



Childer Thornton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111083
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278595
Inspection dates 6 February 2006 to 7 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Ian Thompson CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	New School Lane
School category	Community		Childer Thornton
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH66 1QY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 3393074
Number on roll	161	Fax number	0151 3481343
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs G Granby
Date of previous inspection	8 May 2000	Headteacher	Mr G Powell

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school serving an area of relative social and economic advantage although about one third of pupils are from disadvantaged backgrounds. Eligibility for free school meals is well below average. Pupils' attainments are about average when they enter the school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average; only one pupil has a statement of special educational need. The school has no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and none at an early stage of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school evaluates its effectiveness as outstanding. Inspectors judge it to be good, with some outstanding features. Leadership and management are good, although evaluation of the school's own performance is at times not as sharp as it might be. The quality of teaching and learning is good so that pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Teachers monitor pupils' progress well and know how well they are doing. However, although pupils know their targets, they do not always know enough about what they need to do to improve. Pupils' personal development and well-being, and the quality of the school's care, guidance and support are outstanding. Curriculum provision is good with outstanding opportunities for enrichment. All members of staff work well together to help pupils enjoy coming to school so that attendance is good. Pupils are eager to learn. Their behaviour is exemplary in response to teachers' consistent expectations. Relationships between staff and pupils and among pupils are very good. Pupils respect the views of others and are considerate. Parents' views are overwhelmingly appreciative of the school. The school's partnerships with other schools and agencies are outstanding and make a significant contribution to its work. The school has made good improvement since its last inspection and has a good capacity to improve further. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement by making sure that pupils know the steps they need to take to improve.
- Improve the accuracy of the school's evaluation of pupils' achievement so that prompt action is taken to deal with underachievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter the school with broadly average standards and make good progress throughout. Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage in all the areas of learning because of the good teaching, care and support that they receive. By the time they enter Year 1, the great majority reaches the standards expected of pupils of this age with about one third of the group exceeding them. Results in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 over recent years have been above average. This was the case also in 2005 although levels were the lowest for five years, reflecting changes in staffing that affected the continuity of learning. Results in mathematics, particularly, indicate that some pupils did not do as well as they should. The school identified reasons for this underachievement and took steps to deal with it by reorganising classes and making changes to teaching methods. Inspection evidence and the school's performance data show that the changes in teaching literacy and numeracy, together with 'booster' classes, are working well. An emphasis on investigations is raising achievement in science. Pupils are on course to meet the school's challenging targets in the core

subjects. In addition, the school has particular strengths in art, information and communication technology (ICT) and sports where pupils achieve very well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school's sees this aspect of its work as good. Inspectors judge it to be outstanding. The school promotes pupils' personal development and well-being very successfully. As pupils move through the school, their personal and social skills develop very well. Pupils take great pride in their school and in the work they do. They are keen to learn and show great self-confidence, both in class, in clubs and other activities. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. In lessons they work hard, concentrate well, and are keen to please their teachers. Around the school they are courteous and sensible. Incidents of bullying or other oppressive behaviour are rare and children are confident that adults will deal with them fairly. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Teaching of the arts plays a strong part in promoting pupils' spiritual development. They are given opportunities to reflect on the wider issues of life in class and whole school assemblies. The school council has been active in raising money, for example for the Powered Wheelchair Appeal. It has also played an important part in setting up the Healthy School initiative that encourages pupils to make healthy choices in what they eat. As they grow older, pupils are encouraged to take on responsibility within the school. As a school councillor, a classroom helper, or a 'Red Star' playground helper, they can make worthwhile contributions to the life of the school, as well as to their own personal development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The key to pupils' good achievement is teachers' consistent approach to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. The school's electronic voice amplification system is a very effective support for this, enabling teachers to use an effortless, conversational tone and yet be heard easily by all. This contributes significantly to the calm and purposeful learning atmosphere in the school. Many pupils say that teachers make learning fun; the result of careful planning that provides a variety of tasks to maintain pace and interest. Tasks are well chosen to promote progress and carefully matched to pupils' needs. Above all, pupils are challenged to think. Teaching of literacy and numeracy has improved as a result of additional training and support for teaching. Teaching methods now reinforce learning more effectively. Teachers and classroom assistants provide effective, sensitive support for those who need it. Good relationships and consistent application of reward and behaviour policies result in good classroom management so that lesson time is used well. Effective assessment procedures are being developed to support progress. Teachers know how individual pupils are doing and pupils' progress is tracked well.

