

Cuddington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111059
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	378225
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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	167
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Butcher
Headteacher	Yvonne Elliott
Date of previous school inspection	23 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who observed 13 lessons and saw nine teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils, parents and carers, and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at national assessment data and the school's assessments, policies and governing body minutes, self-evaluation and documentation relating to safeguarding. Also taken into account were 63 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those completed by staff members and pupils.

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

- Inspectors assessed the effectiveness of support for lower-attaining pupils in the classroom, to ensure their good progress.
- They evaluated the school's strategies for raising attainment in reading and writing.
- The quality of leaders' self-evaluation was examined, together with its impact on planning for school improvement.

Information about the school

Almost all pupils are White British in this smaller-than-average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. A broadly average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has achieved Healthy School status and holds the Artsmark Gold and Eco awards.

Pre-school and after-school provision is available on site. This is not managed by the governing body and was not part of this inspection but a report on its quality 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

This is a good school. Leaders and managers have brought significant improvement to key areas of the school's work since the previous inspection. Excellent care, guidance and support firmly underpin pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' impressive personal qualities, including their high attendance, exemplary behaviour and exceptional contribution to school life are very strong features of their overall outstanding outcomes.

Pupils achieve well. Children enter Reception with abilities broadly typical for their age in most areas of learning, although their writing skills and mathematical understanding are generally lower than expected for their age. Progress through the school is good and by the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is above average.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and some teaching is outstanding. Nevertheless there is some satisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2 which results in lack of pace to pupils' learning in some lessons. The curriculum is engaging for pupils and provides a rich source of enjoyable experiences both in and outside of lesson time which contribute well to their good achievement.

Engagement with parents and carers is excellent. They are overwhelmingly supportive and they fully endorse pupils' views of feeling entirely safe in school. The excellent work of the governing body provides first-class support for the continued development of the school. The safeguarding procedures that it has put in place are highly effective. Governors' incisive insight into the school's work helps to maintain the pace and direction of improvement and to ensure outstanding value for money.

The headteacher, ably supported by the leadership team and governing body, monitors and evaluates the school's work well. Expectations are high and are clearly articulated in a development plan that is based firmly on accurate self-evaluation. Middle managers contribute well to curriculum development and have a good overview of strengths and weaknesses within their areas of responsibility. They recognise that there is scope for them to take on more of a leading role and accountability for raising standards further in subjects in addition to English and mathematics.

Previous areas for improvement have been tackled vigorously and successfully. The school has moved forward from being satisfactory to become a good school, clearly demonstrating the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the satisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2 to be good or better by:
 - sharing best practice effectively across all classes
 - ensuring that pace and challenge are maintained in all lessons.
- Develop the leadership roles and increase the accountability of middle managers who have responsibility for raising standards in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' excellent behaviour and attentiveness in lessons are major factors in their good learning. They enjoy lessons particularly when they apply their skills and knowledge in a practical way. Year 2 pupils, for example, used their literacy skills to follow step-by-step instructions and their mathematical skills to weigh ingredients in a productive lesson in which they each made a Christmas cake. Pupils make good use of opportunities to test out their ideas on one another and to work in groups to solve problems. They know their long-term targets, and lesson objectives are shared clearly so pupils always know what is expected of them.

Attainment at the end of Year 6 shows an improving trend since the last inspection with particularly good improvement in mathematics. Pupils' current work shows that the trend is continuing and that pupils are working at above-average levels in English and mathematics. Good improvement at Key Stage 1 in the most recent national assessments has also raised attainment in this Key Stage to above average. The introduction of a programme to help every child become a reader has had a good impact on both reading and writing at the end of Year 2. Progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 has gathered pace due to rigorous checking and target-setting by teachers. Consequently, progress throughout the school is now good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. This is because individual learning plans are tailored well to their particular needs and individual and small-group teaching ensure that pupils get the help they need to make good progress. Lower-attaining pupils also get the best from their lessons due to the careful preparation of work, support and resources to meet their needs.

Pupils are invariably polite and well-mannered. They are extremely mindful of one another, tolerant of others' differences and always alert to situations which may cause others distress. Caring roles, such as being peer mentors and playground buddies, contribute significantly to pupils' feeling of being very safe and to maintaining their strong sense of fair play. The eco-committee, road safety officers and recycling group are just a few of the ways in which pupils are involved in the daily life of the school. The very active school council has shown excellent initiative, for example, in coming up with an ordering system whereby every pupil is able to

have the school meal of their choice from the day's menu. The effect of this has been that meals are more likely to be eaten and waste reduced. Through work on projects in the community, such as planning improvements to a local park or decorating the bandstand for the community harvest festival, pupils ensure that their excellent contribution extends beyond the school boundaries. Pupils have an exceptional understanding of what constitutes a sensible diet and why regular exercise is important. They are very clear about how to keep themselves safe and healthy outside of school. High levels of attendance, good acquisition of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, together with their outstanding personal qualities mean that pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stages of their learning and their future careers.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons well and take good account of pupils' varying abilities. Subject knowledge is good and teachers use electronic whiteboards effectively to add interest to the lesson and support pupils' learning. For example, in one lesson the teacher changed the background colour to a displayed text in order to make it easier for a pupil with dyslexia to distinguish the words. In the most effective lessons there is always a sense of urgency generated by good levels of challenge. In one mathematics lesson, for example, the pupils' determination to 'outwit' the teacher and think of new ways to arrive at given numbers brought a great deal of fun to the lesson as well as better mental agility. Teachers build well on pupils' prior learning and they use assessment well in lessons and in their marking to pinpoint the next steps for improvement. The best practice, however, is not evident throughout the school. In some lessons, particularly in Key Stage 2, pace and challenge are limited. This is usually because the teacher talks for too long and does not engage pupils quickly enough in activity. There are also occasions when the tasks are not challenging enough. As a result, learning becomes no better than satisfactory. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution. Their sensitivity and skilled

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

management of pupils, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, adds a good deal to the quality of pupils' learning.

