

# Brookside Primary School

Rostherne Avenue, Great Sutton, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH66 2EE

## Inspection dates

22–23 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress across the school. Children's skills and knowledge in the early years are now in line with age-related expectations. Standards in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 have also risen more quickly than seen nationally and pupils' attainment is now broadly average.
- The progress of all groups of pupils currently in the school is at least good. The proportion of pupils making better than expected progress by the end of Year 6 in 2014 in reading and writing was much higher than the national average.
- Teaching is consistently good. Questioning is used well to check regularly what pupils have understood and where misconceptions have occurred. Teachers use this information and outcomes from pupils' written work to plan activities which challenge all groups of pupils well.
- Pupils have a good attitude to learning. They are always well involved in their learning, particularly in discussions in groups and in pairs.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children make good progress in all aspects of their development. Thanks to leaders who identify quickly where children need extra support and children's good attitudes to learning, the proportion reaching a good level of development has significantly improved and is now in line with what is seen nationally.
- Pupils love coming to school and this is seen in their work in class, their strong participation in lessons, their smart appearance and high levels of attendance.
- Parents have confidence in the school's capacity to keep their children safe and happy and they believe their children make good progress.
- Leaders, including governors, have employed effective strategies to address areas of underperformance outlined in the previous inspection. As a result, teaching, pupils' attitudes to learning and achievement have improved significantly.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The attainment of pupils in reading in Key Stage 1 is below average and has not risen as fast as it has in writing and mathematics.
- There is not enough teaching yet which is outstanding. This is because pupils are not always given the chance to move onto more challenging work independently. At times they are too closely guided in their learning by adults.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of feedback offered to pupils. Not all pupils are given the opportunity to respond to comments made by teachers and to make improvements to their work.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons taught by eight teachers and four teaching assistants. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed, and spoke with pupils during lessons, at break times and at lunchtime. They also met formally with groups of pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2. Inspectors also observed pupils in assembly.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders. A meeting also took place with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including pupils' work in their books, the school's arrangements for safeguarding, performance management procedures, and pupils' attendance data. Inspectors also looked at information about pupil progress and attainment.
- Inspectors considered the 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also spoke to parents as they brought their children to school. In addition, they attended a breakfast for parents and children from the early years and had the opportunity to speak with parents at this event. The school also provided recent survey responses from parents and pupils.

## Inspection team

Fiona McNally, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elaine Maloney

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- A much smaller than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- An above average proportion of pupils are disadvantaged. These pupils are supported through pupil premium funding, which is provided for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs supported through school action is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement for special educational needs is just below average.
- The school meets 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.

