitched well to match the needs of the pupils. When the most able pupils have the opportunity to extend themselves even further through challenge tasks, they often choose work of an easier standard to complete. Consequently, not enough pupils make the progress in mathematics they could.
- Teaching assistants are used efficiently across the school. They provide effective support to individual pupils, depending on their needs.
- The most able pupils are not challenged well enough across the curriculum. Too often they complete the same work as other pupils and have few opportunities to apply their mathematical and written skills across the curriculum.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in science, geography and history do not develop pupils' subject-specific skills well enough. Too often, work is focused on knowledge with little regard to what pupils need to understand to apply this knowledge.
- The teaching, learning and assessment in the resourced provision for pupils with SEND are tailored to meet the varied needs of the pupils. Teachers ask questions effectively to engage the pupils in their learning. Established routines ensure that these pupils continue to make good progress according to their individual needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- As part of the drive to improve behaviour in the school, leaders focus heavily on ensuring that pupils' welfare is at the heart of their work.
- Pupils are confident and articulate well their views about the school. They understand how different behaviours and attitudes affect their learning and how their actions can affect others.
- The pupils are clear in the restorative approaches to behaviour in the school. Some pupils have taken on the role of restorative ambassadors, and are often the first point of contact for pupils who want to talk.
- Pupils have ambitions and know that they have to work hard to prepare them for life outside school. Pupils are very accepting of one another. They have a good understanding of differences and equality.
- Leaders have created the 'hub' within school to work with pupils and their families to improve aspects of personal development and welfare. Leaders and the pastoral team hold regular drop-in sessions for parents to encourage them to take a more active role

in the further development and well-being of their children. For example, 'lads and dads' or 'mum and me' sessions enhance relationships between pupils and their families.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Since the headteacher was appointed, the behaviour of the pupils has improved significantly. A new behaviour policy was introduced in 2016. After a period of initial resistance from a number of pupils, resulting in exclusions, the number of fixed-term exclusions has fallen year on year. At the time of the inspection, no pupil had received a fixed-term exclusion in the current academic year. High rates of disruptive behaviour and exclusions are no longer the norm.
- Pupils who spoke to the inspectors stated that there were still some occurrences of poor behaviour, but that these were increasingly rare. Inspectors observed instances of low-level disruption in several classes, particularly when pupils were disengaged from their learning. A number of parents voiced their concerns about behaviour in Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Pupils enjoy being rewarded for their good behaviour through the electronic recording system. This information is shared instantly with parents. Pupils said that the staff are fair to them.
- Leaders have successfully lowered the percentage of persistent absence. However, the rate remains twice the national average and leaders have not been successful in improving overall attendance. Leaders have not used the information about pupils' attendance well enough to identify where they need to target support the most.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Unvalidated assessment information for 2018 indicates that an increased proportion of Year 6 pupils achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics compared with previous years. This unvalidated assessment information for 2018 also indicates that the progress of pupils leaving key stage 2 was in line with that of other pupils nationally.
- The pupil premium funding has been used effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make progress in line with their peers. The progress of disadvantaged pupils leaving Year 6 has increased in reading, writing and mathematics for three consecutive years.
- Outcomes in key stage 1 have been affected by several staffing issues. School leaders have accurately identified this as a key priority in the raising attainment plan. It is too early to judge the impact of their work.
- By the time pupils reach the end of key stage 1, attainment is lower than that of other pupils nationally. This has recently shown some signs of improvement. For example, in 2018, the proportion of Year 2 pupils achieving the expected standard in reading rose. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in writing attainment was sustained.

