



# Willaston Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 111076  
**LEA** Cheshire  
**Inspection number** 278591  
**Inspection dates** 17 October 2005 to 18 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Jon Lovgreen CfBT Lead Inspector

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Derwent Close
<b>School category</b>	Community		Willaston
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6QQ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01270 661528
<b>Number on roll</b>	212	<b>Fax number</b>	01270 651190
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Dr M Freeman
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 December 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kairsteen McDowell

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 17 October 2005 - 18 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 278591
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Willaston Primary School is of average size and serves its local village. Some children come from further afield. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. The vast majority of children are white British and none has a first language other than English. Very few children are eligible for free school meals. The school has been awarded Artsmark Silver, the Healthy Schools Award, and the Effective Early Learning Quality Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Willaston Primary School is a good and improving school. This inspection judgement agrees with the school's own accurate assessment of itself. Those leading, managing, and governing the school have a passionate commitment not just to improvement, but to the pursuit of excellence. Standards have risen significantly since the last inspection and there has been a good response to issues for improvement. This has resulted in improvements in science, mathematics and reading, and in the highlighting of writing as an area for further work. Children get on very well with each other and teachers so that the school is calm yet purposeful.

'This is a happy, happy school with lots to do and lots of cool clubs', claim children. They appreciate being cared for, the good quality of teaching, and the many opportunities for relevant practical work. Good links with other organisations prepare children well for transfer to secondary school, and give valuable experience of the world of work. Following a detailed review, the school now provides well for children in the Foundation Stage, as confirmed by the recent award for 'Effective Early Learning'. They achieve well, and quickly reach standards above those expected.

The school is well led and managed, the leadership team having had a major impact on its direction and sense of vitality over recent years. Key issues from the previous inspection have been thoroughly addressed. Value for money is good. The school's high quality, regular and detailed checking of its work and performance put it in a very good position to improve further.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

To improve standards further the school should:

- Make marking of written work more clear and precise, so that children know exactly what to do to improve their standards.
- Encourage children to write at length more often, and insist on such work being as neat and accurate as the writer can achieve.
- Make sure that children get a more consistent experience of information and communication technology (ICT), so that they more fully appreciate its usefulness and develop greater skills in using it.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children achieve well. They enter the Reception year with above average personal and social skills and average skills in other areas of learning. By the end of the year over half are beginning to exceed their learning goals, with notable improvement in language skills. This good progress continues as they move through the school and by the end of Year 2 children are gaining a good grasp of ideas, and have the vocabulary to express them. The standards reached by children in mathematics, science and reading are

above average. A weakness in writing is that when writing at length children's accuracy and neatness do not match the quality of their ideas.

Standards are well above national average by the end of Year 6 because children do so well in science and mathematics. School targets for 2005 were exceeded. The issue from the last report of higher attaining pupils not doing well enough has been successfully tackled and they now make good progress.

The school has seen the need to raise standards in writing. Changes have resulted in girls making better progress but recent results show little improvement by boys. ICT standards are average but could be higher. Children do not get consistent opportunities in ICT, nor sufficient guidance in how to improve and use their skills.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The personal development and well-being of children is outstanding. Spiritual development is very good. Children explore values and religious beliefs, expressing their feelings in a creative way through music, drama and art. Moral development is at the heart of the school. There are carefully planned times for children to discuss their feelings and the impact of their behaviour. Behaviour in lessons and around school is exemplary. Children are well mannered and co-operative. Social development is outstanding. Children learn how to keep safe and healthy, with a strong emphasis on healthy diet and exercise being a particular feature of the school. Some children act as 'buddies' to help others. The school council confidently exercises leadership and responsibility. Residential visits provide challenging team-building tasks. For older children, participation in vocational activities at a further education college develops skills that contribute well to their potential economic well-being. Lessons, and a range of visits and visitors, help children gain broad knowledge of their own and other cultures. Community work such as hosting the 'World Worm Charming Championships' calls on qualities such as humour and organisational skills. The school does all it can to improve attendance. However, attendance fell to average in 2004. Some children miss too much work because their parents persist in taking holidays in term time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Children make consistently good progress because teaching has improved and is now consistently good. They appreciate that teachers plan lessons that are varied and practical. As one enthusiastically put it, 'We get lots of 'hands-on' lessons . and they're fun!'. Teachers manage lessons briskly and confidently. Children respond by being keen to learn. Teachers show children how to use talk to explore ideas and express them clearly, often using the correct technical terms.

