

# Oakfield Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133322
<b>Local Authority</b>	Halton
<b>Inspection number</b>	360484
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 April 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kathleen McArthur

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	284
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Eric Burke
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ian Moss
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Edinburgh Road Widnes Cheshire WA8 8BQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 4244958
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 21 lessons taught by 12 teachers, visited small group sessions and met with groups of pupils, governors, and staff. The team observed the school's work, looked at safeguarding procedures, documentation, including school and national data on pupil progress, policies, development plans, local authority reports and samples of pupils' work. Questionnaires from pupils, staff and the 109 returned by parents and carers were scrutinised.

- The effectiveness of actions to raise boys' attainment to match that of girls and to challenge more pupils to reach higher levels.
- The way the curriculum is being developed to make learning more enjoyable and meaningful, especially for boys.
- The contribution of all leaders and managers to planning improvements that ensure there is good capacity for further development.

## Information about the school

The school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school and has several mixed-age classes. Very nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very high. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, and twice the average proportion has statements of special educational needs. There is additional provision for pupils with special educational needs in two designated units which draw a small number of pupils from other local schools.

**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

This good school successfully fulfils its aim of creating a calm, friendly, nurturing and fully inclusive ethos, so pupils learn and play happily and harmoniously. Outstanding care, guidance and support and excellent relationships with parents and carers ensure pupils feel extremely safe. Their parents and carers agree. 'My child has developed into a well-rounded, bright child, due to being nurtured in a safe and healthy environment'; 'Staff always go the extra mile', were typical of their written comments.

Achievement is good and standards are broadly average. Children make a good start and progress well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils are keen to learn, enjoy school and make good progress as they move through the school. Good quality teaching and additional support have successfully improved outcomes for all pupils and school data show the attainment gap between boys and girls is rapidly decreasing. Although the number of pupils attaining the higher levels has risen, the challenge for more-able pupils is inconsistent throughout the school. Skilled support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities means they progress well in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Staff in the designated units know their pupils well and provide accessible, motivating learning materials so they also progress well.

Good behaviour contributes strongly to good learning. Overall, teaching is good, with some outstanding teaching observed. Staff build successfully on pupils' enthusiasm with well-planned, enjoyable activities. However, there are inconsistencies and pupils do not always have enough swift opportunities to put into practice feedback they receive about their work. Although most lessons move at a brisk pace and are sufficiently challenging, this is not always the case and a few lessons move too slowly and staff expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. Good assessment and tracking systems provide a clear picture of progress, and involve pupils so they know their targets and how to reach them. Improvements to the curriculum to make learning more meaningful have successfully accelerated progress. Pupils' considerate attitudes reflect the very high quality care they receive, saying, 'We all care for each other'. Pupils from the unit are integrated happily when they join mainstream lessons. Attendance is average and is rising rapidly in response to the robust procedures now in place.

Since the last inspection good self-review procedures have enabled leaders and managers to implement changes that have successfully accelerated progress and raised the quality of provision throughout the school. Staff, leaders and managers share a vision and commitment to continue to improve, demonstrating good capacity to improve further.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the best practice in teaching found in the school so that all is at least good or better, by:
  - ensuring expectations of what pupils can achieve are consistently high throughout the school
  - ensuring all lessons move along at a brisk pace
  - giving pupils immediate opportunities to respond to teachers' feedback to help them improve their work.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Discussions with pupils and observations in all classes show that pupils enjoy their lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. Consequently, they work hard, cooperate willingly with staff and classmates, for example with their 'talking partners' and make good progress.

Pupils start school with skills that are broadly well below those expected, most particularly in language. Observations in lesson, work in pupils' books, school and national data show that all groups of pupils progress well. In Key Stage 1, progress is good, and rigorous strategies and better use of assessment are raising attainment. Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2 so by the time they leave the school in Year 6, attainment is broadly average. Although challenge for the more-able pupils is inconsistent, there is a positive picture of more pupils leaving school attaining the higher level. By placing a strong focus on developing language skills, staff enable pupils to express their ideas confidently both orally and in writing. School data show that pupils are securely on course to meet challenging targets.

Pupils are very friendly, polite and have a strong sense of right and wrong. Behaviour is good, although a few pupils think it could be better. 'Teachers are always there so we feel very safe', summed up their strong sense of security. They trust the staff and the headteacher, saying they listen and quickly sort out any problems, so bullying is not seen as an issue. Pupils know how to care for their health and safety on the roads, near water and when using the internet. The very caring school ethos promotes good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are thoughtful when considering emotions and life choices and love taking responsibility such as school or Eco-councillors. They are aware of different religions and enjoy the variety of cultural experiences provided by the curriculum. Planning and selling Christmas goods helped pupils gain experience of economic matters. Good personal skills, cooperative attitudes and sound academic skills give pupils a good basis for the future.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Pupils say lessons are fun, and one described teachers as kind but demanding. Good relations between staff and pupils effectively aid progress and enjoyment. Lessons are planned thoroughly and a variety of interesting activities sustain high levels of interest. Pupils work hard and progress well. In the best lessons, especially in the older classes, the more-able pupils are particularly challenged and pupils are motivated by skilled questioning. However, this effective practice is inconsistent and expectations of what pupils can do are not always high enough, and too much time listening in whole-class sessions slows the pace of learning. Skilled support and intervention ensure good learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the units. Rigorous data analysis enables staff to monitor progress closely and direct help where needed. Pupils know their targets and are involved in assessing their work using a 'traffic light' system. Work is marked regularly, with comments showing pupils how to improve. However, they are not always given opportunities to really benefit from teachers' feedback by implementing it immediately.

