

Upton Westlea Primary School

Weston Grove, Upton-by-Chester, Chester, Cheshire CH2 1QJ

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2017

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, provides determined and ambitious leadership. The school has improved since the previous inspection.
- The governing body makes a positive contribution to school improvement. Governors have an accurate understanding of how pupils progress in their learning.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork. Everyone involved with the school shows a strong commitment to nurturing and supporting pupils.
- Leaders deploy the highly skilled teaching assistants effectively. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are good. From their different starting points, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress.
- The teaching of writing has improved considerably since the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Pupils learn precisely what they need to do to produce good-quality pieces of work.
- Staff teach phonics well. Younger pupils read, pronounce and write new sounds with confidence.
- The Eden Centre for pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) provides a calm and nurturing environment. Pupils make good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils enjoy the well-thought-out curriculum. This is enhanced by trips, visits and visitors.
- The Reception classroom is a rich and enjoyable learning environment. Children in early years make good progress from their starting points.
- Throughout the school, including in Nursery, teachers sometimes plan activities that are not closely enough matched to children's needs. In Nursery, the outdoor area lacks carefully planned opportunities to develop early skills.
- In a minority of classes in key stages 1 and 2, teachers sometimes plan activities which do not meet the needs of pupils, especially the most able.
- In mathematics, pupils do not have regular opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Middle leaders are passionate and knowledgeable about their subjects. They provide clear guidance to teachers in the school. In some subject areas, middle leaders are still developing systems to check on pupils' learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - providing more opportunities for the most effective teachers to share their strong practice across the school
 - ensuring that teachers closely match tasks to pupils' abilities, especially for the most able
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of provision in Nursery by:
 - making sure that activities are carefully matched to children's interests and abilities
 - further developing the outdoor learning area.
- Further develop the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that middle leaders develop effective systems for checking on pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, staff, parents and pupils share the governors' strong and aspirational vision for the school. With the strong support of senior leaders, the headteacher has brought about significant improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Senior leaders and governors have a deep understanding of the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Teachers carefully plan provision, including in the Eden Centre. Leaders make good use of funding, carefully measuring the impact of additional teaching and support on pupils' progress.
- The headteacher and family support worker meet the needs of pupils from armed forces families. Staff establish close links with the local army base. As a result of this support, these pupils make good progress and do as well as their peers.
- Leaders have accurately identified disadvantaged pupils' barriers to learning. The school's family support worker works closely with the headteacher, staff and other outside agencies to ensure that provision closely matches pupils' needs. Leaders spend funds mainly on the staffing of additional support for pupils. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- There are rigorous systems in place to check on the effectiveness of teaching and learning throughout the school. Leaders frequently watch lessons and check pupils' workbooks. Leaders measure how well pupils are progressing in their learning. Where leaders identify areas to improve teaching, they put in place well-planned training and support.
- In mathematics and English, subject leaders take a very active role in checking how well pupils learn. Leaders are knowledgeable about their subjects and are determined to build on recent improvements.
- Leaders encourage teachers to work together to share expertise and good practice, but acknowledge that more opportunities would improve practice. The school works closely with other schools in the locality and staff value the training and support that leaders give them. Staff are keen to develop their skills further.
- The curriculum covers all national curriculum areas. Pupils' books show good progress in science, geography, history and religious education. Subject leaders monitor pupils' learning in all areas of the curriculum. However, leaders have not developed clear systems to measure pupils' progress in subjects other than mathematics and English.
- Through the carefully planned curriculum, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. For example, Year 4 pupils took part in a workshop on British values, writing and acting in a play for the whole school. Pupils have a good understanding of democracy and the rule of law. They learn about other faiths and cultures. Pupils' leadership is strong. For example, classes elect school councillors and behaviour ambassadors. Older pupils regularly lead meetings and assemblies.

- Parents receive informative reports from the school which explain their children's attainment and progress. Responses on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and parents who spoke to inspectors were predominantly positive about the school.

