

# Weston Primary School

Lambstickle Lane, Weston Village, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 4RA

## Inspection dates

27–28 September 2016

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- School leaders provide a safe, caring environment for the pupils in the school.
- Pupils, typically, demonstrate good attitudes and a strong willingness to learn.
- Parents say that school is a safe place and that their children enjoy coming to school.
- Leaders manage the performance of teachers well to ensure continuous improvement. Consequently, the quality of teaching is good.
- Children in Reception have positive attitudes to their learning. They are proud of their work and they cooperate well with each other.
- Current pupils in the school are making good progress and achieve well across a range of subjects.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils are polite and respectful and standards of behaviour around all areas of the school are good.
- Governors know the school well. They offer senior leaders good levels of support and hold them to account effectively.
- While writing is improving, there is still room for even further progress in this subject.
- Most-able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are not challenged consistently to allow them to think more deeply about their work.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics do not yet have a clear view of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve pupils' progress in writing by embedding the strategies that school leaders have recently put in place.
- Improve the achievement of most-able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, by more consistently providing activities that stretch them and allow them opportunities to work at greater depth.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics develop:
  - assessment and tracking procedures that better inform them of pupils' progress
  - strategies that give them a clear picture of the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- School leaders provide a safe and friendly environment for the pupils in their charge. This can be seen in the good attitudes and strong willingness to learn that pupils typically demonstrate. Parents and pupils both say that school is a safe place to be and that pupils enjoy coming to school – a fact that is also borne out by good attendance figures.
- Since the acting headteacher has been in post, she has made effective changes to the monitoring of teaching and learning. In addition, she has re-energised the senior leadership team with some new appointments. As a result, school leaders have a clear view of the school's strengths and priorities for development.
- Leaders manage the performance of teachers well, making effective use of the information provided by the monitoring processes they have put in place. They discuss areas for development with teachers and put actions in place to ensure continuous improvement, including training activities. As a result, the quality of teaching is good and improving.
- Subject leaders for English and mathematics are passionate about the subjects they lead. They have a clear overview of the progress that pupils make because assessment and tracking procedures are robust. Underperformance is tackled in a timely manner. For example, in recent years standards in writing at both key stages 1 and 2 dipped. Immediate action was taken and, as result, this trend of underperformance has been reversed. However, the school is aware the more work needs to be done to raise standards in writing to an even higher level.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics are not clear about the standards in their subjects. This is because there is inconsistent evaluation and tracking of progress overall.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to break down barriers to learning and to ensure that disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, participate in all the school has to offer. The funding is used to support pupils' academic, emotional and social development. This demonstrates the school's good commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. This is because leaders identify their needs quickly and make good use of resources, especially teaching assistants, to support their learning and development.
- The school makes effective use of the sports premium. Staff are becoming increasingly confident in their teaching of physical education. In addition, pupils are keen to take part in the growing number of sports competitions and extra-curricular activities that are on offer.
- The local authority has been providing a light touch level of intervention. It has shown a good awareness of the needs of the school by increasing this recently in order to support the new focus on writing that school leaders have established.
- Parents value highly all aspects of the school's work. They are overwhelmingly positive about the progress their children make and the culture of safety that the school has created.

