

Brierley Primary School

Mirion Street, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 2AZ

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All pupils achieve well and attainment has been rising steadily over a four year period.
- All pupils make good progress. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and the high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language make very good progress because of the extra support they receive.
- Staff know pupils well. Teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Support staff contribute very effectively to the smooth flow of lessons.
- Excellent systems are in place to ensure that pupils' progress is checked regularly and any pupil falling behind is soon identified and supported.
- Behaviour is typically good and all pupils say that it has improved over time. Pupils say that the school makes them feel safe. Parents agree.
- The subjects taught and the many extra visits and visitors provide the pupils with exciting and enjoyable experiences.
- The headteacher provides strong, perceptive and effective leadership. The relatively new senior leadership team is rapidly bringing about improvement. They efficiently manage teaching, quickly and successfully addressing any teaching which is less than good.
- Governors challenge the school well and are fully involved in school life, in particular in decisions about how funding is spent and the management of staff performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes teachers' explanations at the start of lessons go on too long and teachers' plans sometimes put too much emphasis on what pupils have to do rather than what they are to learn. This means that learning sometimes slows.
- It is only in the last two years that pupils have reached average or above average standards in English and mathematics. This is yet to be maintained over time.

Information about this inspection

- Two additional inspectors observed 14 lessons taught by nine teachers. They also visited several parts of lessons and short sessions delivered by teaching assistants.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils, listened to a small number of them read and looked at many samples of pupils' workbooks in English, mathematics, science, religious education and other subjects.
- They looked at the school's documentation including information about pupils' progress, the school's own records and policies and procedures for ensuring that children are safe.
- Discussions were held with staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of parent's views using the recent school survey, the 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and informal conversations with parents bringing their children to school.

Inspection team

Judith Straw, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Prydwen Elfed-Owens

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Brierley Primary is a smaller than average size primary school, although numbers are gradually increasing.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage, but an increasing number of pupils come from Eastern Europe.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average, but the proportion that speaks English as an additional language is well above that found nationally. Many of these pupils start school with little or no English. Over 10 different nationalities are represented in the school.
- The number of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well above average. Those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is high.
- The number of pupils who move into and out of the school throughout the year is higher than most schools.
- The school holds several awards in recognition of its work. The most recent ones include Healthy School status, Inclusion Charter Mark and the Sportsmark.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The deputy headteacher was appointed in April 2012 as acting headteacher and was confirmed as permanent headteacher in June 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to raise pupils' attainment in English and mathematics and further improve teaching so that more is consistently outstanding by:
 - ensuring pupils are constantly challenged to achieve the levels of which they are capable, particularly in Key Stage 1
 - make it clear to pupils what they are learn and not just what they are to do
 - in the minority of lessons where it is necessary, giving pupils more time to get on with their work by reducing how much time the teacher spends talking to the whole class
 - setting work at the right level so that it challenges each pupil individually throughout the lesson.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception class with skills well below those typical for their age. Some pupils join the school speaking no English. From their starting points, all groups of pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Although attainment remains below average at the end of Key Stage 1, it has risen every year for the last four years. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are now reaching at least average, and, on one occasion, above average standards, in English and mathematics.
- The school's calm, cheerful and ordered atmosphere enables pupils to settle quickly to their work. Pupils are respectful to staff, and to each other. They enjoy most lessons and learn to work independently and in groups. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning when the work is pitched at the right level. On the rare occasions when this is not the case, behaviour can deteriorate.
- In the past, pupils have made slower progress in Key Stage 1 because they start from a low level. However, this is improving over time. Although pupils in Key Stage 1 now make good progress, it is still not as good as progress in Key Stage 2. They enjoy practical activities such as singing, role play, storytelling, counting and number games. For example, in Year 2, pupils created their own nonsense rhymes to match those of the Mad Hatter in 'Alice in Wonderland'.
- Pupils' progress in reading is good. They respond well to the school's 'Every Child a Reader' system. Pupils read with enthusiasm and pleasure and work hard to make their reading aloud enjoyable for the listener.
- Pupils take pride in their work and present their books neatly. They persevere when they meet difficulties and respond promptly to teachers' comments about work which needs to be finished or improved. Some are especially keen on mathematics, as shown by a pupil in Year 4 who announced 'I adore maths'.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good and sometimes outstanding progress because they receive extra help and are given more chances to practise their skills.
- Pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English make excellent progress. They receive the support of a bilingual teacher. All teachers work hard to make sure that they are able to take a full part in lessons.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress at the same rate as non-free school meals pupils and achieve well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and it is now consistently good, and, some is outstanding. Teachers have good expertise, knowledge and skills. Many children start school with very low speaking and listening skills. Teachers support this by putting a strong emphasis on developing pupils' social and communication skills.
- Planning is mostly good. However, sometimes it puts too much emphasis on what pupils have to do rather than what they are to learn. Questioning is generally good, but occasionally teachers do not check that all pupils have fully understood the lesson.
- The best lessons ensure that pupils are actively learning throughout all parts of the lesson and are set challenging and increasingly difficult work. For example, in an outstanding lesson in Years 5 and 6 pupils were constructing complex sentences and described precisely what a complex sentence was and identified them in a long passage of writing. Occasionally, pupils in Key Stage 1 are not challenged well enough to ensure they reach the levels of which they are capable.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers' explanations at the start of lessons sometimes reduce the amount of time that pupils have left to complete their own work. In the best lessons, pupils start

work at once and the class is split into groups so that those who need extra explanation can be given this by the teacher or teaching assistants.

- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is well planned and pupils learn to use information and communication technology well. Their books, across a range of subjects, include some striking examples of pupils' expertise in word-processing and power point presentations.
- Teaching assistants are extremely well briefed and make excellent partners in the classroom. There is a very strong sense of team work among all staff.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language all receive extra support through smaller 'intervention groups', as well as in the classroom. These sessions raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence as learners and increase the pace at which they are able to learn.
- Marking is a consistent strength across the school. Pupils' books are marked frequently and skilfully and clearly identify what pupils have done well and how they can improve. All pupils have targets for writing and mathematics. They know what they are and how well they are reaching them. Pupils are also involved in setting their own targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are noticeably polite, friendly and show good manners to adults and to visitors. The pupils say they enjoy and are proud of their school and of themselves.
- Pupils of many different nationalities are represented in school. Pupils agree that theirs is a happy and harmonious community where pupils enjoy working and learning together.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good because they are well taught. Behaviour is typically good and the pupils say it has improved a lot over the last 12 months. Pupils say that they now know how to manage their own behaviour.
- Pupils are aware of all types of bullying such as physical bullying, name-calling and cyber-bullying and are confident that it is not tolerated in their school. They know they can turn to adults, whom they trust, if they are upset in any way. The school rules are few, simple and understood by all pupils and their parents and there is now rarely any disruption of any kind. The number of pupils excluded for a fixed period has dramatically reduced and there have been none since September.
- Pupils and their parents are unanimous that they are safe in school and that the school takes excellent care of them.
- Attendance is at least average and improving. Pupils are generally punctual to school.
- Pupils feel that they are able to make a strong contribution to decisions in school through the school council.

The leadership and management are good

- The highly effective headteacher is ably supported by recent appointments to the leadership team, which have strengthened and extended the management of the school. Even though her appointment as headteacher was recent, she and her team have already made a significant impact on many aspects of the school's work. Pupils' progress, for example, is faster, behaviour has improved and parents are very positive about the school.
- A new and rigorous system for checking on the progress of every pupil is making sure that all pupils have the same opportunity to be successful and achieve well. All staff know they are accountable for the progress pupils make in their classes.
- School data shows that disabled pupils, those who speak English as an additional language and other pupils known to be entitled to receive pupil premium funding are generally making the same rate of progress as other pupils and, in some cases, such as those who are new to English,

their progress is even faster.

- Staff are fully supported in their training needs so that the standard of teaching is improving. Staff morale is high and all adults, including the governors, share the same views about how successful the school can be.
 - Senior managers have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve. They are aware that in the past, progress has been better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. They are confident that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are rising because teaching is consistently improving.
 - The different subjects taught are made exciting and interesting and ensure that pupils want to learn. Specialist expertise is used to provide pupils with different musical tuition and sporting skills. All pupils learn Spanish. The school organises a good range of trips to places, such as safari parks, adventure centres and stately homes. There are regular special days for science, food festivals, enterprise and technology. The aim is to make learning memorable, for example, the Year 2 class hatched their own chicks. The impact of this is seen in the higher standard of pupils' writing when they write from direct personal experience.
 - Pupils particularly enjoy the many clubs, lunchtime and after-school activities, such as 'boxercise', choir, dance, cheerleading, Eco club and 'athletics'.
 - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are considerate of each other, respect others' values as well as their own, behave well and have fair understanding of their own community and that of others. Recently they have completed a project on Africa and are now learning about China.
 - The school has a good partnership with parents who appreciate the family learning days, the services of a translator and the many events that they are able to attend in school. They are kept up to date with events through a weekly newsletter.
 - The school has a positive relationship with the local authority who offer support in a number of specialist areas.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide good support and effective levels of challenge to the senior leaders. They have supported the headteacher in her drive to improve the quality of teaching across the school and have been directly involved in monitoring the quality of teaching. They have supported the school in ensuring that pupil premium funding is used to provide extra individual teaching for those pupils who need most help in English and mathematics, as well as funding two family support workers and a teacher who acts as an interpreter for the many families who speak English as an additional language. The governing body effectively holds the school to account by making sure that leaders provide evidence of the positive impact of this funding. Governors visit the school often and have a positive relationship with all the staff. They routinely check the quality of all safeguarding and child protection arrangements to make sure that they fully meet requirements. They regularly meet parents at school events and parents' evenings, as well as on the playground at the end of the school day. The governing body ensures the efficient management of financial resources and the effective deployment of staff. Performance management is effective. The proportion of teachers who have progressed to higher pay levels appropriately matches the good teaching in the school.
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What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	111061
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	405315

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Birchall
Headteacher	Coral McIntosh
Date of previous school inspection	29 March 2011
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