

J H Godwin Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110983
Local Authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	356843
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Gill Jones HMI

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	Mrs Janette Trenholm
Headteacher	Mr Conrad North
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed 12 lessons and 12 teachers. They held meetings with staff, pupils, governors, local partnership workers and spoke to parents and carers who were taking part in activities run by the school. They observed the school's work, and looked at some of the documentation, including the school development plan, minutes from meetings held by the governing body, reports by the School Improvement Partner, pupil progress data, the work in pupils' exercise books and lesson planning. They scrutinised responses to the 47 parental, 63 pupil and 15 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The extent to which the recent upturn in standards in Year 6 has been replicated across the school.
- How well the work in lessons matches pupils' individual learning needs.
- How effectively the school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities and how well it provides for their specific needs.
- The extent to which the school tackled the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school situated in Blacon, on the outskirts of Chester. Pupils who attend the school live locally in the surrounding housing estates. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is over double the national average. The school has a local authority funded resource provision for pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. There are six pupils who attend this provision, some live locally and others travel to the school from other parts of Chester and Cheshire West. The school has a much higher percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs and/or learning difficulties than is found nationally. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is double that found nationally.

The school has gained a number of awards which include the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, National Healthy Schools, Activemark Gold, a Football Association Charter Mark and a bronze Eco Schools award. The school provides a pre-school, breakfast-and after-school care. A separate report for this provision is available on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

J H Godwin is a good school. Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics, often from well-below average starting points. By the end of Year 6, most pupils reach standards that are close to those expected nationally for 11-year-olds. This means that most pupils achieve the basic skills they need to start their secondary education. The school works exceptionally well with parents and carers. Every morning, at a quarter to nine, parents and carers and pupils read to each other out loud in the Key Stage 1 and Reception classrooms. This prepares the younger pupils exceptionally well for the school day and provides parents and carers with excellent opportunities to talk to staff. The headteacher, supported well by a highly committed and hard working staff, is ambitious for the future of the school. He leads with determination, working well with local partner organisations such as the Blacon Education Village, to secure good quality provision for the pupils and their families. With the governing body, he has appointed strong staff to the senior leadership team. Together, they are striving successfully to raise standards and improve outcomes for pupils. They work effectively to monitor and evaluate the school's work and the progress made by pupils. This is leading to rapid improvements in the standards achieved by pupils.

Pupils enjoy school. In lessons, they are keen to learn and this contributes well to their good progress. Behaviour is good. Most pupils report that they feel safe in school. Pupils are active in the playground and take part in a large number of sporting activities provided by the school. For example, last year, the Year 1 football team won the Everton Football competition. Pupils contribute well to the local community. On the evening of the inspection, the school choir were singing locally for charity and families are generous in their support of events such as 'Children in Need'. During the inspection, pupils were working well together towards their Christmas productions. Their singing, dancing and acting was full of intensity and vigour, demonstrating a good level of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The quality of teaching and the curriculum are good. Lessons engage pupils' interest well and teachers explain the tasks clearly. Pupils say they enjoy learning. However, teacher's marking does not always pick up common errors in pupils' work consistently. For example, capital letters, full stops and spelling mistakes are not corrected routinely which slows pupils' progress, particularly in writing.

Pupils and their families appreciate the high quality care and support provided by the school. The school employs a learning mentor and pupils and their families appreciate the good individual support they receive. In addition, the close partnership with Blacon Children's Centre means that families receive help in parenting skills. Parents and carers involved say this is improving the behaviour of their children and helping them to cope. The school provides good quality support for pupils' with special educational needs and/or

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disabilities. Consequently, they make progress in line with their peers. However, some of the pupils who attend the funded provision have very significant emotional and behavioural needs. This causes concern to the other pupils in the provision as it disrupts their learning.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a satisfactory start to their education. They appear happy at school and are confident using all the learning areas available to them, both indoors and outdoors. However, their progress and development in some key aspects of the curriculum, such as communication, language and literacy and numeracy are slow. This means they are only adequately prepared for their entry into Year 1.

