



Westbrook Old Hall Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111206
LEA Warrington
Inspection number 278619
Inspection dates 15 March 2006 to 16 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Arthur Markham CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Old Hall Road
School category	Community		Old Hall
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Warrington, Cheshire WA5 9QA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01925 415544
Number on roll	395	Fax number	01925 659158
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr M Yates
Date of previous inspection	4 July 2000	Headteacher	Mr John Thomson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school situated in Old Hall, Warrington. The majority of children are from white British backgrounds with a small number from minority ethnic groups. There are no children at an early stage of learning English. The number entitled to free school meals is below average, as is the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. On entry to the school, the children's skills are broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The inspectors find that the school is modest in judging its effectiveness as only good. Leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The strong leadership and vision of the headteacher creates a forward looking, reflective approach with a strong focus on improvement. Excellent monitoring and evaluation procedures enable it to determine how well it is doing and guide improvement. Teaching and learning are outstanding. Children enter the Foundation Stage with broadly average skills and make a very good start to their learning because provision is outstanding. Close attention is given to English, mathematics and science and standards are high, although the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in writing is not as high as in the other subjects. Careful attention is also given to ensuring that children's skills are developed across the whole curriculum. Children enjoy their learning and make extremely good progress. Their attitudes to learning and behaviour are excellent. Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding and impacts strongly on their achievement. They are cared for extremely well and, as a result, feel secure and happy.

A high emphasis is given to ensuring that the needs of all children are met. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with particular gifts or talents are supported very well. Parents hold the school in high regard and are very appreciative of the education provided for their children.

The governors give outstanding support to the school and are very well aware of its strengths and areas for development. The high level performance found at the last inspection has been maintained and the school is well placed to improve further. The school provides exceptionally good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

In order to build on its many strengths and improve standards further, the school should:

- Raise standards in writing even further by presenting all children with more opportunities to write at length and ensuring that the marking of children's work consistently makes clear what they need to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding and standards are well above average. When they enter the school, children have average skills overall. They make very good progress during their first year and reach above average standards. Throughout Years 1 to 6, children continue to make very good progress. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above those expected nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. In the national tests at Year 6, children's performance in English and mathematics has consistently been significantly above average during the last five years and in science in all but the last

of those years. One of the reasons for this is that children's results and overall performance are carefully analysed. For example, the school has identified that children's performance in English is not quite as good as that in mathematics and science because standards of writing need to be improved further. Determined action is being taken to remedy the situation by ensuring that children are suitably challenged.

Close attention is given to meeting the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and, as a result, they make very good progress, many achieving average standards by the time they leave the school. Children who are gifted or talented achieve very well because they are suitably challenged. Virtually all children successfully achieve the challenging targets they are set.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school meets with outstanding success here. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. A rich range of experiences develops children's understanding of themselves and their responsibilities. They feel valued as they receive certificates for their achievements. One boy commented, 'we are good role models, younger children have something to aim for'. They understand clearly what is acceptable behaviour and how to treat each other. Excellent opportunities for social development result in children developing the ability to work cooperatively as well as the self-discipline to work independently. Children learn about other cultures through the arts and through visits from faith leaders who give them an insight into the importance of their beliefs. Children say this helps them to respect differences 'although we are all the same inside'.

Children thoroughly enjoy their learning and attendance is consistently good. They feel safe in school and are aware of the need to lead healthy lifestyles in relation to diet and exercise. Children in Year 1 say, 'we need milk to make our bones strong'. They appreciate the opportunities they have to express their views through the school council and during 'circle time'. Visits to a local home for the elderly, organising concerts and raising funds for various charities develop very positive attitudes to others in the community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers know exactly where children are up to and have high expectations of what they can achieve. Close links between assessing children's progress, planning their work and setting challenging targets mean that teaching is very focused on ensuring that all children do well. Children say that checking their own work and that of classmates, looking for positive, negative and interesting aspects, helps them to think again and to improve. One girl commented, 'you have to learn to take criticisms, your boss may criticise you at work'. The effective use of

interactive whiteboards stimulates children and lessons move along at a cracking pace. The use of talking partners and small group work enables children to generate ideas very effectively.

