

Murdishaw West Community Primary School

Barnfield Avenue, Murdishaw, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 6EP

Inspection dates

23–24 May 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

- Effective and strong leadership provided by the new senior leadership team has brought about significant improvements in all aspects of the school's work. Murdishaw West is now a good school.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork across the school. Morale is high. All staff are committed to making further improvements.
- All groups of pupils, including the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make at least strong progress from their starting points.
- The pupil premium is used effectively. Carefully tailored support ensures that the needs of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, are met.
- Consistently good teaching inspires pupils to learn. Well-planned activities are both interesting and challenging.
- The teaching of mathematics is a strength. Activities are challenging, interesting and fun.
- Pupils' attainment in writing is not as good as in reading and mathematics. Pupils' writing skills and handwriting are not as strong as other aspects of writing.
- Pupils' attendance is slightly below the national average.
- Assessment systems are robust and effective in checking the performance of all pupils throughout the school.
- Most subject leaders are trained thoroughly and have a positive impact on improving teaching and learning. However, subject leaders new to their role are still developing the required skills.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are happy and caring and are very positive about their school.
- Deliberate and effective action has been taken by leaders to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- Parents are very positive about the leadership and staff of the school. They believe that care is at the heart of the school.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe. Leadership of the school supports the needs of pupils and families well.
- Governors provide effective support and challenge. They have challenging expectations for the school and are determined to ensure that improvements are made.
- Children make good progress in the early years. Provision is vibrant. Learning is fun and challenging for all groups.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils' achievement in writing matches their strong gains in reading and mathematics by developing pupils' skills and handwriting.
- Develop the skills of new subject leaders to enable them to contribute fully to improving the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- Improve attendance so that it is consistently in line with the national average.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors have been instrumental in making the changes required to improve the school. Since the last inspection a new leadership team and teaching staff have been appointed. As a result, the school can demonstrate a renewed ethos and vision for all pupils at the school.
- The leadership team has made effective changes to the school's teaching and learning policy and assessment procedures. Teachers are now better informed about the progress pupils are making and their learning needs. As a result pupils' progress is improving and standards are rising.
- Monitoring provides the leadership team with a clear view of the strengths and areas to develop. Training matches the needs of teachers and the school and enables teachers to review their practice and improve. All staff have high levels of energy and commitment to do their very best for the pupils.
- Since the last inspection, effective changes have been made to the school's assessment policy. Teachers have successfully taken on board these changes which enable them to challenge the pupils linked to their needs. Teachers also check pupils' progress and standards to ensure that they are making enough progress. The leadership team monitors these checks closely to ensure accuracy of the teachers' assessments. Underperformance of pupils is spotted quickly by leaders and interventions put in place.
- Subject leaders are confident in their roles and are having an impact on the school's curriculum. Regular training has been provided by leaders, the school's improvement partner and the local authority advisory service. This has enhanced the skills of most subject leaders, but less so for subject leaders who are new to their roles.
- The effective leadership of mathematics by senior leaders has driven improvements in this area of the curriculum. Since the last inspection learning is much improved and teaching approaches are consistent in the school. Improvements have been made by the English leader around the planning for effective teaching of writing. However, the school recognises that more work needs to be done to ensure that outcomes in writing further improve.
- The leadership of the support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. This ensures that this group of pupils makes at least good progress from their starting points. The school's special educational needs leaders are rigorous in ensuring that pupils are cared for well, happy and make progress. They check on the progress and help given to pupils regularly. Well-targeted teaching and support are identified and put in place quickly. The use of the funding for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. Parents are very positive about the support the school gives to their children. Parents describe progress made by their children as 'remarkable'.
- The school's curriculum is well organised and pupils receive a broad and balanced education. Subject leaders are striving to ensure that the learning experiences are as relevant and vibrant as possible.
- Leaders strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This

is evident through capturing the pupils' learning through whole-school displays, special learning books and listening to the views of the pupils. The diverse nature of British society, children's philosophy and British values have been a real focus for the school. Pupils and staff know and understand the school's values of 'Cooperate, Achieve, Respect and Enjoy'.

- Senior leaders and governors have made sure that the pupil premium funding is spent effectively to support pupils academically and socially. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. The physical education and sport funding is used extremely well. Leaders are having a positive impact on pupils' understanding of the importance of 'keeping active'. As a result of the funding, learning and assessment in physical education is much improved and the range of extra-curricular sporting activities is wider. The school now offers targeted sporting activities for the most able pupils who have special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils. Engaging parents in sport is a priority of the school. This is evident in the introduction of a family activity, after school, in the autumn term.
- Pupils' attendance is a priority of the school. Leaders and governors track carefully the attendance of different groups and as a result improvements can be seen. Pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school's procedures. The headteacher works closely with families of pupils who persistently miss school through the deployment of a family support worker. Despite these efforts, attendance continues to be just below the national average.
- Parents are very positive about the school. Many parents felt that their children are happy and that the staff listen seriously to any concerns they have. Parents overwhelmingly would recommend the school to others. They say that the staff 'care about the welfare' of their children.
- Since the previous inspection the school has received effective targeted support from the local authority and external consultants.

