

Wheelock Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111036
Local Authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	367389
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Sue Sharkey

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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Doughty
Headteacher	Ms Susan Tomlinson
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in eight lessons and the work of seven teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed pupils' work and looked at the school's system for tracking their progress, safeguarding documents and key policies. Inspection questionnaires from 125 parents and carers, 37 school staff and 100 pupils were also taken into account.

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

- How the school is tackling the dip in English at Key Stage 2 and mathematics at Key Stage 1, so that improvements are sustainable.
- Whether gifted and talented pupils are consistently challenged during lessons.
- How well pupils use targets to support their own learning.
- How well pupils use a wide range of information and communication technology (ICT) resources and how this impacts on the quality of their work.
- How Early Years Foundation Stage staff plan for both the indoor and outdoor environment.

Information about the school

This is an average-size primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average, and most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, while the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has the Artsmark Silver and the Activemark award.

An independent provider runs a before- and after-school club on the school site. This did not form part of the inspection but the report about the quality of its provision can be found 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Wheelock Primary School is an outstanding school where pupils blossom both academically and personally. The school is an energetic community providing a purposeful environment where pupils love to learn. This is reflected in pupils' high attendance. Excellent links with other schools and agencies bring extensive benefits to pupils' learning and personal development. The skills and confidence that pupils develop ensure that they are extremely well prepared for life as young adults.

Children enjoy learning from the start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they learn to share, follow routines and quickly establish politeness and courtesy. Planning for these children includes good use of both indoors and outdoors but the provision in the outdoor area does not match what is found indoors. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is high in English and mathematics reflecting outstanding achievement for pupils of all abilities. This is because the curriculum and the care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding. The school places a great emphasis on focusing on pupils as individuals and this is reflected in the highly-effective support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils who are gifted and talented are recognised quickly and are provided with opportunities and experiences to progress extremely well.

The consistently good and sometimes outstanding teaching underpinned by pupils' extremely positive attitudes to learning, results in high standards. Lessons give pupils a feel for real-life situations and problems to solve that ensure learning is systematic, real and engaging. Planning though does not always include enough different activities for all groups of pupils throughout whole-class sessions. Teachers use a wide range of teaching styles which successfully enthuse and motivate pupils. Marking of pupils' books, while up to date, does not consistently help pupils to know their next steps in learning. Pupils' understanding of a healthy lifestyle is first class and they appreciate the many opportunities they have to take part in fitness activities. Pupils are extremely proud of their school, readily take on responsibilities and play a very active part in community activities.

The headteacher is well supported by the drive and commitment of the staff and the governing body who share her vision and sense of direction. Self-evaluation is rigorous and leads to very good development planning. Excellent systems have been developed by the deputy headteacher to track pupils' progress and this information is used meticulously to ensure that all pupils achieve their very best. It is the dedicated work of all the whole staff team that underpins the success of the school and is a significant factor in the school's outstanding capacity to improve and in it providing excellent value for money.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding, by:
 - ensuring that marking and feedback consistently help pupils know how to improve their work
 - ensuring that teachers' planning includes an appropriate range of activities for all pupils throughout whole class sessions.
- Improve the quality of provision in the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that it matches the quality of that found indoors.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Throughout the school, pupils are enthusiastic learners. They enjoy lessons, behave well and are motivated and engaged. Enjoyment and outstanding progress in lessons were often evident during the inspection. During a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were captivated as they listened to a recipe to make a cake for the cook's birthday. The recipe was for two people and pupils had to make changes to the quantity so that the cake was larger. Prior work had focused on multiplying by two and doubling numbers so children had to recall this information in order to make the changes. In another mathematics lesson, Year 6 pupils were working in teams to design a medical centre. They collaborated well with each other, for example, some children drew and worked out the area of a circular pond in the garden, while others worked out perimeters and areas of different rooms they were including. The pupils were excited when the completed designs were to be changed into three-dimensional drawings by an architect. Pupils are particularly adept at using ICT, for example, to create their own websites or clay 'animation', a form of stop motion animation.

Overall, children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly in line with what is expected for their age, but can often be lower in reading, writing and calculation. Pupils make outstanding progress so that when they leave school in Year 6 their attainment is above and often significantly above average. Following a dip to above average rather than high standards in English and mathematics in 2010 the school has rapidly put in place a range of strategies to raise attainment and improve achievement. Recent assessment of pupils' progress indicates that these actions are proving to be highly successful and that their attainment has returned to its previously high level. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress due to well-tailored support provided by diligent teaching assistants.

Pupils say they feel safe because adults in school look after them so well and that there are sensible rules. They are keen to raise funds for a wide range of charities locally, nationally or internationally, as well as working alongside charities in support. The school council plays a vital role in ensuring that they continually have a voice in school improvements. For example, when they asked the school to improve information and communication technology (ICT) and create one room to include the library and computers they were keen to raise funds to help ensure this happened. Pupils are now extremely pleased with the Learning Zone which they say is excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good; pupils are curious and embrace new experiences. To raise their cultural development to outstanding the school appreciates

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that pupils need a deeper awareness of similarities and differences between different cultures and faiths.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Strong features in teaching include excellent relationships, and very good questioning that extends pupils' language and learning. The outstanding lessons observed during the inspection, were characterised by exciting planning, brisk pace and high expectations. Teachers plan lessons creatively but do not always ensure that the pupils' range of abilities is catered for throughout whole-class sessions. Teachers assess pupils' learning well in lessons through effective questioning and good explanations of how to improve their work. However, the marking of pupils' work in books does not always clearly point out to pupils their next steps in learning. Nevertheless, pupils know their targets well and say that they are very useful in helping them to know what they have achieved and what they need to learn next. Staff make clear their expectations of good behaviour that pupils are keen to live up to. The work of teaching assistants is of a high quality. They are deployed effectively and have a positive impact on pupils' progress.

