

Green Meadow Independent Primary School

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	877/6011
Unique Reference Number (URN)	135998
Inspection number	361446
Inspection dates	10-11 November 2010
Reporting inspector	John Coleman HMI

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 090070

© Crown copyright 2010



Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Green Meadow Independent Primary School is located in a residential area of Lowton near Warrington. The school is in a new building and opened in September 2009 when it was first registered. This is the first inspection of the school. Adjacent to the school and occupying the same site is First Steps Nursery which is owned by the same proprietor. First Steps provides full and part-time places for children aged from nought to five years, is registered and provides childcare for school aged children. This provision is inspected and reported on separately and was not part of this inspection. Green Meadow is registered for up to 168 pupils aged from four to 11 years and currently there are eight pupils on roll, four of whom are in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pupils are organised into three classes. Three pupils are identified by the school as having special educational needs but none has a statement of special educational needs. A small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.

The school aims 'to create a positive learning environment which celebrates every child as an individual and their right to individual achievement at their own level.'

Evaluation of the school

This school provides a good quality of education. The aims of the school are met well due to staff who are knowledgeable about each pupil's individual needs. Teaching and assessment are good and, combined with a good curriculum, this ensures that pupils make good progress in their personal and educational development. The school meets all the regulatory requirements for registration as an independent school. Arrangements to ensure that pupils are safeguarded also meet all the requirements. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good.

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

Quality of education

The curriculum and other activities are good and meet the range of needs and interests of pupils. The school follows much of the National Curriculum with a strong emphasis on mathematics, literacy and information and communication technology (ICT). The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum provides for each of the six statutory areas of learning. The curriculum plans are organised using a spiral approach so that pupils revisit knowledge and skills in a regular fashion while extending them on each occasion. This successfully reinforces pupils' learning and improves pupils' ability to retain the skills and knowledge they have learnt. Policies, schemes of work and plans are in place to help teachers deliver each subject of the curriculum. This ensures that pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. The school makes good use of educational visits to enrich the curriculum and to bring subjects to life. Recent trips have included Blackpool zoo, Eureka, local farms and to the theatre. Conversely, few visitors come into school to speak to the pupils and help them to learn from their experiences. Although there are no extra-curricular clubs offered by the school, every pupil is able to access the after-school childcare in First Steps. They provide a range of activities including baking, arts and craft, games (indoor and outdoor) and ICT.

Resources to deliver the curriculum are extensive and of high quality. Each classroom, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, has an interactive whiteboard and digital projector as well as additional computers for research and study. Teachers and pupils make regular and effective use of ICT and this stimulates learning and enhances pupils' progress. The classrooms have lots of attractive and colourful displays of pupils' work representing many curriculum areas. These make an effective contribution to reinforcing learning and celebrating pupils' achievements. Outdoors, the curriculum resources include a large covered soft-surfaced play area which can be used for physical education (PE) and playtimes. This enables all-weather outdoor play and learning to take place. There is also an extensive adventure play area with slides and tunnels. Early Years Foundation Stage children have many large resources such as scooters and bicycles. Sand and water are also under cover in a separate adjoining annex. There is good access and regular use of these purpose built outdoor facilities and they make an effective contribution to extending pupils' learning. There are fewer opportunities for children to learn in a natural environment and with natural resources.

Teaching and assessment are good and meet the full range of pupils' needs. In lessons seen during the inspection the quality of teaching was consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and throughout the school. Staff know each pupil's needs very well. Good relationships between staff and pupils build trust and confidence and pupils enjoy school, feel well-cared for and looked after. Staff work hard to develop bright and attractive learning environments in their classrooms. As a result, pupils are motivated to learn. Teachers plan conscientiously and thoroughly. Medium-term and short-term plans outline the content and activities for each half term and day by day. However, the objectives for some lessons are too broad and

often concentrate too much on the activities which pupils will do rather than on the learning which will result. Consequently, in these lessons teaching lacks focus; the pace of learning slows and does not ensure that the progress pupils make is good. Although the school has a policy for teaching, it does not put sufficient emphasis on the features which are essential for high-quality teaching such as precise objectives for pupils' learning in lessons.

Assessment is a significant strength of the teaching. The high level of attention afforded to each pupil by staff leads to ongoing evaluation of learning and instant support and guidance where needed. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, daily notes of observations build into an ongoing profile of every child's progress. In all classes, staff meet daily to discuss the outcomes of the lessons and to plan the next steps in learning. Regular formal tests are used to systematically check on how pupils are improving. Very good records are kept of each pupil's progress and this is used well to inform parents through written reports every half term. The deputy headteacher charts each pupil's progress in reading, writing and mathematics and the staff make effective use of these to ensure that good progress is made over time.

