

Sandiway Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111050
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	378223
Inspection dates	28–29 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Diane Auton

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Juliette MacDonald
Headteacher	Mair Fairweather
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eleven lessons and observed seven teachers in their classrooms. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including pupils' progress and attainment data, the school's planning documents, and policies, procedures, records and documentation related to safeguarding pupils. They reviewed information provided by parents and carers in 132 completed questionnaires. They also took into account the views that pupils in Key Stage 2 and staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.

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

- The progress of more able pupils, especially in Key Stage 1.
- The effectiveness of the curriculum across the school and, in particular, its impact on the progress of more able pupils in Key Stage 1.
- The impact of leadership on ensuring consistency in the quality of teaching across the school, with particular reference to Key Stage 1.

Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than most other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below that usually found. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a very small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds.

There have been some changes in staffing and leadership since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed in March 2009 and a new deputy headteacher was appointed in June 2009.

Since its previous inspection the school has renewed its Healthy School Status. It has also gained the Activemark, the Gold Artsmark, the Eco-schools Green Flag award, the Cheshire Positive Business award, the Silver Sing Up award and the International School award (first level). The school is an E-learning Lead School for the local authority.

Preschool provision and a before and after school care club are provided on site by an independent company. These provisions are subject to separate inspection by Ofsted and reports are 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Very effective leadership has ensured continuous and ongoing improvements, enabling the school to sustain and build on its history of high achievement. Pupils thrive in an environment where every child is known, cared for and valued and this is helping them to achieve excellence in both their personal and their academic development.

Most children join the Reception class with the skills that are expected for their age. From a flying start in the extremely effective Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils go on to reach high levels of attainment by the end of Year 6. This has been a consistent picture for the last five years.

The high overall quality of provision, including excellent teaching and a vibrant curriculum, is a key contributory factor to pupils' excellent achievement. Pastoral care is excellent and pupils respond extremely well to this, with older children taking on responsibilities around the school, including acting as buddies to younger ones. The latter initiative is exceptionally well promoted and significantly enhances the school's supportive family ethos. Well above average attendance and excellent punctuality testify to the school's very effective partnership with parents and carers. The school's virtual learning site provides very high quality information for parents and carers, together with excellent support for extended learning at home; it is extremely well used and appreciated, with many thousands of hits currently recorded.

The headteacher provides clearly focused strategic leadership. Supported by an effective deputy headteacher, she has created a very strong team ethos, with a clear focus on continuous school improvement. Very effective middle leaders contribute strongly to taking the school forward. Leaders are not complacent. The school measures success against high aspirational targets. Areas for development and improvement are clearly and correctly identified and the school takes prompt and appropriate actions to address them. For example, although the vast majority of pupils reached the nationally expected levels at the end of Year 2 in 2011, the proportion reaching the higher levels was below average. This did not match the substantial proportion reaching the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2. The school was not satisfied with this, recognising that overall progress had been good, rather than outstanding, in Key Stage 1. These matters have been addressed very decisively in the current year by strengthening provision in Key Stage 1 and by instituting an intensive monitoring programme. Early signs of improved outcomes for

more able pupils in Key Stage 1 are already evident and inspection evidence shows that pupils are making excellent progress in Year 3. Extremely accurate self-evaluation is based on systematic monitoring and rigorous assessment, with a clear and detailed analysis of need and outcomes. All of these factors, together with the many skills and talents of staff and leaders, including a very knowledgeable and effective governing body, combine to demonstrate that the school has outstanding capacity to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure, through rigorous assessment and monitoring, that more able pupils in Key Stage 1 progress and attain as well as possible and that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level of attainment in Key Stage 1 comes into line with Key Stage 2 by the end of the school year.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' attitudes to school are extremely positive. They are responsive learners, interested and absorbed in lessons. They are eager to offer their ideas in discussions, they are confident and articulate and they collaborate productively when working with a partner or in a group. Their concentration and study skills are developing very well; they listen carefully and see tasks through to completion. They are increasingly able to evaluate the quality of their own work with accuracy. Across the school, attainment is high. Evidence from assessment data for the last school year confirmed that progress was good overall. Although at this early point in the year there is not enough evidence to support an outstanding grade, assessment data for the current term shows that pupils across the school, including more able pupils in Key Stage 1, are progressing at a brisk rate. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, as a result of the well targeted support the school provides for them. Pupils' overall achievement is excellent and this is matched by their interest and enjoyment in learning.

