

Green Meadow Independent Primary School

Robson Way, Lowton, Warrington, WA3 2NP

Inspection dates	26–28 February 2014	
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
Pupils' achievement	Outstanding	1
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Quality of curriculum	Outstanding	1
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

This school is outstanding because

- Pupils make outstanding progress with their learning from mostly average starting points.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and often outstanding across the full age range of the school. Consequently, pupils' achievement is outstanding.
- The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage really enjoy school. They enter enthusiastically into the wide range of learning activities provided for them and make excellent progress.
- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have excellent attitudes to their work, their behaviour is exemplary, and they respond very positively to the challenging work they are given.
- The school provides an extremely safe and secure environment for pupils of all ages. The staff understand the abilities and needs of each individual pupil; effective daily communication with parents and carers strengthens this knowledge.
- The proprietor, who is also the headteacher, sets very high expectations for what pupils can achieve. As a result, the staff ensure that immediate attention is given to support and challenge any individual who appears to be at risk of falling behind. Any weaknesses in the school's work are quickly identified and effective strategies put in place to tackle them. Consequently, the school continues to go from strength to strength.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed seven lessons taught by four teachers. A wide range of documentation was considered, including policy and planning documents, and examples of pupils' work.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the proprietor/headteacher, two parents and carers, all members of staff, and informally with a number of pupils.
- Although there were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for the inspector to consider, eight written responses from parents and carers were received and considered during the inspection. Questionnaire responses from five members of staff were also analysed.
- At the start of the inspection the school requested a material change to extend its registered age range to include pupils aged from three to 11 years. In this instance the material change was not requested by the Department for Education. An assessment of this proposed change was completed by the inspector.

Inspection team

David Young, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Green Meadow Independent Primary School is located in a residential area of Lowton near Warrington.
- The school is in a purpose-built building and opened in September 2009 when it was first registered. Adjacent to the school and occupying the same site is First Steps Nursery which is owned by the same proprietor.
- Green Meadow is registered for up to 168 pupils aged from four to 11 years. Currently there are 15 pupils on roll, ten of whom are in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including five children aged three years. At present there are no pupils in Year 6.
- No pupils at present are identified by the school as having special educational needs and one pupil speaks English as an additional language.
- The school aim is 'to create a positive learning environment which celebrates every child as an individual and their right to individual achievement at their own level'.
- The school's last inspection was in November 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the school's website to make it more accessible and informative for parents and prospective parents.
- Establish a system of external monitoring and review which will enable the proprietor and staff to continuously measure their evaluation of the school against an independent assessment.
- Further develop the arrangements for staff appraisal to increase the focus on pupils' learning in addition to judgements about the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Outstanding

Pupils make outstanding progress and achieve outstandingly well from their various starting points on entry to the school. The majority of children enter the school with skills and experiences that are broadly typical for their age. They make excellent progress towards the early learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The staff have an excellent understanding of their individual abilities and personal learning needs and as a result are able to provide learning activities which enable children to achieve the targets which are set for each lesson. Working in small class groups, these children, including those for whom English is an additional language, make rapid progress with the development of their language and communication. They learn to listen attentively and are willing to offer their own ideas in discussions. They grow rapidly in self-confidence and develop trust with their teachers and with other children. Their progress with their social and emotional development provides them with the confidence to try new activities and to understand when they are doing well. They make an excellent start with their early reading skills by using phonics (the sounds that letters make) to help them to identify words. They enjoy offering their own ideas about what new words mean. Similarly, they work confidently with numbers and can count accurately up to 20, gradually developing an understanding of how to add on or to take away.

