

Oldfield Brow Primary School

Taylor Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 4LE

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2019

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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Although there have been considerable changes to the school since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils are good overall. A positive and caring learning environment pervades the school.
- In key stages 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as in other curriculum subjects.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Leaders have successfully implemented strategies to improve English and mathematics. This is reflected in the good progress current pupils are making.
- Teachers' and teaching assistants' knowledge of phonics is secure. However, the planning of activities in phonics sessions does not always maximise pupils' learning.
- Reading has a high profile in the school. Older and younger pupils are carefully paired as buddy readers. This is proving beneficial in developing pupils' confidence and fluency in reading.
- Senior leaders have implemented new approaches to accurately measure pupils' progress. However, senior leaders and governors are too generous in their assessment of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Subject leaders are developing well their areas of responsibility. However, there is still scope for them to be more involved in school improvement.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders put the safety and well-being of the pupils at the heart of their work.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and engaging. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is planned very well. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The early years requires improvement. Leaders have not ensured that the children in every class benefit from the same good-quality teaching and learning evident in key stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. Incidents of poor behaviour are uncommon. Pupils show kindness and empathy to their peers.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average, reflecting their enjoyment of school.
- The vast majority of parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They appreciate the care teachers and staff afford their children.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers quickly adapt activities in order to address pupils' misconceptions as they arise
 - ensuring that teachers and teaching assistants maximise the use of time in phonics sessions to develop both pupils' phonics and writing skills.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that subject leaders are more effective in driving improvements in the quality of provision within their areas of responsibility
 - developing the skills of senior leaders and governors to assess more accurately the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Improve the early years by:
 - improving the accuracy of assessments of children's ability when they enter school
 - ensuring that ongoing assessments inform teachers' planning of high-quality teaching and learning for all groups of children, particularly in the Reception classes
 - increasing the opportunities for children to learn through structured outdoor activities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the last inspection there have been significant changes in the school, particularly with the expansion of the school building, allowing substantial growth in the number of pupils on roll. The work of leaders has continued to evolve, ensuring that the school serves the local community well. A positive and caring learning atmosphere is underpinned by the school's values. The school motto of 'only the very best will do' permeates all aspects of the work of the school. Staff, governors and volunteers consistently go the extra mile for the sake of the pupils.
- The senior leadership team has been restructured and enhanced by two new assistant headteachers appointed in September 2018. Although they are at an early stage in developing their roles, they bring a raft of experience and have already introduced a new system to check and monitor pupils' progress. They provide teachers and teaching assistants with ideas as to how to support those pupils who need additional help, both in the classroom and through small-group work. This system is effective in improving the progress of those pupils who start to fall behind.
- Senior leaders and governors are aware that there are some aspects of the school's work, such as the early years, which need further development. Senior leaders have made appropriate decisions to address the additional support needed in the early years by appointing one of the assistant headteachers to help with the leadership of this area.
- The leadership of mathematics has been effective in bringing about recent changes in the way that mathematics is taught. The leader for mathematics ensures that teachers' subject knowledge remains strong. Frequent checks are made on teachers' planning and sharing good practice both within and beyond the school.
- The leadership of English has been effective in ensuring that progress in writing has improved in recent years, following a dip in 2016 in key stage 2. The subject leader has worked alongside staff to embed aspects of spelling, punctuation and grammar better into a systematic way of teaching writing.
- A culture of reading has been created and pupils are regularly exposed to high-quality texts. Staff have good subject knowledge of phonics but the planning of activities, including the development of writing skills in phonics sessions, has some shortcomings. Currently, pupils continue to make strong progress in reading.
- Leaders for subjects other than mathematics and English are motivated and eager to develop their roles further. For example, the leadership of physical education (PE), art and science is effective. However, there is scope for leaders to contribute more to improving the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders ensure that the pupil premium funding is used well to benefit the few disadvantaged pupils. There is specific support for their learning and to enable this group of pupils to participate in a broad range of activities, such as a programme to develop pupils' social and emotional resilience. The impact of this breadth of support is helping this group of pupils to close any gaps between their achievement and that of other groups.