The school is well led and managed. The senior leadership team and governing body know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. They recognised that immediately following the last inspection the standards reached by pupils were too low. The school has arrested the decline successfully and pupils are now achieving well. Plans for improvement are of good quality and expectations for pupils' achievement are high. Given the turnaround in standards and the high quality work of the senior leadership team, the school is demonstrating good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the levels children reach in language, communication and literacy and in numeracy in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that:
 - the curriculum meets their learning needs and that children have sufficient time to practise their early speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy skills
 - sufficient time is allocated to direct teaching for targeted groups of pupils, particularly those who are most at risk of underachieving.
- Improve pupils progress in writing by ensuring that:
 - marking consistently identifies what pupils are doing wrong across the whole school and points them towards their next steps in learning
 - targets are relevant to what individual pupils need to learn next and are based on the common errors in their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. They are proud of their school. Pupils told inspectors about the wide range of activities they enjoy such as, gardening club, drama, cookery and the 'wake up, shake up' to start the day. Pupils show respect for others and behave well in lessons and around the school. They say they enjoy school and their attendance is average. Pupils make relatively healthy choices at lunchtimes and have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet. They contribute well to the local community, raising significant sums for charity and they take part in a wide range of clubs and activities run by the school. The school council is active. It influences improvements to the school. For example, it is designing a booklet to help pupils who join the school mid-way through the school year, because it wants to make new pupils feel welcome.

Pupils achieve well overall. However, their good achievement is not consistent across the school. In some year groups, pupils' progress in mathematics and writing is relatively

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weaker than in reading. The school has identified this and has plans of good quality to narrow the gap in pupils' attainment between reading, writing and mathematics. The standards reached by seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics are below those expected nationally. This is because pupils' starting points in language, literacy and communication and in numeracy are well below those found nationally for three and four-year-olds. The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although satisfactory, is not sufficiently meeting the additional needs faced by individuals who start the school with very poor speech and language skills. This slows their progress and attainment in English and mathematics as they move through the school.

In lessons, pupils contribute well. They have good attitudes to learning. For example, in a good Year 6 English lesson they worked in pairs effectively to make a list of adjectives. They listened carefully to each other's lists, identifying whether anyone had introduced a verb into the list. They then wrote complex sentences using the words they had gathered and all completed this work to a good standard. Pupils shared their sentence on the interactive whiteboard and identified successfully essential and non-essential parts of the sentence. All pupils were highly attentive and made good progress. In a Key Stage 1 lesson where pupils were learning about sounds and spelling (phonics), the pupils were using their knowledge about letter sounds to spell words of increasing difficulty. The pupils helped each other to blend sounds together to spell words such as 'desktop and handstand', with good success. In this lesson, two boys continued their conversation about spelling at the end of the lesson as they moved to a different class; such was their level of interest.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good. Inspectors observed a range of lessons across the curriculum. The vast majority were good and the rest satisfactory. Lessons are lively and teachers make good use of resources such as the interactive whiteboards to engage pupils' attention. Where teaching was good, teachers provided a good range of activities which matched pupils' learning needs well. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils were involved in a debate based on the class book they were reading. First, they discussed the question 'whether piggy should eat the farmer?' in small groups, then as a class. This enabled pupils to fully understand the concept of being 'for or against' something in a debate and led to a marked improvement in their speaking and listening skills. Where teaching was satisfactory, the task set did not match the learning needs of all the pupils closely enough. On other occasions the teacher spent too long explaining what the pupils were going to learn, giving them insufficient time to develop the practical skills necessary for the task. Marking is regular and teachers provide appropriate praise and encouragement. There are some good examples in pupils' exercise books of teachers matching their marking to pupils' learning targets; this is leading to rapid improvements in pupils' writing. However, this is not consistent across the school.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, providing sufficient opportunity for pupils to practise the basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers make good links between subjects to ensure pupils are interested in their work. For example, in Year 4, a

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fiction book 'Warrior Troll', which the pupils enjoyed, stimulated a range of literacy, geography and history-related tasks. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including residential visits. Staff ensure these are accessible to all pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and to take part in drama productions on several occasions during their time in school.

The school provides a good level of care, guidance and support for pupils. It works effectively with other agencies to support pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable and their families. It identifies and targets pupils well for additional support. The school provides an excellent level of information for parents and carers, on its website and through the use of learning logs. The school sets pupils 'missions' to complete at home and these are popular with pupils and parents and carers. Teaching assistants are well led and managed. The level of support they provide for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. The school provides a good level of care and support for pupils in the funded resource provision, particularly for those who do some of their lessons in the main part of the school. However, the significant needs of one or two pupils in this provision on occasions override lesson plans and disrupt learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, together with the senior leadership team, is determinedly driving up standards and expectations across the school, with good success. The outcomes achieved by pupils in 2010 are higher than in previous years. This is because the quality of teaching is improving continuously. Leaders and managers identify pupils at risk of underachieving effectively, resulting in improving outcomes for the most vulnerable pupils. School development planning is of good quality and the management of the performance of staff links closely to pupil outcomes. Middle leaders are developing well. However, not all subject leaders are using the school's information on pupils' attainment and progress to analyse and evaluate effectively what they need to do next to improve pupils' progress. All staff promote equality of opportunity well and are inclusive in their dealings with pupils.