Much good work has already been done to establish targets to help pupils to improve, but the steps they need to take are not always clear enough to them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school judges its curriculum to be good. Inspectors find that it is outstanding, particularly because of the excellent opportunities for personal development supported by the extensive range of extra curricular activities. The curriculum has been developed to take account of individual needs and all statutory requirements are met. Classroom activities are very well chosen to be interesting and enjoyable, as well as to challenge all pupils to do their very best. Exceptionally good use is made of ICT to support learning. The school participates in a wide range of initiatives, such as the Eco-School, International School Award, and local events such as the Marina Walk school art project. Visits to festivals such as the International Eisteddfod enrich pupils' understanding of a variety of cultures. Residential experience develops confidence and social skills. The wide range of sporting activities also contributes to pupils' health and well-being. Participation in local sporting leagues has also brought success. The school makes very good use of visits and visitors, such as when local artists come into school to work with pupils. Visits to local places of interest are also used effectively to make learning more meaningful, and enjoyable. Work reflecting this rich curriculum is attractively displayed around the school, enriching the surroundings in which pupils work and setting standards.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school is outstanding. From the youngest classes, pupils are made to feel secure in school. Overwhelmingly they enjoy school, trust the adults they meet there, and are given the support they need in order to fulfil their potential. There are established procedures for child protection. Guidance at all levels is very good. Sensitive support is provided when needed. The school makes great efforts to involve parents in supporting pupils who have difficulties; these pupils achieve well. Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for the next stage of their education through the school's strong links with secondary schools. The school's well established breakfast and after school clubs extend the care and support given. The breakfast club provides a good start to the day, as well as promoting good attendance and punctuality.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher brings enthusiasm and vision to his work. He sets the tone for a school in which all are valued equally and encouraged to do their best in a delightful atmosphere. The impact of his leadership is to be seen in good teaching, good achievement and the exemplary behaviour of pupils in an

outward looking school. Governors provide good support for the work of the school. A good example of the strategic management developed by the headteacher and governors is the decision to run the school without a deputy headteacher. Management roles and responsibilities have been shared among other staff. This approach provides very good opportunities for professional development and leadership from which the school as a whole has benefited. The headteacher is provided with good support in monitoring teaching and learning across the school and teachers gain from additional training and guidance. This management structure has already had a positive impact, for example through initiatives to improve teaching of literacy and numeracy, and gives the school a good capacity to improve further. Nevertheless, there are aspects of the school's evaluation of its work, particularly of achievement, that are not sharply enough focused to be accurate. Issues from the previous inspection have been tackled well.

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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ 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

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	2	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	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	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?	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	3	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	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

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, Mr Hardwicke and I visited your school to check on how well it is doing.

Thank you very much for the way you welcomed us into your school. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and your life in the school. We were very impressed by the courtesy and help you gave us. So many of you told us that teachers make learning fun and we agree with you that the school is a safe and happy place where everyone can enjoy learning.

The best things about the school are:

- your behaviour is outstanding. You get on well together and help each other
- you make good progress because lessons are interesting and you work hard
- there are lots of extra activities that you enjoy
- everyone in the school cares for you very well so that you get help with any difficulties
- Mr Powell, the staff and the governors are working hard to make this an even better school for you to come to.

We have asked your teachers to improve two things to make your school a better place to learn. These are:

- to make sure that you know exactly what to do to reach your targets
- to make sure that they know how well the school is doing in all its work.

We hope that you carry on enjoying lessons and continue to help Mr Powell and your teachers to make your school an even better place to learn.