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

- Improving even more the progress of all groups of pupils, particularly in reading in Key Stage 1, by:
  - providing extra support for those pupils identified as underachieving and ensuring they are given regular opportunities to read
  - consistently challenging pupils in their written work where spelling and grammar errors are identified.
- Improve teaching even further and, by doing so, increase the proportion of pupils making outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school by:
  - encouraging pupils to undertake more challenging tasks without being asked to do so, thus improving their ability to take responsibility for their own learning more
  - ensuring that feedback in marking consistently offers pupils clear direction as to how they improve their work and that pupils are always given enough time to make those improvements.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- As a result of senior leaders' and governors' well considered initiatives to improve school performance since the previous inspection, teaching and achievement are now consistently good. Pupils' attainment has risen faster than seen nationally and they are making good progress across all key stages in reading, writing and mathematics. Equal opportunities are fully promoted.
- Staff believe the headteacher has high expectations as to how the school can improve, and has supported their professional development by providing excellent training opportunities. Middle leaders are effective and have time to evaluate practice and seek advice. For example, leaders have taken time to investigate different methods for teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they make). As a result, a much larger proportion of pupils are now able to read by the end of Year 1.
- Leaders know the school well and are fully aware of the areas in which improvements need to be made.
- The monitoring of teaching and the scrutiny of pupils' work are now more regular and rigorous. Assessment has also improved and, as a result, support for pupils is now stronger and the gaps between the performance of different groups are continuing to close.
- Marking and the feedback to pupils on their work has improved significantly. There is also some strong practice in which teachers offer pupils challenges to extend their work. However, this is still not yet fully developed.
- Systems to monitor staff performance are fully in place and lead to a wealth of professional development for staff, including preparation for leadership roles. Staff have targets based on the pupils' progress and their performance. Salary rewards link to success. Staff express positive views about these arrangements.
- The curriculum is developing well and the school considered the views of pupils and staff when amending it. As pupils' speaking skills are lower than other aspects on arrival, this is now a focus in all lessons.
- A strong emphasis on class discussion, the emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills in all lessons and many extra-curricular visits ensure that pupils have good attitudes to learning. This is seen in all lessons, especially philosophy lessons in Key Stage 2. In addition, respectful attitudes modelled by adults and the regular reinforcement of the school's values of determination in learning and striving to make a positive contribution to school life, prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The school does much to engage parents, for example in helping their children learn at home. As a result, parents report that communication from school is much improved and they believe their children are happy, safe and making good progress.
- The additional primary school sport funding is used to good effect. There is increased participation in sports clubs and in pupils taking part in competitions in the local area. Pupils are taught by specialist sports coaches and teachers observe and teach with these specialists to improve their own skills in teaching sport and games.
- The local authority agrees with the school's view of itself and believes the school has made significant improvements in many areas to ensure pupils are now achieving well. The local authority has worked with the school in providing training for teachers and governors, as required, which has had a good impact on the improved provision.
- Safeguarding procedures meet all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are well informed and as a result of the training they have received since the previous inspection, challenge the leadership with rigour and have a good understanding of the achievement data presented to them. Equally, they are aware of what still needs to be done to improve the performance of the school further.
  - Governors know that the quality of teaching has improved and is now consistently good. They know where teaching is particularly strong and are fully aware that pupils' achievement is closely linked to teachers' pay progression.
  - The governors effectively manage the school's financial resources. This includes a clear understanding of how funding for disadvantaged pupils is used and the impact it has on their levels of achievement.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning in all year groups are positive and their conduct in class and around school is good. They are very respectful of one another, as modelled well by all adults, including the headteacher, who pupils say takes a close interest in them.
- There are very few incidents of low-level disruption and the rates of exclusion are well below the national average. Pupils enjoy the rewards they receive, which keep them motivated to do their best in all aspects of their life at school. For example, each teacher picks a pupil once a week who has done particularly well to celebrate their attributes in assembly. There are testimonials to the pupils about how they make a positive contribution to school life and how determined they are to succeed. These are values held in great esteem by the school and all pupils are fully aware of the benefits of being a persistent learner. Indeed, inspectors observed pupils congratulating one another after test results were returned, noting to one another how much they had improved since the last assessment. Pupils never give up on their objective of improving. As a result, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are making good progress.
- Pupils of all ages report that they enjoy school and that lessons are often fun and that they always understand the point of the activities in which they take part. Pupils present their work very neatly and in accordance with their teachers' instructions. Equally, the majority respond to specific guidance made by their teachers, although there are some inconsistencies in pupils' correcting spelling and grammar errors identified by their teachers.
- Pupils, parents and staff all say that poor behaviour is rare.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils' attendance has significantly improved in the past 12 months, thanks to the school's focus in this area and the employment of an attendance officer to work with families whose children do not attend regularly. In addition, the school now takes the views of the pupils in determining the topics they will be studying and how these topics will be studied. As a result, pupils are far more enthusiastic to attend every day, and they say they love coming to school.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school and believe the adults in the school supervise them well, know them well and are good to talk to if they need to share a concern. This extends to the playground, as well as in school, where pupils of different ages play happily together.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudiced-based bullying. Parents and pupils agree that bullying is very rare and when it does happen, adults deal with it quickly so that it does not persist. The school's own logs of bullying incidents demonstrate low rates of bullying.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They wear the school uniform smartly at all times. The classrooms and other areas around the school are tidy and well organised.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Over time, the quality of teaching is good. This is seen in pupils' work, in their test and assessment outcomes, from the good progress they make over time, and from leaders' monitoring of teaching.
- Adults and pupils enjoy very positive relationships and, consequently, pupils feel confident to question ideas and offer opinions. One result is that pupils' speaking skills are being developed successfully. This is a particular strength throughout the school from the early years to the end of Key Stage 2. This is a focus for all teachers as the school is making a concerted effort to overcome particularly weak development in children's speech and language when they arrive in Nursery. The majority of children's development in this area is at least 10 months below their actual age.
- Questioning is skilful and comprises different techniques to gauge what pupils have understood well and what misconceptions about their learning may have occurred. When this happens, teachers are quick to respond and provide activities to reinforce learning. They also provide resources to challenge pupils further when they are ready to move the learning on.
- Teachers work well with teaching assistants in the classroom and teaching assistants have a clear understanding of their role in helping identified pupils with their learning. Teaching assistants have been well trained and, as a result, are very capable of taking the initiative when they see that pupils need further support.
- Marking of pupils' work is regular and thorough but its impact is not always consistently effective. Most marking also includes feedback from teachers which highlight errors to pupils or provide pupils with

guidance on how to make their work better. Pupils are expected to respond and generally do so. However, at times, teachers do not provide a challenge for pupils who have successfully completed a piece of work, which will move their learning on and, on these occasions, pupils are sometimes required to repeat a piece of work they have already completed well. Equally, on occasions, pupils do not respond fully to teachers' feedback.