Pupils show an excellent understanding of issues around personal safety. They form very good relationships with each other and with the adults in school and they say they are confident help is on hand if they encounter any problems. Pupils, parents and carers strongly agree that school is a place of safety. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the range of activities provided to support their health, fitness and well-being. They enjoy taking responsibility, for example as influential school councillors. They are enthusiastic fundraisers for charities at home and abroad. All of this, together with their excellent basic skills, contributes extremely well to preparing them for the next stages in their education. Pupils show a mature understanding of the sound moral values the school promotes and this is reflected in their excellent behaviour and considerate attitudes.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	1
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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:	1
Pupils' attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The excellent quality of teaching is contributing very strongly to pupils' learning and progress and to their personal development. Lessons are planned very well to take the range of learners' needs into account and the pace of learning is brisk. This is helping pupils to progress very well in lessons. Imaginative teaching strategies are often used to very good effect, bringing learning alive for pupils. This was the case, for example, in a literacy lesson in Year 1, where pupils had the opportunity to develop their understanding of characterisation through role play activities out of doors. The school's 'woodland' area served to replicate the setting in the story they had been reading together. They returned to class to review a video they had made of themselves in role. High quality oral and written work resulted, with pupils totally absorbed in exploring the feelings of the characters in the story and eager to express well developed ideas in the writing session that followed.

Regular and very effective assessment means that class teachers have a clear overview of progress and this helps them identify pupils who may be underachieving and those who require extra support. Focused support is timely and effective. Welltrained and skilled teaching assistants work in professional partnership with class teachers and contribute extremely well to all pupils' learning and progress and particularly to that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school's rich and varied curriculum is supported very well by excellent provision for information and communication technology. Much work has been done in recent times to bring subjects together, in order to deliver the curriculum through topics and themes that are interesting, relevant and engaging for pupils. Learning activities provide appropriate challenge for pupils of all abilities, including the more able. This is equally the case in both key stages. The curriculum is exceptionally well enriched by opportunities for pupils to develop skills in sports, the arts and two modern foreign languages. Music is a particular strength with many pupils learning to play an instrument and with staff and pupils frequently involved together in musical

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

performances and activities, including a successful boys' choir. A range of visitors and visits, including several residential trips, contributes very effectively to promoting pupils' academic, personal, social, health and citizenship education. Well chosen support strategies for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensure they enjoy full access to learning and are included in everything on offer.

Pastoral care is excellent and the school works sensitively to support pupils and their families whose circumstances make them most vulnerable. This is helping to break down barriers to learning and progress that pupils occasionally encounter. Attendance and punctuality are promoted extremely effectively. An effective link with the local high school benefits pupils at transition to secondary education. The school works in close partnership with the onsite preschool provision and this supports children's smooth induction to the Reception class very effectively. The school collaborates extremely well with a wide range of agencies that support pupils' health, welfare, social and learning needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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?

Staff and the governing body wholeheartedly share the headteacher's firm commitment to continuous improvement and her ambition to achieve the best possible outcomes for pupils. Subject leaders and key stage leaders contribute very effectively to ensuring the quality of provision and to helping drive forward improvement initiatives. The school plans appropriate actions for ensuring that pupils' above average attainment is sustained and that their learning and progress are promoted very well. The information gained from regular and rigorous progress reviews is used extremely well to ensure appropriate levels of challenge in learning activities. The supportive, actively involved and exceptionally well informed governing body challenges and holds the school to account very effectively. A programme of continuous professional development, involving staff at all levels, contributes strongly to the high quality of provision, to ensuring consistency in teaching quality across the school, especially in Key Stage 1 and to very positive outcomes for pupils.