The curriculum is becoming more creative and relevant to pupils while ensuring all basic skills are covered. Themes like Health Week and local visits to study mini-beats in the park generate meaningful subject links. For example, pupils used literacy and numeracy skills to create charts of physical features in geography. Tailoring the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the mixed-

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age classes ensures overall progress is good. Enrichment activities extend pupils' experiences and all older pupils learn to play a musical instrument. Popular school clubs incorporate pupils' suggestions, for example dance. The good quality personal development programme enables pupils to consider choices and issues in their lives.

A secure and welcoming environment enables pupils to feel extremely safe and eager to learn. Excellent relationships between home and school lead to a consistency in approach and a thorough understanding of pupils' personal as well as academic needs. Any pupils who are potentially vulnerable because of their circumstances are supported extremely well. Strong links with all external professional agencies are sensitively directed to benefit these pupils and their families. Good intervention and induction procedures for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the units ensure they progress well. Rigorous procedures and close liaison with parents and carers mean attendance is rising and there is a reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Good induction and transition arrangements ensure pupils start school and move confidently between different stages of their education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

An ambitious vision and high aspirations, supported by all staff have resulted in improvements in all aspects since the last inspection. Accurate self-evaluation means areas of weakness are quickly identified and acted on through a detailed school improvement plan. By monitoring teaching and outcomes, middle leaders are becoming more effective in bringing about change. They are aware that most staff have high expectations for their pupils, although this is not yet consistent in every class. The effective governing body is led successfully. Supportive governors provide a good range of skills, are well aware of areas for improvement and challenge school leaders rigorously.

Exemplary links with parents and carers mean they feel involved as partners in their children's education. They appreciate the way they are involved in school, for example helping with reading or baking. Parents and carers say staff are approachable and willingly 'go the extra mile' for pupils. Regular 'Talk shop' sessions with the headteacher enable parents and carers to share ideas and suggestions. The school provides regular progress and information through meetings, texting and newsletters. Partnerships with local schools and organisations bring additional experiences including sports and musical activities. Good arrangements for equal opportunities ensure there is no discrimination. Academic progress and involvement in different activities are carefully monitored to ensure all

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participate in everything the school offers. Gaps in achievement for the more-able pupils are closing as the school makes better use of assessment information.

All safeguarding arrangements are fully in place. Up-to-date training ensures all staff understand child protection and risk assessment procedures, and the site and buildings are secure so pupils feel very safe. The promotion of community cohesion is good because leaders have a clear understanding of the local community and is extending links with a school in a different locality. The school is a harmonious community, and the curriculum develops pupils' knowledge of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles in the wider world.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

On entry, children's skills are generally well below those typical for their age, especially in the vital area of language. Boys and girls make good progress in all areas of learning through the Nursery and Reception classes, with particularly rapid gains in personal and social skills. By the time they leave, most are working close to the expected levels, although language skills remain weaker.

Warm, trusting relationships with adults in both settings ensure children feel safe, settle quickly and enjoy exploring the activities on offer. Good teaching, based on secure understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures children meet a wide and interesting range of carefully planned learning experiences. Resources are imaginative and used effectively both indoors and outside. Adults lead specific activities, and most help children extend their knowledge of language by encouraging them to talk about their activities. For example, discussing and writing about mini-beasts in the Reception class. Occasionally, activities are over-directed limiting the opportunities for children to choose and follow their own interests. Behaviour is good, children are considerate towards each other and relate happily with the adults. They become



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increasingly independent and develop a sense of responsibility, sharing equipment and quickly putting it away when they hear the 'tidy up' music.

Good leadership and management place appropriate priority on children's welfare and identify the correct priorities to improve. Progress is carefully tracked and staff know each child well and meet their individual needs. Parents and carers are welcomed, for example, helping nursery children bake cakes in preparation for their Royal Wedding party.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

About 34% of parents and carers returned questionnaires. All said the school keeps their child safe. Responses were extremely positive particularly about children's enjoyment, progress, the quality of teaching and leadership, information they receive that takes account of their views and enables them to support learning at home.

A very small minority felt their children were not prepared well for the next stage of their education or helped to have a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors discussed these points with the school. There are well-established induction and transition arrangements at all stages, and the curriculum provides a well-organised programme of health education.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oakfield Community 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 109 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 284 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	70	32	29	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	82	75	27	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	75	69	32	29	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	74	68	33	30	0	0	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	81	74	26	24	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	70	64	38	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	64	35	32	3	3	1	1
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)	70	64	31	28	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	73	67	33	30	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	63	58	41	38	0	0	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	69	63	36	33	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	84	77	22	20	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	86	79	21	19	1	1	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



3 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Oakfield Community Primary School, Widnes, WA8 8BQ**

The inspectors have asked me to tell you that it was a real pleasure to meet you all.

We were given a polite and friendly welcome and you told us many things that enable you to enjoy being at school. We enjoyed all the Royal Wedding activities, especially seeing the winning designer of the wedding cake receive that delicious looking prize!

We found that Oakfield is a good school with good leaders, managers and teachers who care for you all exceptionally well. You told us that you feel very safe, and so did your parents and carers. The Reception and Nursery classes give you a good start. You behave well, work hard and make good progress to reach the right standards for your age. You told us you trust your teachers and know they will always help you.

Many things have improved at Oakfield since the last inspection and the leaders and staff are keen to make it even better. So we have asked them to:

- make sure you are always taught well and challenged in your work
- given the chance to act on your teacher's advice about improving your work straight away.

The team send you very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Kathleen McArthur

Lead inspector

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