Governance of the school

- An enthusiastic, skilful and effective governing body supports leaders. Governors have a detailed knowledge of the school, including the progress that pupils make in their learning. Governors are uncompromising in their desire to raise standards. They have worked closely with leaders to monitor, evaluate and improve all areas of the school.
- Governors carefully check on the use of external funding for physical education and sport, the use of the pupil premium grant and SEN and/or disability funding for the Eden Centre. Governors ask pertinent questions and hold leaders to account in a firm but fair manner.
- Governors take their responsibilities very seriously. They are scrupulous in ensuring that they have the right level of skills and expertise. All governors undertake training to develop their knowledge. They provide the right balance of challenge and support for leaders in the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders complete thorough checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. The school provides all staff with regular and appropriate training which reflects recent developments in ensuring that pupils are safe. Leaders train staff to identify any signs of abuse.
- Staff are vigilant in referring any concerns about pupils' safety to the school's designated safeguarding leader. Leaders deal with concerns quickly and, where necessary, they seek specialist support from professional agencies. Record keeping in relation to safeguarding concerns is good. Leaders follow up any concerns swiftly and effectively.
- Staff work closely with families and outside agencies to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Classes elect Year 6 pupils to the e-safety council. The council supports staff in teaching pupils how to stay safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the last inspection and is now good.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge contributes well to pupils' progress and learning. They use language precisely so that pupils learn new vocabulary and develop a deeper understanding.

- Staff training in the school's new approach to teaching writing works well. Pupils are enthusiastic in lessons and produce work of good quality. They practise their writing skills across other subjects on a regular basis.
- Staff teach pupils phonics and early reading systematically. Teachers give early support to pupils whose reading and spelling skills are behind those of their classmates. This support precisely matches pupils' needs.
- Teachers have improved pupils' skills in reading. Staff teach pupils to read with fluency and expression and teach grammar, punctuation and spelling well in English lessons. Staff reinforce these skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers give accurate feedback on learning, following the agreed policy of the school. Pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve.
- The precision with which teachers plan activities to match the needs of all pupils is still developing. For example, in mathematics, teaching does not always provide the challenges needed to stretch pupils, including the most able. In some year groups, pupils need more opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive excellent support, both within the Eden Centre and in the wider school. Leaders plan teaching and support carefully to involve teachers, parents, pupils and external agencies.
- Leaders deploy teaching assistants exceptionally well. Teaching assistants are one of the school's main strengths. They give pupils the right help to achieve well. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to ensure that support for teaching is appropriate.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and confident learners. They cooperate well with their classmates and listen carefully to advice from teachers and other pupils about how to improve their work.
- The care that pupils receive from staff is exemplary. Staff get to know pupils and their families extremely well. The school's family support worker, ably assisted by other staff, offers a wide range of help, including speech therapy and art therapy. This personalised intervention helps pupils to overcome any barriers to their learning.
- In the Eden Centre, staff work closely with families and other agencies. The school ensures that it meets the educational, social and healthcare needs of pupils. Teachers carefully plan the curriculum to give pupils a range of opportunities. For example, pupils enjoyed working with staff to plan and build an outdoor sensory garden, which is part of their outdoor classroom.
- Staff take time to ensure that induction for new pupils is successful. For example, a carefully planned transition takes place for children of military personnel. Members of staff visit the families' army base in Cyprus to ensure that the pupils' move is successful.

- Annual residential trips in Year 2 and key stage 2 give pupils the opportunity to become more independent and to overcome challenges. They take part in outdoor and adventurous activities. Year 2 pupils enjoyed a residential trip to Delamere Forest, developing their teamwork and resilience.
- Pupils are curious about other faiths and cultures. They learn about other religions, and visitors to the school enhance pupils' learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are pleasant and polite. They move around the school in a calm and orderly way. They settle very quickly to work and are ready to learn. Lunchtimes are calm and orderly. They provide a sociable experience for all pupils, including those from the Eden Centre.
- School leaders have worked hard to improve behaviour across the school. Pupils understand a recently introduced behaviour system which is working well.
- Attendance is improving for all groups. Leaders celebrate good attendance in the school through assemblies, newsletters and awards. They take swift and appropriate action when pupils' attendance starts to fall.
- Pupils and parents agree that pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils are clear that there is no name-calling. They are kind to each other and staff teach them to respect each other's differences.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The proportion of pupils who reached the standards expected for their age at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 in 2017 was low. However, pupils across the school make good progress from their variable starting points. This includes pupils from the Eden Centre who have SEN and/or disabilities, along with other pupils with significant barriers to their learning. There are also significant numbers of pupils who joined the school very recently, some with below-average starting points.
- Pupils currently in the Eden Centre and those in the main school who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. The school plans teaching and support carefully, improving pupils' outcomes in the full range of subjects. Teachers plan for the transition of these pupils when they join or leave the school. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- A majority of disadvantaged pupils also have SEN and/or disabilities. The school's assessment information and pupils' books show that other disadvantaged pupils make good progress. They are working close to or at the expected level for their age. The school works closely with outside agencies to ensure that outcomes for children looked after are also good.
- The proportion of pupils who passed the phonics check in Year 1 declined in 2017. However, the vast majority of pupils who did not attain the expected standard were those who have SEN and/or disabilities or who joined the school during the school year

at below-average starting points. Outcomes for other pupils in phonics were good. Those pupils working below the national average in phonics receive well-planned additional teaching. Their progress is also good.