- The additional funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used well. Staff implement individual education plans, which address the specific needs of a pupil, with bespoke support from teachers and teaching assistants. When needed, the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND sources external professional support from a range of agencies with whom staff work well.
- Leaders use the primary school funding for physical education (PE) and sports to build pupils' confidence and teamwork. For example, there are coaching sessions from sports specialists who work with pupils and develop the skills of staff. This is helping pupils to acquire better skills in sports such as hockey and lacrosse.
- Leaders have planned and embedded a broad curriculum for pupils, which includes religious education and personal, social and health education. Visits and visitors bring to life pupils' learning about other cultures, tolerance and British values. Teachers ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well integrated into the curriculum.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' progress is improving strongly across different subjects. Pupils practise their reading and writing skills through a range of different topics planned by teachers, and pupils clearly find this engaging. Teachers' planning of a range of aspects of the Shang Dynasty captivated Year 4 pupils and ensured that they were hungry to learn more.
- The before- and after-school clubs are well attended and appreciated by pupils and their parents and carers.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the strengths of the school and the areas to develop further. However, together with senior leaders, their evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inflated.
- Governors have supported the decision to recently restructure the senior leadership team. Staff are appreciative of the support and changes the new assistant headteachers have brought to the leadership and management of the school.
- Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They have ensured that safeguarding is effective and systems to keep pupils safe are strong.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All statutory checks are in place to ensure the suitability of adults working in school. Appropriate checks are made on visitors when they arrive at the school.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' safety is a priority and staff are vigilant. They make sure that staff receive appropriate training to identify any signs of possible danger or potential abuse. Leaders have created a safe and caring culture in which pupils feel confident that they have someone to talk with if they are worried. Pupils spoken with during the inspection said that they feel safe in school.
- The procedures for reporting any incidents or concerns are very clear and understood

by staff, including those not directly employed by the school. Leaders effectively engage with parents and external agencies to ensure that all pupils are supported and safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Excellent relationships between the pupils and staff have led to a positive learning environment at Oldfield Brow. Pupils typically behave well in lessons and enjoy their learning. Teachers encourage pupils to work hard and try their best.
- Teachers know pupils well. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are appropriately challenged and supported in lessons. The new system to check on pupils' progress ensures that teachers and teaching assistants provide timely and appropriate support. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Pupils think deeply about their learning. Teachers plan lessons which engage and motivate pupils. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their mathematical thinking across a range of topics.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge of phonics. However, the planning of activities in Year 1 phonics sessions is not always precise enough. Learning time is occasionally wasted. Writing words on post-it notes leads to poor-quality writing because pupils have so little space and no lines from which to guide the formation of their letters.
- Leaders have raised the profile of reading across the school. Pupils are encouraged to review and share with others the books they have read. Teachers carefully choose high-quality books to read in class, which stimulates the interests of girls and boys alike. Older pupils told inspectors how important it is to be fluent readers in order to improve all aspects of their education and future prospects.
- The teaching of writing is effective in consolidating pupils' understanding of the correct application of grammar, spelling and punctuation. Pupils have regular opportunities to develop longer pieces of writing, both in English and across a range of subjects and topics.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in a wide range of curriculum subjects other than English and mathematics is good. Leaders of science, art and physical education (PE) ensure that staff work with teachers from other schools to develop their skills.
- Occasionally, teachers do not adapt pupils' activities quickly enough when pupils have misconceptions. This slows pupils' progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They show care and empathy for one another in their good conduct. Older pupils enjoy taking on extra responsibilities to model good behaviour to the younger pupils.

- Pupils have a good understanding of how their behaviour impacts on others. They report that bullying and name-calling incidents are rare.
- When pupils are anxious or worried, they are confident adults will listen to them. Pupils who spoke with the inspectors said that they feel valued and cared for well.
- Pupils learn about the attributes of a healthy lifestyle. Many sporting opportunities enable the pupils to engage in a wide range of activities to stay fit and healthy, while developing a competitive edge.
- The curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils have a developing understanding of what it means to be a British citizen. Their link with a school in India is an example of how they are developing their understanding of the lifestyles of children in a developing country. Pupils have a good understanding of gender, diversity and equality issues.
- The staff working in the breakfast club help pupils to have a calm start to their day. This is appreciated by pupils and parents alike.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Positive relationships between adults and pupils are promoted effectively. Pupils are polite, well mannered and friendly.
- Pupils said the behaviour of other pupils is good. Any incidents of bullying are rare and dealt with quickly by adults. Pupils speak confidently about how staff help them to resolve any disagreements.
- Attendance continues to be a strength of the school. Few pupils are persistently absent from school. Vulnerable pupils are well supported by staff, who also provide families with advice and signpost them to other agencies and charities for additional support.
- Inspectors observed pupils' good behaviour in lessons. Occasionally, when activities do not fully challenge the range of abilities, pupils become distracted and lack focus. Pupils move around the school sensibly, and they play well with one another at breaktimes.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018, the attainment of Year 6 pupils in reading, writing and mathematics combined was much higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils which achieved greater depth in reading and mathematics was above the national average. Those reaching greater depth in writing was in line with the national average. Current pupils in key stage 2 are making good progress as a result of good-quality teaching, the inspiring curriculum and the dedication of the staff team.
- Similarly, in the last two years, the proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching the expected standards and greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics has been above the national average. Across the current Year 1 and Year 2 groups, pupils are making good and some, better progress.
- The proportion of Years 1 and 2 pupils who achieved the expected standard for age in

