

Westbrook Old Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111206
Local Authority	Warrington
Inspection number	325312
Inspection date	11 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	401
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Yates
Headteacher	Mr John Thomson
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Old Hall Road Old Hall Warrington Cheshire WA5 9QA
Telephone number	01925 415544
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Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how well pupils are achieving in classes across the whole school in English, mathematics and science; the quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage; and the quality of leadership and management. Evidence was collected from the observation of lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work, records of their progress, and examination of other documentation including 200 completed parents' questionnaires. Discussions were held with pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This larger than average sized school is situated in an area of relatively high social advantage. A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are White British. None of the few pupils who belong to minority ethnic groups is at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes. The school has gained the Activemark Gold, the International Schools and Eco Bronze Awards. On site, there is a privately run pre-school Nursery and an after school-club which are subject to separate inspections.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This outstanding school truly lives out its motto, 'The best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today'. The vast majority of parents agree with this judgement. Comments typical of them include: 'The well-being, happiness and education of our children are paramount – this is continually reflected and complemented in this school.' Underpinning this success is inspirational leadership by the headteacher, complemented by the deputy headteacher, and exceptional teamwork by all staff. Within this purposeful nurturing environment, all pupils flourish and make outstanding progress in their academic and personal development.

Achievement is outstanding. Children begin school with skills broadly expected at this age. They get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and consequently start Year 1 as independent, confident young learners, eager to enjoy all the school has to offer. From the very beginning of their time in school, staff involve pupils in a regular assessment and review of learning. Through this rigorous process, identified gaps in learning are swiftly addressed with programmes of work to meet individual needs. Because of the close attention to checking progress, all groups of pupils continue to make excellent strides in their learning in Years 1 and 2 and reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This excellent level of success continues as pupils move through to Year 6, where well above average standards in English, mathematics and science are attained. Inspection evidence shows that these standards are on course to be sustained.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers deliver their lessons with the learning style of each pupil in mind. For instance, in a Year 6 English lesson, the teacher used reflections of a recent visit to the D-Day landing beaches in Normandy exceptionally well. The lesson stimulated pupils' imaginations, promoted their writing skills, increased their historical knowledge and brought the subject matter to life in a meaningful way. All pupils make rapid progress while thoroughly enjoying their learning in such lively and challenging lessons. Pupils are eager to say how much their lessons help them to be more confident in assessing their work and that of classmates. Their attitude to school is excellent because they feel valued and know that their contributions are respected and important to staff. Highly skilled teaching assistants enable pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make the same outstanding progress as their peers.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They have mature attitudes about what is right and wrong and display a high level of social awareness and responsibility. School and class councillors do much to represent the views of all pupils and are proud to share what they have done to develop healthy and safe lifestyles. Pupils really love school and this is reflected in their good attendance and impeccable behaviour. They develop into caring, mature young citizens, exceptionally well prepared for their future lives. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They make a significant contribution to the school and its local community: for instance, in playing in the school orchestra, choosing a child to receive the golden apple award for good attitudes or in raising funds for those less fortunate than themselves. They also show great interest in the wider world, for example in their work with a school in Soweto. Pupils have an excellent awareness of their role as global citizens, but they are given fewer chances to develop links with those parts of this country which differ from their own.

The outstanding curriculum gives pupils breadth to their learning. For instance, specialist French, music, art and physical education teaching from exceptionally talented staff ensure pupils' achievement in the arts, sports and music are outstanding. Excellent use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) in each class. The virtual learning environment reinforces new learning by providing each child with their own personal laptop. These are used most effectively for personal research in all the subjects that pupils study, both in school and at home. Art and display work throughout the school is of an exceptionally high quality. Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities and annual residential trips. These do much to raise confidence and general well-being among pupils. Parents support this view, saying for example, 'My daughter's smile and enthusiasm for learning is not only a credit to her but to the school and environment it has created'.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Making sure that all pupils are nurtured in an excellent caring and supportive environment is central to the school's agenda. This is achieved through a programme of daily lessons, in all classes, which extend pupils' social and moral understanding exceptionally well. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and supervision is rigorous at all times. The quality of marking, which helps pupils to reach and surpass the very challenging targets set for them, is outstanding. Pupils comment on this and say they find teachers' advice extremely helpful in guiding them how to improve their work.

Leadership and management are outstanding. All staff have clear leadership roles and very effectively use their individual expertise and interests for the benefit of pupils' learning. Excellent partnerships with other schools and health services are used very effectively to enhance the provision for all pupils. Community cohesion is successfully promoted through local and international links. However, pupils' experiences of different socio-economic, religious and ethnic dimensions in the other towns and cities in Great Britain are less developed. Governance is excellent. The high expectations in the school are shared by the governing body who believe that only the very best is good enough for pupils at Westbrook Old Hall. The school has been successful not only in maintaining but extending its outstanding provision from the last inspection. It offers excellent value for money and its capacity for future improvement is outstanding.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

As a result of exemplary leadership and outstanding provision, all children make rapid progress. Excellent links made with parents and pre-school nurseries ensure that all children quickly settle to a very happy start to their school life. The environment for learning is stimulating and lively, both indoors and outdoors. It encourages children to explore and find things out for themselves, and to think critically and imaginatively. For instance, children buried 'jewels' in the sand so that the 'pirates' amongst them could not find them! They love to discuss ideas and cooperate with each other. Many opportunities are provided for children to extend their personal ways of learning, and they practise their mathematical and writing skills in practical settings. For instance, they pursue symmetry through highly effective art and ICT activities. Children are content and thoroughly enjoy being in school. All welfare requirements are met. There is a good balance between the activities teachers lead and those that children chose for themselves. Planning is comprehensive and rigorous. Staff value children's views and excellent use is made of staff observations to feed into the 'Learning Journeys', which are meaningful celebrations of children's achievements over their time in Reception. Consequently, by the time children move into Year 1 most have achieved or exceeded the early learning goals set for them nationally.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop pupils' experiences and knowledge of different socio-economic, religious and ethnic dimensions within different towns and cities in Great Britain.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you all very much for your help when we inspected your school. The other inspector and I enjoyed our visit very much and thoroughly enjoyed meeting you, particularly in your assembly. In this letter, I want to let you know what we found out.

Yours is an outstanding school. Your parents agree and most are very happy with all the school does to help you in your learning. Your behaviour is exemplary and it is clear that you really enjoy school. This is because of the way you always try your best. Your enthusiasm, together with your excellent musical, artistic and French language skills, really impressed me. The care that you take over your work and the way you listen to your teachers is exceptional. It is also because you have excellent teachers. You are fortunate that your headteacher is so well supported by all the staff and the school governors. Of course, part of my job is also to find ways the school can improve. It was hard, but I do think there is one thing it can do.

I have asked the school to find ways for you to work with children from different parts of Great Britain. I know you love doing this sort of thing because many of you do great work finding out about the wider world through your link with the school in Soweto. So, why don't you let the school know which parts of the country you would like to know more about and try to think about how you could do that?

Finally, on behalf of the inspection team, I wish to thank all of you for the way you welcomed us. In particular, I want to thank those of you who gave up your time to talk to us.

With best wishes for the future.