

Cheswardine Primary and Nursery School

Glebe Close, Cheswardine, Market Drayton, Shropshire TF9 2RU

Inspection dates

24–25 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires Improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders do not yet have sufficient impact on consistently raising pupils' achievement. School improvement plans require further refining to ensure that targets are clearly measurable.
- Teaching has not been consistently good over time to ensure that all pupils are making good progress.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school and understand its effectiveness. However, they have only recently started to rigorously hold leaders to account.
- Pupils do not routinely show sufficient pride in their work. Teachers do not consistently on the highest standards of presentation and handwriting.
- The curriculum is interesting and varied, so pupils enjoy their lessons. However, teachers' expectations in teaching the humanities are not consistently high enough.
- Pupils' outcomes are too varied. Not all pupils make sufficient progress. Consequently, some pupils' attainment is too low.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding independently.
- The role of middle leaders is not fully developed and they have not had sufficient impact in improving the subjects they lead.
- Teaching is improving but some teachers do not frequently plan work that offers the right challenge for pupils. This means that some pupils, but in particular the most able, do not make the rapid progress they are capable of.
- Pupils' work and observations of learning show that teachers and support staff do not ask enough questions to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Teachers do not routinely intervene during lessons to address misconceptions.

The school has the following strengths

- Early years provision is good. Children gain confidence and make good progress from their differing starting points.
- A wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, including specialist teaching in music, PE and German, combined with visits enrich learning.
- The large majority of parents, staff and pupils have a positive view of the school.
- Early reading skills and phonics are taught well.
- Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is very good. Pupils are polite, respectful and welcoming to visitors.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should:
 - strengthen the role of subject leaders to monitor teaching and learning in their areas effectively and enhance leadership capacity in the school
 - sharpen school improvement plans with a greater focus on improving pupils' outcomes and introducing more specific time frames
 - continue to challenge leaders rigorously to improve outcomes for pupils, particularly the most able and document this challenge appropriately in governor minutes
 - improve the quality and consistency of checks by leaders so that teaching in history and geography develops pupils' subject-specific skills and meets the school's planned coverage of the national curriculum.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by making sure that:
 - the best teaching in the school is shared more widely so that there is greater consistency of practice
 - all pupils use neat handwriting and good presentation consistently across the curriculum
 - teaching sufficiently challenges pupils by making sure that work planned is carefully matched to pupils' abilities, including the most able, to improve their progress further
 - the quality of questioning is consistently effective in stimulating pupils' thinking and probing their understanding
 - pupils have planned opportunities to think for themselves, make their own choices and be more independent learners
 - adults check on how well pupils are learning in a lesson so they can quickly help those who are struggling and offer greater challenge to pupils who are secure in their understanding.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Over time, senior leaders, including governors, have not been effective enough to ensure good teaching and progress across all key stages.
- Although teaching is improving and many pupils are now making rapid progress, attainment is not consistently in line with the national average. This is one of the vestiges of the legacy of underachievement and inconsistent teaching.
- Action plans are not as useful a tool for school improvement as they could be. Timescales for improvements and their intended impact on pupil progress are often unclear. Governors have only recently begun to play a part in checking that leaders' actions are having a positive effect on pupils' progress.
- The role of middle leaders is underdeveloped in the school. The senior teacher is new to the role and has had limited opportunities to work alongside colleagues to improve their practice. Checks on the quality of teaching are not incisive enough for all teachers to be clear about the difference their work makes to pupils' achievement.
- Not enough checks are in place to make sure that teaching in subjects including history and geography is of a high standard and matches the school's plans for coverage of the national curriculum. The development of pupils' historical and geographical skills requires closer monitoring to ensure that pupils are well equipped to start secondary school.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school. Support for leadership, including governance, has been arranged and this support has had an immediate impact. The local authority adviser has been able to support the headteacher's checks on the school's performance and provide the challenge needed.
- The school now uses its pupil premium funding more effectively to provide support for disadvantaged pupils and so improve their rates of progress.
- The school's strategies to improve outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are improving. The school has established a clear system for deploying additional staff to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils in classrooms. Pupils are integrated well in working alongside their peers, while having additional adult support close at hand.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively through a range of musical and sports activities, trips and visitors. Older pupils say that they enjoyed being involved in team-building activities while on a recent residential visit to Arthog outdoor education centre. A visit by Year 5 and 6 pupils earlier this year to Germany was also seen by pupils as highly beneficial. It developed their confidence, social skills, grasp of the German language and understanding of another European country.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in all areas of the school. Pupils have an understanding of non-Christian religions. A display in the school captures pupils' social targets as they strive to 'turn over a new leaf'. They learn