Governance of the school

- The governors have a clear plan to tackle actions that need attention and their desire to improve the school is very clear. They are proud of the changes they have overseen since the last inspection. Governors are clearly having an impact on the school's success.
- Members of the governing body are eager to develop their contribution to the leadership of the school. They work hard to ensure that there is a balance of skills to ensure that appropriate levels of support and challenge are given.
- They ensure that the pupil premium is used effectively to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher has a very robust and thorough approach to keeping pupils safe at school. He is supported well by all staff, governors and other stakeholders. Checks on staff and visitors are effective. Safeguarding and child protection training for all staff is

up to date.

- Procedures are clear and systems are in place to raise concerns about the safety and welfare of the pupils and ensure that they are kept safe. The family support worker works closely with the families to give extra support.
- Parents are supported very well with information, guidance and support about safeguarding through the school's website. Regular updates and reminders are also provided on the school's Twitter feed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the last inspection. The newly appointed leaders' unceasing drive for better learning and progress of all pupils in the school has been instrumental in this improvement.
- Improved teaching is ensuring better outcomes for pupils. Professional development opportunities for existing teachers and teachers new to school have been used skilfully and effectively by the leaders, ensuring that teaching is now good.
- The school's arrangements for communicating to pupils their next learning steps are clear and used effectively by teachers throughout the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to check against their learning targets during lessons and take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers always give time for pupils to look back at their work to make changes and improvements.
- Teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers put the information they have gleaned from intensive training into effective use. New resources are used successfully to help pupils understand mathematical strategies. Secure subject knowledge is shared effectively to extend pupils' skills in problem-solving. Pupils are challenged to look in greater depth at mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Activities are planned carefully for the differing needs of the pupils. As a result, pupils' reading is improving. Reading is taught effectively. Since the previous inspection teachers have adjusted their approach to include more time for reading as a class. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about reading, read with expression and readily talk about what they have read.
- Since the previous inspection English lessons are now planned and structured with greater care. Handwriting is not always as neat as it could be in all classes. Also, not all pupils are writing consistently at length and applying their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills.
- Teachers use imaginative ways to inspire pupils to complete learning tasks at home. Pupils take pride in their special homework books. Effective strategies are used to inspire learning to take place at home. Complete homework tasks can be uploaded onto the school's Twitter account and shown at each Friday's celebration assembly to the whole of the school.
- Reading and writing are promoted well across the curriculum. During the inspection, for example in history, pupils in Year 3 were writing a persuasive argument and in Year 1 pupils were writing diary entries. Reading was used for research in geography in Year 4.

- Pupils are developing a good understanding of e-safety through the curriculum. Teachers appropriately teach pupils about how to use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly.
- Since the last inspection there has been a drive to plan inspirational learning experiences throughout the curriculum. During the inspection pupils were challenged to design and make their own sweet wrapper having studied the artwork of a famous artist. Also, subject leaders explained about past whole-school themed events such as the Hindu Holi spring festival of colour, a 'famous scientists' event, a British values event and a bridge design technology project. As a result, on inspection the pupils the inspectors spoke to were positive about their school and their learning activities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel safe and cared for. They know whom to talk to if they are concerned about their safety and talk avidly about their 'staying safe' lessons. They are aware of the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. Pupils say that bullying is 'non-existent'. They understand the importance of eating healthily and keeping active. Many participate in the school sports activities provided by school.
- Pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school. Care is central to the whole community's approach. Good use of wrap-around care activities and the school's family support worker ensures that pupils are well cared for at all times.
- Leaders are effectively developing pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. Pupils talked confidently about their understanding of British values and said that they enjoy discussing the 'big issues' of today's society. The school hall proudly displays their 'A to Z' of British values work created at a whole-school event. Since the last inspection leaders have been central in supporting the pupils' personal development.
- Pupils now have a broader understanding of the cultural diversity of British society. Through the introduction of new teaching materials, strong subject leadership and visitors to school, pupils are developing a better understanding of the range of religious festivals and the diverse cultural nature of British society. During the week of the inspection the school welcomed a visitor to talk to the whole school about the Islamic festival of Ramadan.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In lessons, pupils work hard and behave well. This is because teachers plan learning activities that are interesting and inspiring. All staff have high expectations of pupils and use the school's behaviour policy consistently well. The headteacher has clear systems to monitor and track the behaviour of all pupils throughout the school. A monthly review takes place to gather a behaviour overview which enables leaders to

provide support where needed.