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their literacy and mathematical skills in different ways across subjects. This is made more purposeful for pupils because their views about what to learn in a topic and how to learn are taken into account. There is good provision for the arts and ICT, and pupils achieve well in those areas. Learning is enriched well by a good range of planned experiences such visits to the zoo for Year 1 or enterprise days for Year 5 at a local college. Residential visits contribute to pupils' development of excellent personal qualities, and their individual interests are nurtured well in the extensive range of after-school clubs.

Parents and carers are unanimous in their view that their children are exceptionally well cared for in school. The caring family ethos and welcoming environment of the school foster a strong feeling of trust in which pupils are recognised as individuals. Care is excellent for pupils considered to be potentially the most vulnerable and this helps those pupils to thrive, enjoy school and achieve well. Arrangements for pupils joining the school and transferring to the next are extremely well managed and ensure parents and carers as well as pupils are very well-informed. There are easily accessible systems through which parents and carers can communicate with the school and most acknowledge that staff members are open and approachable. The school has very successfully improved attendance since the previous inspection through close monitoring and the involvement of a family support worker.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The high expectations set by leaders and managers at all levels are clearly communicated through a shared vision for improvement, incisive self-evaluation and realistic development planning. Since the previous inspection this has brought about more effective leadership, and improved attainment and provision. Teaching and learning have been managed well. Close monitoring and developmental support for teachers have raised the overall quality and resulted in a measure of outstanding teaching in Key Stage 1. Nevertheless, leaders recognise that further work is to be done to secure good and better teaching throughout the whole school, as well as to enhance the roles of middle managers in order to raise standards further across a range of subjects.

The governing body has been highly effective both in improving its own performance and in setting clear direction for the school. High levels of insight into the school's effectiveness mean that its members are quick to share views on where improvement might be found and to hold the school to account. There is an excellent

working relationship with school staff and highly efficient systems for dealing with statutory responsibilities. The monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding procedures are excellent. Regular training for staff and upgrading of systems are given paramount importance, and high-quality practice permeates throughout the school's work.

All forms of discrimination are strongly challenged by school leaders, and equality of opportunity is ensured. Potential attainment gaps are quickly identified and resulting action is swift. Consequently, the progress of pupils in the 'lower average' attainment band at Key Stage 1, for example, is being targeted by additional support, to good effect. The school promotes community cohesion well. There are extensive links with local community groups which give the school a high profile. Pupils and staff communicate with, and support the work of, an orphanage in Tanzania. The school has welcomed students from a Swiss college who brought a different perspective to pupils' cultural awareness. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to experience the diversity of arts and festivals of different cultures. Leaders are aware that, as yet, pupils have few opportunities to compare cultural lifestyles with other communities in the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for the 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	1
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	1
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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage are well provided for. They make good progress from their broadly typical starting points so that all work securely within their early learning goals by the end of Reception and some are more advanced. Provision to secure children's safety and well-being is excellent. Procedures for preparing children, and their parents and carers, for when they enter Reception are very well planned and ensure a smooth and happy transition from pre-school. All are warmly welcomed and there are many opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to the process of children's learning and development. High priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development. Teachers consistently reinforce the importance of cooperation, working safely, and good hygiene so that children learn to play harmoniously, behave well and gain good levels of confidence and independence. Children develop literacy and numeracy skills well. The teaching of letters and the sounds that they make is very well managed and enables children

to approach early reading and writing with confidence. During their play children were writing and spelling simple words correctly and showing each other how they can write their names. Activities are planned well and often take children’s own ideas into account. For example, a fireworks display was abandoned in favour of pirates’ hats which captured imagination when a child brought one to school. Good use is made of the outdoor learning area in all weathers to give children the chance to build on their learning through exploration and play which they initiate themselves. Further development of the outdoor area is in the leaders’ action plan in order to accommodate a more continuous free-flow of activities between the classroom and outside.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

A minority of parents and carers returned questionnaires. The overwhelming view is that they are happy with their children’s experiences at school. A few raised concerns which were largely related to communication with the school about their children’s progress. All concerns raised by parents and carers were discussed with school leaders while ensuring that anonymity was always protected.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cuddington 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 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 167 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	75	14	22	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	73	16	25	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	44	30	48	3	5	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	43	32	51	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	54	28	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	51	28	44	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	62	24	38	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)	28	44	29	46	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	49	28	44	4	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	48	31	49	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	41	31	49	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	70	19	30	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	67	20	32	1	2	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.



9 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cuddington Primary School, Northwich, CW8 2NY

Thank you for the very friendly welcome that you gave the inspectors when we came to inspect your school recently. It was a pleasure to talk to you because you are all so polite, well-mannered and extremely enthusiastic about school. Your behaviour is excellent and you make an outstanding contribution to school life. Congratulations on your high level of attendance as well as your sparkling performances of *What a Knight*. We were very impressed by your school council and their good schemes to improve things for everyone in school.

Yours is a good school. You make good progress in your work and the standards you reach in English and mathematics are above average. You are taught well and some lessons are outstanding. The grown-ups in school take excellent care of you and you take excellent care of each other. That is why you enjoy school and always feel safe.

Even though there are many good and outstanding things, we have asked your school leaders to do two things to make your school even better. The first is to make every lesson as good as the very best by making sure that all your teachers always challenge you to work as hard as you can and give you enough time in lessons for practical work. The second thing is for teachers to check how well you learn in subjects other than English and mathematics and to plan ways for you to reach higher standards in those also.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Johnson
Lead Inspector

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