- In 2017, by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics, which was below average in 2016, had improved. However, published assessment information shows that at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in writing was lower.
- As a result of improvements to the teaching of writing, current pupils' progress and attainment are good. Pupils write competently in a range of styles, with good grammar, punctuation and spelling. In pupils' history, geography and science books, their writing is of the same good standard as in their English books.
- In 2017, by the end of Year 6, progress for the most able pupils was good. However, in all classes, teacher need to challenge these pupils to attain the higher standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils are skilled readers. Teachers focus on developing pupils' enjoyment of reading and comprehension skills. This has improved pupils' outcomes.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve average standards in science from their varied starting points. Pupils' workbooks in other subjects show that they make good progress over time. However, there is no assessment system in place to measure progress accurately in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Teachers plan activities to enable children to learn well throughout Reception Year. Children enjoy a wide range of experiences and opportunities to develop their skills. They concentrate and persevere with activities and work cooperatively. In the outdoor area, for example, a group of children worked enthusiastically with construction materials, using clipboards to write on. Other children worked creatively, choosing different materials to make and write greetings cards.
- Children in Nursery quickly learn classroom routines. They move calmly between activities and play, showing concentration and sustained interest.
- Teachers and other adults plan their lessons with children's interests and needs as a starting point. In Reception, they match activities to learning skilfully and carefully. In Nursery, activities do not match children's needs as closely. For example, in the outdoor area, there are few opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills.
- Assessment procedures are detailed and provide teachers with a good knowledge of each child's learning and development. Parents appreciate the good communication between the school and home. Parents know what progress their children are making.
- In Nursery, children make good progress from their starting points. Around half of the children starting in the Reception class have not attended the school's nursery. Their levels of development are below those typical for four-year-olds. The children make good progress in the Reception class and are well prepared for Year 1. The proportion of children attaining a good level of development by the end of Reception has increased and is closer to the national average.

- Leaders use additional funding effectively. They provide extensive activities and support to meet the needs of disadvantaged children and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. These children make good progress.
- Children's work, particularly in writing, shows good progress. The Reception class gives children a wealth of opportunities to develop their early writing. Teachers encourage them to try things out. As a result, children write frequently and with enthusiasm.
- Teachers match early reading to children's skills. Children have frequent opportunities to learn sounds. As a result, they make good progress.
- Children across Nursery and Reception behave well. They concentrate on activities and share resources. They are happy and attentive learners. They handle equipment safely in the classrooms and in the outdoor areas. Children show a good awareness of their own safety and the safety of others.
- The school meets all of the statutory welfare requirements. Leaders carefully follow the school's safeguarding practices and procedures. The classrooms are safe and secure and allow children to thrive.
- The school's 'buddy' system, in which older pupils pair up with children in early years, contributes well to the school's nurturing and caring ethos.

School details

Unique reference number	111100
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10036764

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	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Adrian Thorp
Headteacher	Kathryn Carruthers
Telephone number	01244 981215
Website	www.uptonwestleaprimary.co.uk
Email address	head@uptonwestlea.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	29–30 September 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average, as is the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school has resourced provision for pupils who have ASD. There are currently 11 pupils, ranging from key stage 1 to key stage 2, in this class.

- More pupils enter and leave part-way through their education than is found nationally. This is linked to the number of children of military personnel, currently 29, in the school.
- The school meets the government's floor standards. These are the minimum standards and rate of progress expected in reading, writing and mathematics of pupils in key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in the main school, as well as the Eden Centre, across a range of subjects, including science, physical education, mathematics and English. They looked through pupils' work. Inspectors conducted four observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, members of staff, representatives of the governing body and representatives of the local authority, including the virtual school headteacher.
- Inspectors met with two governors and considered four written submissions from governors.
- Inspectors met a group of pupils and talked with pupils around the school. They observed pupils during lunchtime.
- Inspectors heard a number of pupils read.
- Inspectors checked a range of pupils' books with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents and took into account the 21 responses to Parent View.
- Inspectors took into account the 34 responses they received to the Ofsted questionnaire for school staff.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Elizabeth Clarke

Ofsted Inspector

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