- Pupils respond very well to the behaviour policy. For example, they strive to earn points to reach the 'Gold' reward level. Other headteacher rewards include good work, good attendance, achievement out of school and homework.
- Attendance levels are consistently just below the national averages. Pupils are very positive about their work and readily talk about their favourite subjects. They are keen to learn and show high levels of resilience. Pupils are eager to improve their work and check whether they have achieved their targets.
- All parents who completed the online questionnaire said that their children are happy, looked after and are safe. The overwhelming majority of parents felt that the pupils are well behaved. All parents who spoke to the inspectors said that their children enjoyed school and were very happy.
- Staff who completed the online questionnaire had no concerns about the behaviour of the pupils. The overwhelming majority of staff feel that pupils' behaviour is good and that the leaders of the school help them to manage behaviour well.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Fast and well-planned actions taken by senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are proving successful.
- External assessments, scrutiny of pupils' work, observations in lessons and talking with pupils about their learning show that the pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has rapidly improved.
- Children enter Reception Year with skills, knowledge and understanding below those typical for their age.
- Standards at the end of key stage 1 have improved since the previous inspection. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have for the last two years generally been in line with the national averages. However, 2016 saw a dip in writing to below the national average. The school is aware of this and has begun to address the issue.
- Progress at the end of key stage 2 has improved in all subjects since the previous inspection. In 2016 it was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Also in 2016, the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected standards for their age in mathematics was above the national average. Reading was near to the national average. Writing was below the national average. This is an area for improvement for the school.
- The school's own assessment information and work in pupils' books show that current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. There has been a particular focus on raising standards in writing throughout the school. This has begun to see an improvement in the achievement of pupils' work.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar good progress to that of other pupils. Their needs are identified early so that specific support can be given to help them make good progress from their starting points.
- The most able pupils also make good progress. However, leaders are aware that there

is scope to enable these pupils, like the others in the school, to make even better progress, most notably in writing.

- As a result of the effective allocation of the pupil premium funding, disadvantaged pupils make good progress in their learning and take a full part in all that the school has to offer. Such good practice demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Work in pupils' books and visits to classes show that all pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects. This is because the quality of teaching is good across the different subjects of the national curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- The Reception class provides a positive start to school life. The leader is effective and has an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of provision. As a result, the provision is bright, well resourced and carefully organised. Outdoor learning is provided in a spacious centre courtyard at the heart of the school.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their low starting points. The proportion reaching a good level of development has increased year on year. It is now above the national average. Children are now well prepared for their move up to Year 1.
- The early years curriculum and provision capture the children's interests well. Children are challenged to learn independently, both inside and out.
- Staff know the children well, their likes, dislikes and capabilities. As a result, children are challenged in their learning. This year, children have had extra support in improving their physical development and social skills.
- Safeguarding is effective and all staff have received regular training and updates. All staff work closely to ensure that all welfare requirements are met to keep children safe. Children in the early years behave well and feel safe.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged children have significantly risen since the last inspection. The early years pupil premium funding is used well to support their development. This year a special 'music and movement' intervention programme was used to support their development. Other uses of the premium have included training staff in helping children settle into new routines and become more independent learners.
- Teaching is good. The development of reading and writing has a high profile in Reception, resulting in children making good progress. Teachers create a range of opportunities for children to read, spell words and write independently. Through the use of close monitoring, children are moved quickly onto their next steps. The most able children are supported well with their writing. These children can spell new words independently and write full sentences extremely well. The Reception children enjoy reading and writing and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Transition to Year 1 is well planned. Visits to Year 1 take place in the summer term to ensure that children continue to make good progress and to ensure that they settle happily.
- Parents are involved with the children's learning in the Reception class. They told the

inspector that they were very happy with the communication from staff.

School details

Unique reference number	111174
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10032174

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Stockton
Headteacher	Charlie Stanley
Telephone number	01928 711254
Website	www.mwcp.co.uk
Email address	head.murdishawwest@halton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average primary school.
- There are no Nursery classes. Children attend the Reception class full time.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much smaller than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant changes to the

leadership team and teaching staff through retirement or moving on to other jobs. The school appointed a new deputy headteacher in September 2015 after the retirement of the deputy headteacher.

- The school met the government floor standards in 2016. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. They observed learning in the classes and when pupils learned in small groups. One observation took place jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with them about their work. They listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of reading skills. Inspectors talked to pupils about the books that they have enjoyed and those that they are currently reading. Inspectors took note of the displays around the school.
- Inspectors talked with pupils informally as they played at breaktimes, visited the dining hall at lunchtime and observed pupils as they moved around school. They met formally with one group of pupils.
- An inspector met with the chair of the governing body and four other governors.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority and with members of school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the day. They took account of 18 responses to Ofsted's online survey (Parent View).
- Inspectors reviewed the contents of the school's website and scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding completed by staff.

Inspection team

Howard Bousfield, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Simon Hunter

Her Majesty's Inspector

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