- The progress that pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics varies between year groups. In some year groups, not enough pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Results from the Year 1 phonics screening check have improved for four consecutive years. Strong leadership and good teaching are improving pupils' outcomes.
- Outcomes for pupils in geography and history are limited. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop subject-specific skills in sufficient detail. Too often, work lacks challenge. For example, in geography, map work is underdeveloped. In history, pupils' work shows limited opportunities to apply enquiry skills.
- Pupils' outcomes in science vary between different year groups. Only in the later stages of key stage 2 do pupils take ownership of their learning and begin to apply their own investigative and evaluation skills without the teacher's input. Once pupils reach this level, they begin to apply their mathematical skills well.
- The quality of pupils' work is better in some classes than in others. However, too often, teachers accept poorly presented work and they do not routinely challenge pupils to do better. For example, although pupils practise their handwriting, they do not apply the same care to their written work well.
- Outcomes in art are good. High-quality displays of pupils' artwork around the school show that pupils have used a wide range of different media to create artwork inspired by famous artists. For example, a display in the entrance hall shows how pupils have created portraits of Lady Justice in the style of Picasso.
- Pupils with SEND and those in the resourced provision make good progress in relation to their individual targets. Pupils were observed during the inspection working alongside their mainstream peers with little need for direct adult intervention. Pupils are developing their independence skills well.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start early years with skills and knowledge that are well below those typical for their age. Leaders have put a clear plan in place to improve outcomes for children in early years. For example, their analysis of data showed the need for the children to attend Reception full time from the start of the school year. An effective transition now begins in the summer term and this helps to prepare the children and parents for school. As a result of leaders' improvement of the provision, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception Year has risen for three consecutive years.
- All groups of children make good progress. Leaders plan activities well to cater for the many different needs of the children. For example, adults question children in the Nursery and Reception class well to draw out their understanding.
- Leaders ensure that mathematics and writing are developed well. For example, children used shells and chestnuts to create repeating patterns. They explained their patterns well and shared out their resources when they saw that a friend might need a shell.
- Children enjoy exploring in both the inside and outside learning environments and move between these spaces with relative ease. They take care of their own needs;

they know to put their coats on and zip them up when they go out. Children explained to me that they were not allowed on the grass as it was too muddy that day. They are supportive of one another and cooperate well together.

- The early years is a calm learning environment that encourages good behaviour. Children walk around the room sensibly and engage in the many activities on offer.
- Leaders have ensured that children have many opportunities to develop their coordination as well as their fine and gross motor skills through carefully planned activities.
- Leaders have considered the risks involved in the outdoor environment carefully. Children enjoy managing their own risk. For example, they build dens from crates and other materials. This leads to some detailed conversations when children have to think and apply their reasoning and communication skills well.
- Leaders prepare children for Year 1 throughout the year. Reception and Year 1 classes come together to receive phonics teaching.
- Parents are kept well informed about the progress of their children. Learning journals are available inside the classroom for parents to have a look at. As in the rest of the school, the children's behaviour is recorded electronically and shared with parents. Leaders have held a series of workshops for parents to help them help their children learn, but these have not been well attended. Leaders are in the process of introducing a new electronic recording system to share more information with parents about the progress of their children.

School details

Unique reference number	106054
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10042466

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gwyneth Holloway
Headteacher	Emma Hill
Telephone number	0161 428 5445
Website	www.ladybridge.stockport.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@ladybridge.stockport.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 February 2014

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than the national average.
- The school runs a resourced provision on behalf of the local authority which caters for the needs of eight pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment in all classes. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspectors heard pupils read in the classes they visited and formally.
- The inspectors scrutinised a wide range of school documentation, including the single central record, records of safeguarding, the raising attainment plan, the school's self-evaluation and evidence of subject monitoring. Inspectors also viewed assessment information.
- The inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' books with the headteacher and with the representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors spoke to parents before school. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with one parent. Inspectors considered the 15 free-text responses, the 19 responses to the staff survey and the 28 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. The lead inspector compared these with the 69 responses to a recent parent questionnaire that the school ran earlier in the autumn term.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection and formally on day one.

Inspection team

John Donald, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Steve Kirkpatrick

Ofsted Inspector

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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.

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