Marking highlights children's strengths, but places less emphasis on providing guidance on what they need to do to improve. Teaching assistants work in close partnership with teachers and make a very positive contribution to the learning in the school. Their particular success lies in their support for children who have learning difficulties. Parents are pleased by their children's achievements. One wrote, 'teachers combine effective discipline and teaching so that children want to learn and behave well'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent. It is rich, relevant and interesting and meets the needs of all children well. A strong emphasis is given to teaching basic skills in English, mathematics and science. Provision for information and communication technology is very good and successfully strengthens links between subjects and prepares children well for life in a technological world. Art, music, French and physical education are given a high profile, ensuring children receive a rounded education.

Children take part in a wide range of sporting activities and extra-curricular clubs that contribute to their enjoyment and achievement. A wide range of visits and visitors, including residential visits, enrich the curriculum. The curriculum is also enhanced by regular focused weeks such as art, book and mathematics weeks.

Work in personal, social and health education helps children to understand their rights and responsibilities within the community. The school's healthy eating initiatives and strong emphasis on the need to stay fit are having a positive impact on children's well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The high quality care, guidance and support provided to children impacts strongly on their learning and achievement. Risks to health and safety are assessed carefully. Child protection procedures are robust and rigorous checks are made on adults who work in the school. Children say there is always someone they can turn to for support. Parents value highly the level of care given to their children, one parent stating, 'my children have felt emotionally supported, which has given them the extra self-confidence they need'. Children are encouraged to eat healthily and to take regular exercise. Lunchtime assistants, playtime leaders and buddies prevent bullying by supporting children and ensuring everyone has a friend to play with. Support for children with medical difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent.

Children's progress is carefully monitored and good quality guidance is given in lessons. Teachers make good use of positive comments when marking children's work, but less use is made of developmental comments to help them understand how they can improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher gives a very clear educational direction to the school. His dynamic leadership has successfully created a

strong team approach with a high emphasis on providing a high quality education for children. Whilst there is a clear focus on raising standards and improving teaching and learning, great attention is also given to promoting a very caring school.

All areas of leadership and management are regularly and rigorously monitored. The school's self-evaluation is excellent and children's performance is closely monitored. Information is used effectively to ensure that children are set challenging targets and tracking procedures ensure that any underachieving are identified and their needs met.

For example, the school quickly identified the reason for the slight dip in performance at

Level 5 in science in 2005 and is taking effective action to address the issue. Parents rate the headteacher and the school highly. One stating, 'the headteacher is excellent, he is an inspirational leader with high ambitions for the school'. Parents' views, and those

of the children, are sought in order to inform strategic planning. Performance management is used very effectively to drive forward improvements and develop the expertise of teachers. Finances are very carefully managed and the school is very well resourced.

Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and have a very good awareness of its strengths and weaknesses. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities and

make an excellent contribution in moving the school forward by working in close harmony with the school's leadership team.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, three inspectors recently visited your school to find out how well your teachers are helping you with your learning. Thank you for being so friendly and talking to the inspectors. It was really interesting to listen to what you had to say. The things that we particularly liked were:

- the way your headteacher runs the school: he listens to what you all think could make it better and works hard to make the changes happen
- the way all school staff care for you extremely well and make sure that you feel safe and happy
- your excellent behaviour in lessons and around the school, and the way you help each other
- the way you work hard for your teachers and they do their best to help you learn
- the wide range of school trips that are organised for you and the interesting additional activities like the orchestra and sporting opportunities.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to improve some things to make your school even better. They are:

- help you to get even better at writing by making sure the work you are set is challenging and using comments when marking your work that help you understand how to improve.

We are confident that your headteacher and teachers can do these very important things. You can help them by continuing to work hard and doing your best.