to cooperate well and respect others. Pupils with key roles, such as international committee members, reading buddies, house captains and school council members, help support their peers and instigate school improvement. Pupils were proud to inform the inspector that they were instrumental in getting school meals to be served hotter than they had been previously.

- The school makes good use of the primary physical education (PE) and sports premium. There is a clear focus on developing staff confidence and competence, enhancing pupils' physical skills and healthy lifestyles. For example, teachers often work alongside a specialist PE teacher to develop their own expertise, and pupils take part in regular tournaments and festivals. Despite very low numbers in each year group, pupils have competed admirably against much larger schools and the school has been awarded the Silver Activemark.
- The overwhelming majority of parents are happy with the school. Almost all of the parents who responded to Parent View said that they would recommend the school to others. One parent spoke for many by saying: 'I feel very comfortable sending my son to Cheswardine primary school. He enjoys his time at school and there is always a lovely atmosphere between children and teachers.'
- Arrangements for the performance management of teachers are stringent and align closely with teaching standards and current school improvement priorities.

Governance of the school

- In the past few years, governors have not used the school's performance information effectively to challenge school leaders about the underachievement of pupils. The legacy of underachievement was not addressed in a timely manner.
- Under the direction of the local authority, governors have recently conducted an action review to improve the overall effectiveness of the school. As a consequence, the governing body has been refreshed and transformed. Governors are ambitious for the school to improve. They are now more knowledgeable and confident in asking searching questions of the leadership. Governors are also beginning to carry out some checks on the impact leaders' actions make, but these are at an early stage. Some of the strategic plans do not yet have clear enough milestones to enable governors to measure the impact of leaders' work precisely enough. In addition, greater attention needs to be given to how challenge and future actions are documented in governor minutes.
- Governors now liaise more closely with staff to help raise standards and keep themselves informed of curriculum changes. They regularly come into school to see for themselves the progress being made. Governors also seek the views of parents more readily to improve communication and identify ways of improving provision.
- Governors understand their statutory responsibilities, such as keeping the website up to date and their role in safeguarding. They regularly review the single central record to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders make sure that checks on all staff, volunteers and governors are well managed, continuously reviewed and updated.
- Leaders ensure that the school's culture of safeguarding is strong. Staff are well trained and have kept up to date with statutory guidance and best practice, for example, through weekly NSPCC circulars. They know and understand what to do when they identify concerns and act swiftly. As a result, pupils feel safe and are kept safe.
- The headteacher has fostered a school culture in which pupils know the importance of looking out for each other and how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils attend workshops on road safety and e-safety. Pupils report that they feel safe. One pupil who spoke to the inspector said of staff that, 'They know every child by name and they're really kind and caring.'
- The school is quick to engage with external agencies and support services to ensure the safety and well-being of all children. Work to fully involve parents in their children's education has further strengthened safeguarding.
- Parents are rightly confident that their children are safe and well cared for at school. One parent wrote: 'The children have many opportunities and experiences for a small school and it has such a community and family feel.' Another described the school as a 'hidden gem'.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because they are not consistently good across classes and subjects.
- Expectations are not consistently high for all groups of pupils. In some lessons, the work is not set at the right level of difficulty for pupils, especially the most able. When this happens, pupils' learning slows down because the work is too easy and they are not moved onto new learning quickly enough.
- Staff do not systematically check on how well pupils are learning in a lesson. As a result, those pupils who are struggling sometimes stall in their learning, while pupils who are secure in their understanding sometimes complete work that is too easy for them. Questions are often too specific to enable pupils to explore their learning and deepen their thinking.
- Teachers do not consistently use a range of resources and approaches to spark pupils' creativity and allow pupils to make their own choices and develop their independent thinking skills.
- There is some strong teaching in the school. High expectations, excellent preparation and planning and good pupil learning attitudes underpin this. Such practice is starting to be disseminated in the other year groups.
- Teaching assistants work effectively alongside teachers and provide good support to individuals and small groups of pupils. They strike a good balance between explaining how a task should be undertaken and requiring pupils to work independently.