Children are taught to understand how they will learn best, and are given the opportunity to be creative and to think for themselves. Teachers are open to new ideas

and learn from each other. Whilst most children can write lengthy pieces of work, some teachers do not expect them to do so often enough, or carefully enough. Too much finished work is untidy and not helped by being presented in pencil.

Teachers have a very clear idea of where children have got to in their work and what they are capable of. Regular marking is helpful, but too often does not demand enough in terms of neatness and accuracy. There is praise and encouragement but some teachers do not give crisp advice to children as to how to take the next step to improve. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Their needs are quickly spotted and clearly communicated, and teachers and assistants support them well.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's curriculum is good, meeting the needs of all learners. Statutory requirements are met. The Foundation Stage has undergone a rigorous review to ensure that the recommended areas of learning are fully covered. Provision for ICT has been improved but its use is inconsistent. The school has recognised the need to improve opportunities for writing across the curriculum. Investigation in science and in practical mathematics has been significantly improved. Children with learning difficulties access all curriculum areas, tasks being carefully adapted to match their individual needs. Specific activities are planned to provide extra challenge for children identified as being particularly able. Personal development is very effective. There is a strong emphasis on fitness and healthy competition in sport. The range of lunchtime and after school clubs and activities is exceptional. Sport, music, modern foreign languages, and the Conway residential experience for Year 5 develop healthy and varied lifestyles, as well as enjoyment and achievement. Liaison with secondary schools prepares pupils well for the next stage of education.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a learning environment where children feel safe and valued. There are good arrangements for children to settle into school. Procedures for child protection are robust, and pupils at risk are quickly identified and supported. The dangers of drug misuse, the need to keep healthy, and preparation for puberty are carefully and sensitively taught. The vast majority of parents feel their children are well cared for. Children say there is always someone they can turn to for help. Records of injuries are kept scrupulously. The school is responding to parents' suggestions about the arrival and departure arrangements for the very youngest children. Supervision during playtimes and lunchtimes is good. Children enjoy using play trolley equipment and are guided by older children. Good quality support enables all children to participate fully in every aspect of school life. Children's personal development is closely monitored but academic guidance is not as strong. Teachers know what children can do and set broad targets for improvement, but the quality of marking is inconsistent.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and deputy have provided very good leadership through a period of considerable change. This has resulted in excellent improvement since the previous inspection, based on regular, high quality checking on the progress being made. There has been considerable commitment to helping teachers improve, and a clear expectation that they will respond to the challenge. Subject leaders have been given more responsibility for checking their areas and encouraged to make changes. Careful selection of new teachers has had a beneficial effect on learning. The school has a strong sense of direction, understood by all, including parents and children. The school administrator is a key link in the smooth, cheerful and caring running of the school.

Children, through form time and the school council, feel involved and listened to. The school welcomes comment from parents and others in the community, and is open to new ideas. There is good communication with parents, the vast majority of whom are well satisfied.

The active and well informed governing body is an effective support, guide, and critic. Members are fully aware of their responsibilities, and welcome the increasing opportunity to visit school to examine its work. Issues such as the staffing and organisation of the school and budget planning have been well managed. An instance is in a recent appointment designed to stimulate better ICT skills amongst teachers and children - a weakness highlighted in the school's self review. The systems and personnel that are in place, a successful track record, and the desire to become even better give the school good capacity for further improvement.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	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	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	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	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 a small team of school inspectors visited your school recently to find out if the school is giving you the sort of education you should be getting.

Firstly, thank you for the way in which you welcomed us to your school and for being so helpful and courteous. We really enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching how you went on in lessons, and how you got on with each other around school.

We are pleased to be able to tell you that your school is a good one. We were especially impressed by:

- The way the school is helping you to become good learners and good people.
- How your headteacher and other people running the school check that it is doing a good job, and that you are doing well in it.
- The way in which nearly all of you behave so well and want to work.
- The excellent range of interesting things the school arranges for you to do in addition to normal lessons.

We have asked your teachers to do some things to make your school even better. These are:

- When they mark your work we have asked teachers to give you a better idea of what needs improving and exactly how you can do that.
- We want you to get used to writing longer pieces of work more regularly, and completing them as neatly and correctly as you can.
- We want teachers to help you use computers and other modern technology, so that you learn how to use them really well.

Our best wishes for your future success and happiness.