This excellent rate of progress is continued as pupils move on through Key Stages 1 and 2. They are challenged to extend their reading and writing skills and to take part in imaginative conversations. Most pupils are confident to ask questions and to check whether they have understood what to do. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 continue to progress rapidly and many make exceptional progress. Key Stage 1 pupils are enthusiastic about their work, keen to be involved and eager to respond to increasing levels of challenge in their learning. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are able to apply their writing and research skills effectively to produce independent projects of high quality. They understand how to interpret graphs, to manipulate fractions and decimals, and to reach conclusions based on the evaluation of evidence. The rich range of experiences in the curriculum, together with excellent teaching, enable pupils of all ages to experience success and to meet the ambitious targets set for them.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Outstanding

The behaviour and personal development of pupils are outstanding. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are keen to attend school and eager to learn. They take part enthusiastically in the range of learning opportunities provided for them. They quickly learn to take turns, to listen to each other and to respect their teachers. This positive attitude to learning continues into Key Stages 1 and 2 where pupils respond well to increasing levels of challenge in their learning. Pupils of all ages have excellent attendance and enjoy school. The management of pupils' behaviour is a natural part of the classroom routines where pupils know what is expected of them and respond positively to teachers' expectations. The school's records show that there are no reported incidents of bullying and pupils demonstrate high levels of cooperation during play and work. Older pupils act as buddies to the younger children and enjoy taking on responsibilities.

Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent. Pupils have many opportunities to reflect on their feelings and to be creative in their ideas and activities. The youngest children have unlimited ability to be imaginative and to adapt their classroom to a range of interesting activities, such as going camping, creating a picnic and feeding the animals. All pupils are successfully taught to understand the difference between right and wrong, and to recognise what is appropriate behaviour. Pupils have excellent opportunities to take part in activities in the wider community, such as performing for the elderly in the local community or collecting for overseas charities to assist farmers in Africa. The school has developed excellent provision for the celebration of festivals and understanding different cultures and beliefs. Pupils have access to a

dedicated room where they learn Spanish and where there are attractive displays of their work, for example celebrating Remembrance Day, Hanukah, Easter and Chinese New Year. They gain a very good insight into the occupations of people in the wider community, and visitors to the school, such as a local vet, are welcomed and questioned effectively by the pupils. The school maintains extensive photographic records illustrating the excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills through play and learning activities.

Quality of teaching

Outstanding

The quality of teaching is outstanding and enables pupils to make excellent progress in their learning across a wide range of subjects. The quality of teachers' planning is exemplary throughout the school. The school has a systematic and successful approach to lesson planning which provides secure support for staff, and which is constantly reviewed in the light of teachers' responses. The targets for pupils to achieve in each lesson are clearly identified and shared with the pupils. In the Early Years there is an appropriate balance between focused learning, for example in literacy and mathematics, and extensive opportunities for continuous learning in the stimulating classroom and outdoors environments. Teachers throughout the school have excellent skills in questioning pupils and adding deeper layers of learning to ensure that they are challenged sufficiently at all times. There is much focused conversation, illustrating how pupils understand what they are doing and testing their imaginative ideas. The teaching of pupils in Key Stage 2 is based on an excellent knowledge of individual personalities and preferred methods of learning. Teaching is exciting and lively and, as a result, the pace of learning and the amount of work covered are excellent. Pupils respond equally well to the completion of formal written exercises in English or mathematics, and to individual research and investigations in history, geography and science.

Arrangements for the assessment of pupils' progress are exemplary. All members of staff continuously assess through observation, making notes, gathering written and visual evidence and marking pupils' work. As a result the staff gain a continuous, accurate record of the progress evident in every lesson. Information gathered from assessment is used sensitively to adapt future learning activities and to make sure that no child is overlooked. The headteacher places a strong emphasis on ensuring that no child is left behind as a result of insufficient challenge or support. The outcomes from this continuous assessment are carefully recorded and evaluated against the early learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the National Curriculum levels in Key Stages 1 and 2. The records clearly demonstrate the impact of high quality teaching on the outstanding progress of all pupils.

Quality of curriculum

Outstanding

The school provides an outstanding curriculum for pupils of all ages, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The planning for pupils' learning is based on excellent schemes of work which set out the learning objectives for them across the full range of required subjects. The school has developed a real strength in the development of meaningful documentation which provides the basis for very effective teaching and learning. The staff evaluate each lesson and record ideas about how the curriculum might be adapted and developed in the future. The headteacher has ensured that each classroom is equipped with extensive high quality resources, including practical materials with which pupils may experiment and take part in imaginative learning. Staff also make excellent use of interactive whiteboards to engage pupils in problem-solving and the development of language skills.