- Overall, the curriculum is broad and balanced, but there is a stronger focus on English and mathematics in key stage 1. This reduces the depth with which pupils learn about other subjects compared to key stage 2 pupils. As they progress through school, however, pupils acquire appropriate knowledge and skills, such as understanding about gathering evidence in science investigations, and showing that they understand musical notation and terms such as 'tempo'.
- The wider curriculum contributes strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Planned activities to promote this development include work with a local church on moral questions and visits by the UK military school to develop pupils' thinking about discipline and the law. Artists and sculptors also come into the school to develop pupils' creativity. There is also a planned programme of activities each year which promotes fundamental British values effectively.
- Some information is missing from the school's website. School leaders know this and have taken appropriate action to correct the position.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are clear about the importance of safeguarding. They are kept regularly informed about safeguarding issues in school and the chair of the governing body holds regular meetings with school leaders.
- Governors receive regular and appropriate training in various areas, including safeguarding. As a result, they are able to provide good support to senior leaders.
- Governors have a clear overview of the school's strengths and areas for development. They challenge leaders stringently, asking searching questions about pupils' standards and financial matters.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff are highly knowledgeable about the most recent safeguarding procedures and training. They are very clear about how to report concerns, and they know how to recognise signs of abuse or neglect. Staff recruitment processes are safe and thorough. There is clearly a strong culture of safeguarding in the school.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers mostly plan lessons that pupils find stimulating and that allow pupils to gain skills and knowledge well. They often use skills learned in English and, to a lesser extent, mathematics across the curriculum. For instance, in a geography lesson, pupils were enthusiastic about using their writing skills effectively to compose a letter to a friend about the advantages and disadvantages of moving from a rural setting to a large city.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Consequently, all pupils are keen to learn.
- Most-able pupils are not consistently challenged to develop deeper learning, or think more independently. For example, in mathematics they sometimes complete a task quickly and are then distracted from their learning because no more challenging work is provided. Furthermore, in English pupils do not have the chance to make decisions

about the structure and style of their writing because the teacher limits them with a prescribed framework.

- The small number of pupils who are looked after or adopted are well provided for. In one class, for instance, one of this group showed confidence and a willingness to participate by eagerly volunteering to answer the teacher's questions, showing that this pupil felt included.
- Teaching assistants are a valuable asset to the school and are well deployed to support pupils in their learning. This support is particularly effective for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Resources are of good quality, are accessible and are used well to support pupils in their learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and generally use good questioning skills to ensure that pupils have understood what they are learning. Sometimes, pupils are asked to justify their responses, which helps to develop their reasoning and communication skills effectively.
- Parents feel well informed about their children's progress and they value the variety of homework that school provides.
- Teachers mainly adhere to the school's revised feedback and marking policy. However, there is some inconsistency, as teachers do not always allow pupils to respond in a way that will help them to improve or learn from their mistakes. There is also some inconsistency in the way teachers challenge spelling mistakes. In some cases, the mistakes are simply indicated; in others, pupils are expected to correct the mistakes.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They also know how to stay safe in various contexts and who to speak to if they have a concern.
- Pupils report that there is no bullying of any sort in school, but that any disputes between children that arise are dealt with effectively by school staff.
- Pupils' knowledge of e-safety is secure. They are aware of the risks presented by the internet and how to manage them. For example, they know what they would do if they were to see any inappropriate content on their computer.
- Pupils understand different faiths through their work in religious education and through visits from organisations such as church groups.
- The school's 'buddy' system between Year 6 pupils and Reception children is popular and gives the older children a sense of responsibility that contributes to their development as good citizens.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are confident and polite, showing good manners and conduct around school during breaks and lunch time. They also play well together, with older pupils generally looking after younger ones.
- Pupils mainly behave well in lessons, indicating a good attitude to their learning. They

respond positively to the carefully targeted praise used by teachers to encourage them. They are also well behaved and interested during assembly time.