- Improving the quality of the teaching of writing is a focus for school leaders. It is much improved as teachers now have higher expectations of pupils' writing and pupils enjoy regular opportunities to write at length. Younger pupils enjoyed writing instructions for the sweet peas they had planted and older pupils were encouraged to use words including 'lachrymose' in the correct context. Children in early years recorded customers' orders in the role-play café and pupils had a sound understanding of their next steps in writing.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in the early years and key stage 1. When listening to pupils read, it was clear that pupils of different ages used their phonic skills to good effect when trying to pronounce unfamiliar words. The majority of pupils told inspectors that they enjoy reading, attend Market Drayton library and read regularly at home. Most read with expression and the older pupils understood the meaning of words including 'bashful', 'hankering' and 'implored'. They were able to discuss their favourite authors but would enjoy a wider variety of books, of their choosing, on their class bookcases.
- Mathematics teaching across the school is improving. An increased focus on reasoning and applying mathematical skills in all year groups is beginning to take hold well this year. The acquisition of key mathematical skills is also being fostered effectively in key stage 1.
- Good relationships between staff and pupils help to create a purposeful working atmosphere where children are keen to learn. Pupils say they value opportunities to earn 'dojos' for good learning and they find table resources like their literacy mats helpful in supporting their writing.
- Teachers give pupils good opportunities for discussing and sharing their work with their talking partners, helping them to develop their speaking and listening skills effectively.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- When walking around the school or meeting visitors such as school inspectors, pupils conduct themselves politely and confidently. Older pupils show particular care and consideration towards younger pupils.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about their school. They told the inspector how much they enjoy their lessons, including a recent visit by archaeologists linked to their study of dinosaurs. They appreciate how fortunate they are to have access to such wonderful school grounds and they enjoy working in their outdoor classroom.
- Pupils with whom the inspector spoke said their feelings and views matter to staff. They feel staff listen to them and noted how new bikes had been purchased for Year 1 and additional playground resources as a result of pupils' requests.
- Pupils say that staff respond well to the rare instances of bullying and that there is no racism among pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe at school. One pupil noted how 'children never feel embarrassed sharing a problem with teachers'.

- Pupils enjoy the breakfast club and the good start it gives to the day.
- Pupils feel safe and are taught about how to stay safe in a well-planned, structured way. Pupils speak confidently about lessons in which they are taught about how to stay safe online, stranger danger and eating healthily. As a result of this, pupils are making informed decisions about protecting themselves.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons. At times, the inspector observed exemplary behaviour. Pupils are eager to collaborate on paired and group activities, offering support and encouragement to those pupils who need additional support.
- During playtimes and lunchtimes pupils behave well, socialise suitably and engage in a variety of friendly games. Activities such as the tyre park, football, netball, a climbing wall and an assortment of small playground equipment encourage active lifestyles. Friendly conversation was also observed in a shaded wooded area where lots of pupils enjoyed chatting amiably with their peers.
- The vast majority of parents consider that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils' attendance at school is excellent. Pupils are punctual and no pupils are persistently absent from school.
- In mathematics and English, pupils take care with the quality of presentation of their work. In the wider curriculum, pupils do not show that same level of pride in their work. This is because teachers' expectations of both handwriting and presentation are not consistently high.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because progress has been too variable across all subjects and all year groups since the previous inspection. Inconsistent expectations of pupils' performance lead to erratic patterns of progress and attainment. This is because the quality of teaching has not been consistently good enough over time.
- In 2016, pupils' attainment was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Pupils did not make enough progress from their starting points and too many pupils underachieved. This included disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The most able pupils do not make enough progress. Despite improvements in teaching, there remain too limited opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding across a range of subjects. This hinders the progress these pupils make. Too few pupils are exceeding national expectations again in 2017.
- Pupils' progress and attainment are tracked each half term, leading to the provision of extra support to pupils where necessary. Assessment information shows that there has been recent rapid improvement for many pupils, supported by work seen in English

and mathematics books. As a result, a much higher proportion of pupils in Year 6 are currently working at the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics than was seen both by the school and nationally in 2016.