the national phonics screening check was in line with the national average in 2018. Current pupils are making steady progress in acquiring and applying their phonics skills and knowledge effectively in their reading and writing.

- In writing, inspectors observed pupils applying their knowledge and skills in a wide range of writing across a range of subjects and genres. Teachers ensure that pupils develop their skills by undertaking longer pieces of writing, both in English and through topic work.
- Pupils read well. Those who read to the inspectors had books which were well matched to their ability and appropriately challenging. Pupils said that they enjoyed reading and that they were aware of a wide range of authors. Parents are actively involved in helping their children to read at home. Good routines have been embedded across the school. Pupils enjoy their regular comprehension challenges.
- In mathematics, inspectors noted that pupils make good progress. Pupils apply well a wide range of skills to different mathematical situations. Teachers' planning across a range of subjects, such as science, ensures that pupils apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in different settings.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND make good progress. Work in pupils' books and assessment information indicates that these pupils do well and are supported effectively in class.
- Across the wider curriculum, pupils achieve well because leaders have designed the curriculum to ensure that pupils experience a range of learning. For example, the quality of artwork is of an exceptionally high standard.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years requires improvement because leaders have not ensured consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the Nursery and Reception classes. Senior leaders have recognised the need for improvement. Consequently, an assistant headteacher is supporting this area of the school.
- Leaders' assessments of children's abilities are not always accurate. Children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge typical for their age. Over the past three years, the proportion of children who have achieved a good level of development has been broadly in line with national average, but with a below-average proportion attaining at greater depth in their learning. Some children, especially the most able, could be making more progress than they do currently.
- Leaders plan exciting learning and ensure that the different areas of the learning environment are well resourced. However, activities in the Reception class sometimes lack focus. Therefore, adults do not always move children's learning on well enough. As a result, some children do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Adults plan activities to encourage children to develop skills and knowledge quickly. Activities in the Nursery class encourage children to think deeply and extend their learning through discussion. For example, children were fascinated by the footprints left in their classroom following the visit from a dinosaur. Adults questioned whether it could have been a cat that had visited, but children were quick to respond well, explaining that the footprint was too big for a cat.

- Relationships between the children and adults are strong. Children enjoy their learning and are typically confident and articulate. They behave well and share cooperatively with their friends. Children enjoy a range of activities in the classroom but there are not as many opportunities for them to engage in structured activities outdoors.
- Welfare requirements are met. The provision is well staffed. It is a safe environment and all statutory school policies are in place, ensuring that children are safe and feel safe.
- Communication with parents is strong, for example leaders invite parents into school to view examples of children's learning and parents share the progress that children make at home.

School details

Unique reference number	106284
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	10090646

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	390
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Martin
Headteacher	Robert Merrell
Telephone number	0161 926 8646
Website	www.oldfield-brow.com
Email address	Office@oldfield-brow.com
Date of previous inspection	18 October 2006

Information about this school

- Oldfield Brow is a larger than the average-sized primary school. The school has undergone substantial new building work and as a result, the number of pupils on roll has almost doubled since the previous inspection.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than average.
- The proportions of pupils with SEND and of those who have an education, health and care plan are below average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than average.
- The senior leadership team has been restructured. As a result, two new assistant headteachers were appointed in September 2018.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Several sessions were observed jointly with the headteacher and assistant headteachers.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and held formal and informal discussions with pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and tracking records with senior leaders.
- The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, subject leaders, the chair of the governing body, the designated and deputy safeguarding leaders and the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND. The lead inspector held telephone conversations with a representative from the local authority and the vice-chair of the governing body.
- The responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account. The inspectors met with parents at the school gate to seek their views.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents. These included the school's development plans and self-evaluation documents, pupils' tracking information, subject leaders' documents, minutes of the governing body meetings, safeguarding documentation and various records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Moira Atkins	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Joyce	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Cropper	Ofsted Inspector

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