Observations of lessons during the inspection, scrutiny of pupils' work in books and an analysis of data show that good progress is being made by all pupils. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children make good progress in learning and in their personal development. Many children attain a level of knowledge and skills which is above that expected for children of this age. Children for whom English is an additional language make equally good progress. The older pupils make good gains in reading, writing and mathematics. All pupils make good progress in developing their ICT skills. Pupils with special educational needs also progress well and, while the standards they reach are below that expected nationally, they are being helped to narrow the gap.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The quality of provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. All pupils say they enjoy school. Attendance is good. Staff set high expectations for pupils and, as a result, their behaviour and attitudes are good. Pupils are polite, courteous and show respect for each other. They have a secure understanding of right and wrong. Due to the consistent praise and support of staff pupils feel valued and this promotes the development of their self-esteem and confidence very well. Good progress is made by all pupils in acquiring basic skills and, as a result, they are well prepared for the next stage of education. However, opportunities for pupils to socialise with their peers and to learn and work with pupils of similar age are limited due to the small numbers in the school. Pupils recognise this restriction and acknowledge that in this respect their preparation for high school is hindered. The school does organise several lessons, such as PE, swimming and during theme weeks, where all pupils in the school work and socialise together. Pupils make a positive contribution to the school community by undertaking jobs and

taking on responsibilities such as the older pupils looking after the younger children. A good example of citizenship education and contributing to the local community was seen in a letter written by pupils to the local Member of Parliament about the lack of litter bins in the local area. The curriculum includes multicultural education and studies have included some religious festivals such as Diwali and Eid. However, pupils' knowledge of different faiths is weak and few opportunities exist for visits to places of worship or to invite church leaders in to talk to the pupils. Opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures are provided through pen-pal links and pupils have written to young people in Canada and Germany. Current plans include links being made with children on the Isle of Skye.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of all pupils, including the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. All the required policies and procedures are in place to help ensure that pupils are kept safe and free from harm. Risk assessments are carried out for the premises and for trips and visits. The benefits of healthy eating are promoted well by all staff and the pupils are able to access drinking water at all times. Lunches are provided with healthy choices. The breakfast club and after-school provision in First Steps also provide healthy snacks. Pupils enjoy swimming and PE lessons each week. Staff show vigilant supervision for pupils and in lessons there are regular reminders about safety points such as when using scissors. Pupils say they feel safe and are happy that they can turn to an adult for help if needed. The leadership of the school ensures that staff training and procedures for child protection and first aid are always up to date and meet requirements. The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

All the required safeguarding checks on staff, such as those by the Criminal Records Bureau, are made and recorded appropriately in a single central register.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The school is housed in a new, purpose-built two storey building which allows pupils to learn effectively, safely and securely. The accommodation provides bright, spacious and airy rooms which are well heated and ventilated. Facilities include seven good-sized and well equipped classrooms each with computer, internet and whiteboard operation. There is a school hall which is used for dining, sport and assemblies. A kitchen is located next to the hall. Additionally, the school has a library and a computer suite. Outdoors, a covered annex is attached to the Early Years Foundation Stage classroom. The annex opens onto an extensive outdoor adventure play area with a summer house and decked area. Also outdoors is a large covered playground with a soft surface which can be used for PE lessons.

Provision of information

Parents, carers and others are provided with regular reports about the attainment and progress of the children. In the reception area of the school visitors and parents may access a range of school documents. The school has a website which provides useful photographs and information. A prospectus is available which gives contact names and addresses as required and an overview of the schools aims and ethos.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's complaints policy and procedures fully meets the requirements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well and outcomes are good overall from a range of starting points. The staff know the children very well and provide good care and support. They effectively take account of children's individual needs and interests. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and their needs are met appropriately. Personal and social skills are developed very well. Children soon settle in to the regular routines and are happy, well behaved and confident learners. Consequently, they learn quickly and some children exceed the goals usually expected of their age. Activities are well prepared to promote exciting and interesting learning experiences. The children enjoy learning in the well-ordered and stimulating environment and become eager learners as their curiosity motivates them to investigate. They become increasingly independent, making their own choices from the accessible and well-resourced and good provision either indoors or outdoors. For example, children were seen choosing jungle animals to aid their play whilst confidently being able to take a drink from their water bottle whenever they needed. Visits to the toilet are self managed without interrupting the lesson activity. However, opportunities to enable children to explore and learn from the natural surroundings and from natural materials are limited. The leadership and management of the setting are good and staff are appropriately qualified, working together with common purpose to challenge children successfully so they make good progress. Self-evaluation is generally accurate. The assessment of children's achievements and planning their next learning steps is well organised.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Ensure specific objectives for pupils' learning are provided so that they can have an impact on the pace and expectations of teaching to help pupils make good progress in all lessons.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths and cultures.
- Provide regular opportunities for pupils to link with other schools to improve their readiness and preparation for the next stage of their education.

Early Years Foundation Stage

- Make more use of the natural environment to excite children's curiosity and improve their learning about the world they live in.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
-------------	------	--------------	------------

The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
--	--	---	--	--

The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Independent Primary		
Date school opened	September 2009		
Age range of pupils	4-11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 6	Girls: 2	Total: 8
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,390		
Address of school	Robson Way Lowton Warrington WA3 2NP		
Telephone number	01942 671138		
Email address	lynireson@yahoo.co.uk		
Deputy Headteacher	Mrs Lyn Hackett		
Proprietor	Mrs Sandra Green		