The first-class curriculum provides an excellent balance between creative, physical and academic work. The provision for ICT is exemplary and is threaded through subjects to ensure that there is an abundance of opportunities for pupils to use their skills. Curricular enrichment is a strength providing pupils with a wealth of opportunities for their personal

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development through visits, visitors to school and learning to play musical instruments. Extra-curricular activities are wide in range, for example, in performing arts, gardening and science, and are very well supported by pupils.

Staff work extremely well with outside agencies to provide help for pupils' varied needs and to ensure that those who may be vulnerable due to their circumstances receive support tailored to their individual needs. Arrangements when children commence school are admirable and Year 6 pupils say that teachers are helping them well to prepare for secondary school ensuring excellent continuity in their learning and development. The school provides a rich learning environment for all pupils with a wide range of art work and thematic displays.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The excellent leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher and the way in which staff work extremely well as a team, help to promote a caring ethos in which pupils thrive and learn successfully. The leadership team is rightly focused in its desire to pursue a continuous rise in pupils' achievement. Since the last inspection, as a result of excellent leadership and management of teaching and learning, there is now clear evidence of some outstanding teaching. The school is committed to promoting equal opportunities and to avoiding discrimination and ensures that there is no significant underachievement by any group of pupils. Leaders and managers have ensured that all pupils now make outstanding progress, not just pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as was the case at the last inspection. The governing body plays a highly-effective role in shaping the school's direction. It is extremely committed and provides rigorous monitoring, support and challenge. Members of the governing body ensure that child protection and safeguarding procedures are good in all aspects of school practice.

The school actively promotes community cohesion through involving pupils in a wide range of activities to develop their understanding of the world around them. The school has identified areas for future development aimed at promoting engagement with a range of groups beyond the school and the immediate community. The school is extremely committed to working in partnership with other schools and organisations. These strong links enable leaders to work closely together for support as well as providing a wide range of opportunities to promote pupils' learning and well-being.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children quickly settle into the Reception class because of the high-quality care and support they receive as well as the very good partnerships with parents and carers. Within a stimulating environment activities are chosen well; they excite children and support the different areas of learning, particularly indoors as the outdoor area does not fully reflect the wide range of opportunities for learning offered indoors. Children are taught well and good use is made of assessment in helping identify what children need to do next. As a result of good leadership, children make good progress from their starting points. Children enjoy the challenge of arranging small animals into two groups, those that are dinosaurs and those that are not. The teacher challenges them further to arrange the animals into different groups and children decide to look at those that can fly and those that cannot. Outdoors children enjoy dressing up as a dragon and exploring different ways a dragon might move. In the end, they decide that 'stomping' would probably be the best way and take pleasure in showing everyone what 'stomping' would look like. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good; they behave well, are keen to learn while enjoying friendships and taking responsibilities. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because early assessment highlights their needs and good teaching assistant support is provided. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that children's welfare needs are fully catered for.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Around 60% of all parents and carers returned the questionnaires, a proportion that is considerably higher than in most primary schools. All were positive about the way the school cares for and educates their children. They feel that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and are pleased with their children's progress. Some parents and carers took time to add comments to the questionnaire they returned, many to reinforce the strength of their positive views. A very small minority of parents and carers raised concerns and these were looked into during the inspection.

Some parents and carers were concerned about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour and felt that the school did not meet their children's needs. A few felt that their children were not making enough progress nor did the school inform them of their progress. The inspectors investigated these during the course of the inspection and found that behaviour is managed well by staff. During the inspection, it was found that the needs of all pupils are met extremely well, but there are occasions, in lessons, when different activities for different groups of pupils could be improved. Pupils' progress was found to be outstanding and inspectors noted that parents and carers have the opportunity to meet with staff each term where pupils' progress can be discussed and an annual written report is available.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wheelock 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 131 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	82	66	38	30	5	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	79	63	42	34	3	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	46	37	63	50	13	10	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	42	54	43	10	8	4	3
The teaching is good at this school	62	50	52	42	9	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	38	68	54	5	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	38	69	55	4	3	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)	59	47	53	42	2	2	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	61	49	49	39	12	10	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	35	70	56	11	9	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	38	61	49	10	8	5	4
The school is led and managed effectively	56	45	55	44	6	5	6	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	69	55	47	38	8	6	1	1

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



13 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wheelock Primary School, Sandbach, CW11 3RT

Thank you for making the inspectors welcome when we visited your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and watching you learn in lessons. It was good to learn that you feel very safe and that you have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy. We were very impressed with your school council members who work so hard to help your school be outstanding. Your behaviour is good and well done for raising money for various charities. All the jobs you do in and around school help the school enormously but we were also impressed with all you do outside school to help others. Your headteacher and teachers are very good at working with other teachers in other schools as well as other groups of people. This helps you to develop lots of skills as you grow up. Overall, we found that your school provides you with an outstanding education and the progress you make is excellent.

There are three things that I have asked the school to do to help to make it better.

Firstly, for teachers to mark your work differently so that they add comments to let you know what you need to learn next, particularly in your writing. Secondly, to make sure that when teachers plan tasks for you in lessons they always remember to plan a full range of different activities when you are taught as a whole class. Thirdly, that the outdoor area for the Reception class is developed so that it can be used for lots of different activities all day.

We were really impressed with how well you care for each other. Congratulations on all you do to help the school. We were really delighted that you said that you enjoy coming to school. Remember always to do your best and help your teachers. Thank you for helping us and for being so polite.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Sharkey

Lead Inspector

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