- All groups of pupils have good attendance, which shows that they enjoy school and value their education.
- On occasions, a small number of pupils lose concentration in class and distract each other from their work. This is usually because the planned activity has not engaged them sufficiently. Teachers are, however, generally prompt in ensuring that pupils refocus on their task.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Current pupils, including children who are looked after or adopted, are making good and improving progress across a range of subjects from their different starting points. Through effective teaching, they acquire a range of knowledge, skills and understanding that are appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress compared to other pupils nationally. School leaders use pupil premium funding well to provide effective support for eligible pupils.
- Over time, a large majority of pupils have typically reached the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils read well and say that they enjoy reading. Many like to read for pleasure. Overall, pupils show good comprehension skills and can use their knowledge of phonics to sound out unfamiliar words.
- Validated key stage 2 assessment information for 2015 shows that, from a substantial majority of starting points, the proportions of pupils who made expected or better progress in reading, in writing and in mathematics was close to or above national figures.
- Provisional key stage 2 assessment information for 2016 indicates that for most aspects of English and mathematics, pupils made sufficient progress and on average reached the expected scaled score for attainment.
- While published data in writing at key stage 1 and key stage 2 shows that attainment has fallen in recent years, current pupils are making good progress because of improvements in the planning and teaching of this subject. This can be seen in the school's own assessment information and in pupils' work.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, frequently demonstrate a higher degree of understanding, knowledge and skills. For example, in Year 4, most-able pupils are using more ambitious vocabulary and phrases, such as 'disgusting odour' when describing an old orphanage. However, the provision of activities that allow most-able pupils to deepen their learning and challenge their abilities is inconsistent. As a result, learning for this group of pupils sometimes slows.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years leader has a good grasp of standards and priorities in the Reception Year. For example, after a recent review of provision, she has put revised assessment processes in place that focus more sharply on identifying the next steps of children's learning.

- Children come into Reception with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. As a result of good teaching, a significant number of children make good or better progress. By the time they leave Reception, the majority of children have the skills they need to start Year 1.
- Disadvantaged children, including the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points. Staff plan support effectively and they make good use of the early years pupil premium funding.
- The Reception teacher plans a good variety of activities which are fun, reflect children's interests and develop their learning well.
- Overall, questioning is used well to drive forward children's learning at a pace, particularly for the most able. This was exemplified when children were asked to identify how many 'p's there were in 'pumpkin'. Correct answers were forthcoming. This learning was then skilfully extended when the teacher questioned the children more deeply to assess their understanding of the connection between pumpkins and Hallowe'en.
- A large majority of children are developing their phonics knowledge rapidly. For example, some children write their names and use their phonics knowledge to sound out the letters correctly. Almost all the children can correctly identify initial sounds of objects that the teacher shows them.
- Children show good behaviour and are keen learners. They are proud of their work and cooperate well with each other to complete their tasks. They listen attentively when asked to do so and respond well when the teacher asks questions.
- There are good links between the early years and parents. There is an 'open door' policy which means that parents can bring their children into the classroom in the morning and can talk about their progress or any issues. There is also a home-school book for each child, in which parents can write down comments about their child's progress and development.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable about how to keep children safe and there are no breaches of welfare regulations. Children are well supervised and the learning environment is well organised and secure. They show that they feel safe through their attitudes to their learning and their relationships with their teachers and teaching assistants.

## School details

Unique reference number	111114
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10002980

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	169
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alicia Parry
Headteacher	Ros Atkins
Telephone number	01928 574544
Website	<a href="http://www.weston.halton.sch.uk">www.weston.halton.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head.weston@halton.gov.uk">head.weston@halton.gov.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	1–2 May 2012

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about: providing details of the curriculum for the academic year; the effectiveness of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; and governor dates of appointment, who appointed them, business and pecuniary interests and attendance at governors' committee meetings.
- The acting headteacher is in post until the substantive headteacher returns from maternity leave.
- Weston Primary School is smaller than average in size.
- The percentages of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are well below the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support in school for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below the national average.



- The proportion of pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of key stage 2.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations of learning in all year groups. Two of these were joint observations between the acting headteacher and the lead inspector. The acting 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, staff recruitment documentation, behaviour logs and records connected with the safeguarding of children.
- Inspectors had discussions with various stakeholders, including members of staff, governors, a representative from the local authority, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and analysed pupils’ writing and mathematics work, as well as their work in other subjects. They also looked at the work of children in the early years.
- The inspector also evaluated 37 responses received through Parent View (the online survey). No other survey responses were received.
- There is an independently run pre-school on site. This was not part of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Mark Quinn, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
David Woodhouse	Ofsted Inspector
Lorna Rushton	Ofsted Inspector

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