Parents and carers appreciate all that is done to support their children's welfare. Pupils benefit from the very effective partnership between home and school, which is supported by excellent communications, including regular newsletters, workshops, meetings, questionnaires and the outstanding web site. The school complies well with statutory requirements for safeguarding, health and safety and child protection through well managed procedures and through an ongoing review of their effectiveness. Its highly inclusive ethos supports excellent promotion of equal opportunities and access to educational entitlement. Discrimination in any form is not

tolerated. The school contributes well to community cohesion through an extensive range of partnerships in and beyond the community and through a range of developing international links. Partnerships with other schools, including the high school and schools outside the immediate locality, are particularly beneficial in helping to support pupil's personal and academic development. Partnerships with sports and music providers are very strong and contribute extremely well to pupils' cultural and skills development and to their health and fitness.

These are the grades for the 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	1
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 make excellent progress and develop very positive attitudes, becoming happy, interested learners. As a result, by the end of the year, most children are working above the expected levels for their age. All of the children, including the more able, make excellent progress in relation to their starting points. This is because ongoing assessment is accurate and, resulting from this, activities are very well matched to children's individual learning needs. The quality of teaching is excellent and children are provided with an appropriate balance between activities they choose for themselves and those led by adults. This supports the development of independent learning skills very well. Assessment is informed by evidence gathered through observations of the children in their activities and staff use this information extremely well to help them plan the next steps in the children's learning. The setting is very effective in identifying and supporting children with additional learning needs. Children interact well with each other and enjoy warm, trusting relationships with the caring staff. As a result, they grow in confidence, they are happy and secure and ready to learn. They settle quickly because induction procedures are sensitive and staff establish very positive relationships with parents and carers. Excellent communications keep them well informed about their children's learning and progress and excellent advice and guidance are provided on how to extend and support learning at home. Each child has a blog on the school's website and parents and carers say they find the website is a very helpful communication link with school. The setting is led and managed extremely well

and very effective team work contributes strongly to positive outcomes for the children. Provision is monitored regularly and this supports ongoing improvements. Procedures to ensure children’s welfare are very good and meet all requirements.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	1
Taking into account:	1
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

A large majority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Almost all said they agree or strongly agree that they are happy with their children’s experience at the school. Parents and carers who met with a member of the inspection team commented on how eager their children are to come to school each day and on their confidence in the school’s leaders and the staff team. Their comments indicated that parents and carers place a high value on the school’s caring ethos and that most are very pleased with their children’s progress and attainment. Many remarked on the very good home school communications, saying how they appreciate the fact that the school consults them regularly through questionnaires and meetings and keeps them very well informed through the website. In the questionnaire responses, a very small number of parents and carers expressed some disagreement over the latter point. Inspection findings endorse the views of the vast majority of respondents. Several parents and carers of pupils with additional needs expressed great appreciation of the school’s inclusive ethos and of the support provided for their children.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sandiway 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 132 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 194 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	96	73	35	27	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	91	69	38	29	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	63	48	62	47	7	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	58	44	63	48	8	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	74	56	56	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	65	49	60	45	6	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	76	58	52	39	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)	68	52	57	43	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	70	53	56	42	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	65	49	55	42	4	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	42	64	48	6	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	68	52	55	42	4	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	79	60	50	38	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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.



30 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sandiway Primary School, Northwich, CW8 2JX

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. As you know, we came to see how well the school is doing and how you are all getting on with your learning. We enjoyed our visit very much and it was lovely to meet you all.

We found that Sandiway Primary is an outstanding school and that it is a very happy place for you to learn and grow together. Your education gets off to an excellent start in the Reception class and you successfully maintain the positive attitudes to learning that you establish there as you move up through the school. You are extremely well behaved and polite young people. Your attendance is high. You work hard in your lessons, enjoy your work very much and get on very well with each other and with the grownups in school. They look after you extremely well. They work very hard, too, to make sure that you are provided with excellent teaching and a really interesting curriculum and you told us how much you enjoy your lessons. Because of all this, you are making good progress in your learning and your overall attainment is high.

This is something we have asked the school's leaders to do, because we think it will help to make your school even better.

- Make sure that more able pupils in Key Stage 1 do as well as they possibly can, so that the number who achieve Level 3 in assessments at the end of the summer term, is above average in 2012.

You can help by continuing to do your best and by continuing to be happy learners.

With my very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely,

Diane Auton
Lead inspector

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