

Over Hall Community School

Ludlow Close, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 1LX

Inspection dates 12–13 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Highly committed and caring staff admire the drive of the senior leaders and share their passion for providing the best they can for the pupils.
- Good improvements have been made to pupils' achievement, because of the strong leadership provided by the headteacher who is well supported by the deputy headteacher.
- The quality of teaching in most lessons is good and some is outstanding, due to the range of ways the school checks on and improves teaching. As a result, pupils' progress is at least good in all subjects.
- Pupils help to improve teaching through their observations and feedback to staff.
- Governors work well with the school to ensure that money is well spent to help improve pupils' achievement and enjoyment of school.
- Pupils feel well cared for, safe and behave well. They are keen to learn in lessons and work well in groups when solving problems.
- The school provides many rich opportunities such as through trips out and visitors to the school, to help pupils learn well about the wider world.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The majority of teaching is not yet outstanding.
- More-able pupils are not consistently stretched, pupils' targets are sometimes unclear and not enough time is given for pupils to respond to comments in marking.
- Pupils do not attain standards at the end of Year 2 that are close enough to national expectations.
- The school has not successfully improved the attendance of a small number of pupils who are often absent.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed nine lessons, four of which were joint observations with the headteacher. They also made short visits to six lessons.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of eight responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to a parental questionnaire recently carried out by the school.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils. Inspectors also held discussions with the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and school staff.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, documents relating to the school's plans for improvement and its procedures for checking the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Pupils' books were checked by inspectors with the headteacher.
- Inspectors visited the school's breakfast and after-school club.

Inspection team

Clarice Nelson-Rowe, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Maureen Coleman	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- A high proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of families serving in the armed forces.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A breakfast and after-school club operate on the school site that is managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards at the end of Year 2 by:
 - ensuring all staff work towards achieving challenging targets for pupils' progress, to enable them to come closer to nationally expected standards.
- Improve teaching and learning so that most is outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers design activities that specifically challenge the more-able pupils to reach higher levels
 - giving pupils time to respond to teacher's written comments in marking, to show they understand what is been said to them and so improve their quality of work
ensure pupils' targets are more easily understood by them, so that they can be used to check and improve on their own progress.
- Improve rates of attendance by taking more effective steps to improve the attendance of the few pupils who are persistently absent.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are well below those typically expected for their age. They progress well due to good teaching. As they move through Years 1 and 2, the good progress continues. This is evident in lessons observed and samples of pupils' work seen. Teachers plan creatively and therefore help pupils to learn well in a fun way.
- Although standards at the end of Year 2 are slowly rising, pupils are still below the national average due to their very low starting points. Targets for progress are sometimes not challenging enough to help to bring pupils nearer to the standards expected for their age. However, by the time pupils leave school they reach standards that are in line with national averages in both English and mathematics.
- Progress in Years 3 to 6 is good and improving strongly, particularly in reading and writing, due to the school's efforts to promote higher levels of achievement in these areas. Pupils make better than expected progress in relation to most schools. Pupils with lower starting points often make better than expected progress when compared to national figures. More-able pupils do not consistently reach higher levels because teachers do not consistently plan activities that stretch them sufficiently.
- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who are supported by the pupil premium, make as good and sometimes better progress than all pupils in the school. This is due to the way the school carefully plans its support for pupils who may not achieve as well as others due to their additional needs. As a result, the school demonstrates good commitment to equal opportunities.

The quality of teaching is good

- Lessons are lively, interesting and consistently help pupils to make good and sometimes outstanding progress. Pupils are given regular opportunities to work in groups or in pairs to solve problems. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils were given a 'mystery envelope'. In groups, they had to put in order a set of instructions, work out what they were about and what were the good features of the instructions.
- Most lessons are planned well with the different needs and abilities of pupils in mind. For example, teaching assistants are used well to run or help with activities planned for pupils in need of extra support. However, more-able pupils are not always stretched enough with suitably challenging activities and so do not consistently reach higher levels of progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers' questioning is good. They regularly make checks and develop pupils' understanding throughout the lesson. Pupils' answers to questions are used well by teachers to adapt the lesson and to go over, or develop further, aspects of their learning.
- Marking is good as teachers mark regularly, accurately and identify clearly what pupils have done well and how they need to improve further. However, there are missed opportunities to encourage pupils to respond to the comments made in marking. For example, pupils do not consistently show that they understand the comments or practise making the improvements suggested by teachers as they are not given sufficient time to do so.
- Pupils are encouraged to reflect on what and how well they learn in lessons, either together or by themselves. Clear lesson objectives are used well to support this process and pupils' targets in their books. However, the targets in pupils' books are often too complicated and therefore are not used as well as they could be by pupils, to check or improve how well they learn.
- Writing and reading skills are taught well. The school promotes curiosity and excitement through the topics pupils are given to write and read about, but also through inviting authors to the school to work with children. Good grammar, punctuation and an adventurous choice of words are encouraged by teachers consistently across the school, leading to good and sometimes