The senior leadership team and staff are very aware of the severe barriers to learning facing some of the pupils. They take this into account when planning the curriculum and in the level of care, guidance and support they provide. They work hard to inform parents and carers about their children's progress at regular intervals and to ensure that they feel welcome in the school. Parents and carers appreciate the opportunities to work alongside their children and say the school is always willing to help. This is evident in the confident way parents and carers talk to all staff and are encouraged in this with courtesy and a

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smile. Partnership work with parents and carers is excellent and is contributing well to pupils' improving progress.

The arrangements for safeguarding the health and safety of the pupils are adequate. There are some site arrangements which the school has good quality plans to improve. For example, the space for the funded provision does not provide pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities with sufficient facilities to meet the individual needs of those who experience severe difficulties. The school promotes community cohesion well. It is a cohesive community which celebrates diversity both within the school community and wider, through its links with other schools.

The governing body carries out its duties well. It provides an effective level of challenge and carries out its statutory duties effectively. The school provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are happy at school and settle quickly into the classroom routines, using all the areas available to them confidently. However, the progress they make is inconsistent. In some aspects of the curriculum it is good, for example, the school's own data demonstrate that they are making good progress in learning their letters and sounds. But progress in other aspects of language, literacy and communication, such as communication for thinking, is slow. The progress they make in numeracy is also slow. This is because the curriculum does not match children's learning needs sufficiently well and they do not have enough time to practise the basic skills they need to learn indoors and outdoors.

During the inspection the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator was absent from school. It was evident that despite this, relationships in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and the children were happy working with the temporary teacher and teaching

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assistant. However, some systems for ensuring children develop good learning habits are relatively weak. For example, some children did not respond quickly enough when asked to tidy equipment away and some areas of the classroom became increasingly messy throughout the day. The outdoor area, although used effectively for physical development does not provide enough opportunities for language activities, for boys in particular. This links to children's poorer achievement in this aspect of their learning. Planning takes account of children's interests and staff assess their progress regularly. However, this assessment does not lead to an evaluation of the curriculum to identify what is working well or to plan children's next steps in learning. Parents and carers appreciate the care and support provided for their children and they feel confident to approach the staff if they have any concerns.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Although inspectors received only a relatively small percentage of questionnaires, they spoke to a large number of parents and carers who attend the early morning reading session and other events in school. Parents and carers are very positive about the school. They appreciate the quality of care provided and the progress their children are making. Typical comments include, 'I feel that JH Godwin is always finding new ways to improve the children's learning', 'I am very happy with how much progress my child has made since starting school', 'my daughter has received excellent support at this school' and 'my child looks forward to attending every day'. A very small minority of questionnaires had negative comments. These included comments about the need for an anti-bullying policy, pupils' progress and more notice for fun events, such as non-uniform days. The anti-bullying policy is available to all parents and carers at the school office. Pupil's progress and communication with parents and carers are covered in other parts of this report. All the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, including those with negative comments, report that they are happy with their child's experience at the school overall.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at J H Godwin Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	57	19	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	66	16	34	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	38	28	60	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	49	22	47	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	57	19	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	60	19	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	45	25	53	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	23	49	20	43	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	49	21	45	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	49	24	51	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	36	28	60	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	49	24	51	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	53	22	47	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of J H Godwin Primary School, Chester, CH1 5JG

You may remember that recently I visited your school with two other inspectors to carry out an inspection. Thank you to those of you who talked to inspectors for sharing your views about your school. This letter is to tell you what we found.

We judged your school to be providing you with a good quality of education. It gives you many opportunities to do interesting activities, such as gardening club, cookery and sports clubs which support you to keep fit and healthy. Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and you told us that this is one of the reasons you enjoy school. Staff invite your parents and carers to help you learn at home and that is helping you to succeed. Your headteacher is very good at working with other local community leaders to make sure that Blacon is a good place to grow up and all these things are contributing to why you are making good progress at school.

Although your school is good, we think it can do some things even better. For example, the youngest children do not practise their literacy and numeracy skills frequently enough to make fast progress, so we have asked your school to improve this area of its work. Also, in some classes, the progress you make in writing is not as good as in reading, so we have asked your teachers to look at how they mark your work to help you to make faster progress.

We were impressed by your Christmas productions. You sing, dance and act very well indeed. We also thought that the school council's plan to make a booklet for pupils who are new to the school is a very good idea. You can help your teachers by always trying your very best and continuing to be kind to each other. I wish you all the best for the future and a very happy 2011.

Yours sincerely

Gill Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector

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