The curriculum includes an appropriate balance between literacy and numeracy, and a wide range of additional subjects, including high quality science and humanities opportunities in Key Stage 2. The school invites visitors to come and speak to the pupils and takes them out on trips in the locality and further afield to learn from real life; pupils of all ages enjoy stimulating and varied experiences both within school and in the natural environment. Pupils enjoy planting seeds and measuring the growth of their plants; strawberries grown in the outside classroom are extremely

popular. The length of the school day is longer than average and time is used well to make sure that pupils have every opportunity to reinforce and extend their learning in art, music, design and physical activities. These all contribute to their excellent progress in academic, emotional and physical development.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Outstanding

Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are outstanding. Exemplary paperwork and rigorous monitoring of all aspects of safeguarding are implemented consistently. Policies related to the management of behaviour, the prevention of bullying, safety on off-site visits and child protection are thorough and implemented robustly. The headteacher has ensured that all the regulations are met, including the Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirements. The staff share high expectations of safety and security, and support each other in continuous effective supervision of the pupils. The school's records show that no incidents of bullying have been experienced and all pupils say they feel safe and well cared for. The proprietor ensures that excellent procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are implemented rigorously and details of all the required checks on staff suitability are recorded in a single central register. The safeguarding of pupils is given a high priority. The school provides training at the appropriate levels for the designated person and staff, and they share a good understanding of the role of external agencies.

Health and safety requirements are evident in the excellent attention to risk assessment, including all aspects of the maintenance and management of the premises. An appropriate fire risk assessment is in place, supported by exemplary routine management and recording of all required fire safety requirements. The staff are well trained in fire safety and in first aid. Parents and carers are able to choose healthy options for their children in the daily lunchtime menus. In their written responses to a school questionnaire, parents and carers express unanimous confidence in the school's arrangements for pupils' welfare.

Leadership and management

Outstanding

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The proprietor, who is also the headteacher, has high expectations of her staff and of what pupils can achieve. She ensures robust implementation of the school's policies and procedures so that pupils can achieve outstanding outcomes. As a result, pupils, including the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are enabled to make rapid and sustained progress. Strongly supported by the staff, the headteacher has produced outstanding policy and curriculum documentation, and all aspects of the school's administration underpin a strong focus on pupils' achievement. The staff work effectively together towards the continuous improvement of teaching and learning to ensure that all pupils have an opportunity to achieve, or exceed, their potential. Robust arrangements are in place to challenge teachers to constantly review their practice. Successful arrangements for the evaluation of staff performance place an essential emphasis on the quality of teaching; a similar focus on pupils' learning is less evident in the current process.

The proprietor holds colleagues to account and produces a realistic and well-judged review of the school's successes. This is not currently accompanied by a regular system of external review to test and ensure the security of the school's self-evaluation. All required information is made available for parents, carers and others, including details of the school's complaints procedure; but the proprietor is aware of the need to update and improve the suitability of the school's website. The premises and accommodation provide an excellent environment for effective learning, in which furniture and learning resources have been carefully selected to meet the needs of pupils. All staff pull together and accept suitable levels of responsibility. The proprietor leads by example and the quality of her leadership is recognised by staff and parents. All members of staff are proud to work at the school and all parents completing questionnaires would recommend the school to other parents. The proprietor has ensured that all the regulatory requirements are met.

It is recommended, subject to approval by the Department for Education, that the school's age range be extended to include pupils in the age range three to 11 years.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	135988
Inspection number	422816
DfE registration number	877/6011

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Primary day school
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	4–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	15
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Sandra Green
Chair	Sandra Green
Headteacher	Sandra Green
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,000 to £4,500
Telephone number	01942 671138
Fax number	01942 671138
Email address	info@first-steps-nursery.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