outstanding progress in writing.

- Mathematics is taught well as pupils are given regular opportunities to use a range of methods to solve problems. Pupils are also given opportunities to use mathematics in different subjects across the school. However, sometimes work is not appropriately pitched at the right level for the more-able pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons as they regularly show keenness and an excitement to learn. They concentrate well and persevere. They rarely lose interest due to the ways that teachers plan a variety of activities to help them learn in an enjoyable way.
- Pupils behave safely around the school. Their good behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded by highly caring staff. They conduct themselves well around the school, in assemblies, and at break times. They show good awareness of safety issues including how to be safe when using the internet.
- Pupils feel safe. They are looked after well by all staff including those in the breakfast and after-school clubs which help to give a positive start and end to the school day. Pupils have few concerns about bullying as it is rare.
- Good and sometimes outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is regularly demonstrated. For example, the pupils take up opportunities to observe teaching in the school and to share their views with staff on how it could be improved. They also engage well with community issues such as visiting the Houses of Parliament to discuss with their Member of Parliament how to address issues in Winsford.
- For the few pupils who struggle with their behaviour, the school provides well-focused support and outside help to address their needs. Staff are sensitive and alert and know when these pupils may need to be withdrawn for quiet time alone. However, they also ensure that these pupils are taught skills to enable them to engage with other pupils respectfully.
- Attendance has improved well recently. This is due to improved arrangements across schools in the local area to promote better attendance and to the good work with parents through the home–school link worker. However, the school has not yet successfully improved the attendance of the small number of pupils who are persistently absent.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has high ambitions for the school and, with the deputy headteacher and other leaders, shows great determination in driving improvements forward. All staff are highly committed and go to great efforts to ensure that pupils make good progress in their learning and personal development. Leaders have an accurate view of how well the school is doing and what they need to improve further to make the school an outstanding one.
- The headteacher, alongside leaders at all levels, ensures a good range of ways is used to check on the quality of teaching. For example, the opportunity for all staff to look at pupils' work and information about pupils in one class at a time, during various times of the year, has been found to be particularly effective. This process enables all teachers to be part of the checking process, helps them to be familiar with what is taught in different classes and enables them to share tips on how to improve teaching further.
- Arrangements to improve the performance of teachers are good. Targets for staff are specific, challenging and linked to pay progression. There is good training for teachers, often provided by senior and middle managers in the school, which is helping to improve teaching further. The school is therefore demonstrating very good ability to carry on making further improvements.
- Activities across the school are planned well to promote at least good literacy and numeracy skills. There is also good attention to using visits such as those to museums and local places of worship and visitors to the school from a range of ethnic backgrounds, to widen pupils' knowledge and experience of the world and what they learn in class. As a result, their spiritual,

moral, social and cultural development is very strong.

- Partnerships with other schools are being used well. Pupils benefit from links with a local high school to enhance their physical education lessons and with special schools to promote engagement with those with special educational needs.
- As the school has made significant improvements in achievement, the local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide good challenge and support due to training undertaken and accurate information provided by the headteacher. They are knowledgeable about the overall quality of what the school provides, the quality of teaching, data and how pupils' test results compare nationally. They work closely with leaders at all levels, to improve the performance of staff. Governors closely check the school's finances and ensure that spending makes an impact on improving pupils' achievement. For example, they know how pupil premium funding is being used and what impact it is having on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	111130
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	401173

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vera Farrow
Headteacher	Hilary Berry
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2010
Telephone number	01606 288200
Fax number	01606 861998
Email address	admin@overhall.cheshire.sch.uk

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