- Resources match pupils' needs well and pupils are generally offered an appropriate level of challenge in lessons. However, pupils often rely too much on teachers to help them move onto the next challenge. This inhibits their ability to learn unaided.
- The teaching of reading has been a focus in all key stages and there are an increasing proportion of pupils now reading at the expected level for their age. This is because there are regular opportunities for pupils to read in class and there is more encouragement from parents to support their children with reading at home. The way phonics is taught has changed in the past 12 months in order to increase the proportion of pupils who can read by the end of Year 1. As a result, and the strong teaching of phonics, this proportion has increased significantly and is now well above the national average.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Pupils achieve well in all key stages. Children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge below what is typical for their age, particularly in speech and language development. The attainment of pupils has improved rapidly in both Key Stages 1 and 2 and in all three subjects. In the Year 6 class which left in 2014, for example, pupils reached broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics and there is evidence to suggest that this group of pupils made very strong progress.
- Improvements in attainment and progress in reading are particular strengths. A much larger proportion is now reaching expected levels in the phonics screening check in Key Stage 1, which prepares them well for the rigours of reading in Year 2 and beyond.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points to the end of Year 6 and their achievement is in line with other pupils in school. In 2014, by the end of Year 6 pupils were two and a half terms behind their peers in school in mathematics. They were under two terms behind other pupils nationally. In reading, they were two and a half terms behind their peers in school and one and half terms behind other pupils nationally. In writing, they were just under four terms behind their peers in school and two and a half terms behind other pupils nationally. This demonstrates that the gap between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged pupils in the school is closing over time.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. This also demonstrates improvements in the provision for these pupils, which has led to stronger progress. The gap in attainment between these pupils and their peers in school is closing as they move through the school.
- The most able pupils achieve well, including those currently in the school. The most able pupils are provided with activities and work which challenge them and, as a result, an increasing proportion are now reaching the higher levels. This represents good and sometimes outstanding progress over time.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well. They make progress in line with, and sometimes better than, their peers. The good achievement of different groups of pupils, from different backgrounds and of different abilities, demonstrates how committed the school is to offering all pupils in their care an equal opportunity to achieve well during their time in school.

### **The early years provision** is good

- Children start school with skills and knowledge below what is typical for their age. Thanks to strong leadership, assessment of the children is rigorous and accurate and information is used well. Leaders and teachers are well aware of which areas need to be prioritised for developing children's skills so they can fully access all parts of their learning in the early years. For example, assessments show consistently that when children arrive, they do so with lower than expected development and that, in particular, their speech and language as well as their communication and listening skills are low.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Teachers plan activities to advance children's skills so that by the time they leave Nursery more are working at levels that are typical for their age. Children enjoy a variety of activities to support rapid development of their skills both indoors and outside.
- Good progress is sustained in the Reception class. The majority of children attain skills in line with what would be expected for their age by the end of the early years. For the first time, in 2014, the majority of

children left the early years with good levels of development in line with the national average. This demonstrates good progress and signals strong improvement of the provision, where good levels of development have historically been below the national average. As a result, as pupils enter Year 1, they are well prepared for their future learning.

- School leaders make concerted efforts to engage parents in the early years, many of whom are new to the school system. For example, the school holds a breakfast for parents to enjoy in school, and to hear from teachers the different activities in which their children are currently engaged. They also receive advice on how they can reinforce this learning at home. Parents regard this as useful. Parents are also of the opinion that the varied menu at the breakfast encourages them to ensure that their children eat a more varied diet.
- Children's behaviour is good. They have clear, established routines and thus a clear understanding of the adults' high expectations of them. As a result, their conduct is very good and they respond to adults' instructions immediately. The children also trust adults; they know they care about them and this helps when adults are observing and supporting children to move their learning on.
- The achievement of all groups is good. There are a significant proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and there are very clear systems, understood by all, which help all adults to understand children's particular needs and how to help them make good progress. Parents agree that this is a particularly strong part of the early years provision and feel reassured that staff cater fully for their children's needs.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131956
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	452027

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Newman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Rodgers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 June 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 338 2052
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