- Progress in key stage 1 is showing some improvement. A higher proportion of pupils in Year 2 are performing at levels expected for their age this year in all subjects.
- Current pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making better gains in reading, writing and mathematics, given their starting points. Additional support is planned quickly and carefully and led by skilled teaching assistants to ensure that they meet their needs precisely.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making stronger gains in their current work in reading, writing and mathematics. From starting points at the beginning of the year, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils moving towards the standards expected for their age is increasing.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of phonics. The proportion achieving the expected level in the Year 1 phonics check was well above the national average in 2016. Inspection evidence confirms that standards have continued to improve.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders use local authority moderators to check that their judgements on children's starting points when they enter the early years are accurate. This lends confidence to the view that children are making good progress from their starting points in a number of areas of learning. Observations during the inspection confirm this.
- In 2014 and 2015, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development was above average, with all groups achieving well. Despite a dip in 2016, the proportion is much improved for 2017.
- Early reading, writing and number skills are given high priority. The outdoor areas in Nursery and Reception are carefully set up to support these skills with a range of activities for children to practise and apply skills in independent play. Nursery children were observed playing in their outdoor café where one child commented, 'This teacake is round,' while another counted how many pancakes he had to sell.
- The indoor and outdoor environments are orderly and well resourced. Children are excited to learn. Nursery children were delighted to explore their mud exploration area. 'My boot's stuck in the mud,' laughed one child as another discussed how the mud on her boot was drying and changing texture in the process.
- Teachers and support staff ensure that children make good progress by providing an effective blend of activities, some staff-led and some child-initiated. Reception children work alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils when appropriate. This helps ensure that the most able are suitably challenged and are very well prepared to start key stage 1.
- The wide range of work produced in children's learning journals shows that they make strong progress towards their early learning goals over time. A vast and detailed collection of precise quotes by children alongside photographs of them at play demonstrates strong improvements in their speech and language since September.

- Children learn not just the requisite subject skills and knowledge, but also develop well as individuals. 'I need a cloth to clean up,' said one nursery child responsibly. They quickly learn what is expected of them, for example when listening to the teacher or each other. They socialise well with each other.
- Transition arrangements are highly effective between Nursery and Reception. This helps ensure that children have a smooth start when they commence full-time education.
- The vast majority of parents are appreciative of the care taken to ensure that their children are happy and make good progress. They speak highly of approachable staff. They are keenly involved in their children's learning but school leaders must do more to ensure that parents are able to make valuable contributions to their child's learning journal.
- Safeguarding practice matches the good practice across the rest of the school. All welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	123357
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10032577

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	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Otto Blank
Headteacher	Stuart King
Telephone number	01630661233
Website	www.cheswardine.shropshire.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@cheswardine.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Cheswardine Primary and Nursery School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who leave and join the school other than at normal points of transfer is in line with the national average.
- The early years provision consists of a Reception class who are taught alongside pupils in key stage 1 and a separate nursery.
- The school operates a breakfast club.
- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in a number of lessons, several of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. The inspector also made a number of short visits to lessons as part of learning walks throughout the school.
- The inspector observed other aspects of the school day, including lesson changeovers, breaktimes, lunchtimes and the start and the end of the school day.
- Various discussions were held with senior leaders, pupils, parents, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including: the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and attendance; reports on the school's progress from external consultants; minutes of governing body meetings; the school's self-evaluation; and the school's improvement plans.
- The inspector listened to pupils reading, looked at pupils' books and scrutinised the school's information showing pupils' current progress and attainment for all groups in all year groups. The inspector also scrutinised books belonging to specific groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.
- The views of pupils and children were gathered by the inspector, who spoke to them in lessons, at breaktimes and in a small group meeting.
- The views of parents were gathered from 15 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and 11 text responses. The inspector also spoke to parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- The inspector considered the seven responses in staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Alan Prince, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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