



Willaston CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111245
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278633
Inspection dates 27 February 2006 to 28 February 2006
Reporting inspector Ms Susan Preece HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Neston Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Willaston
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Neston, Cheshire CH64 2TN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 327 4133
Number on roll	206	Fax number	0151 327 8244
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr K Butcher
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs J Drew

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Introduction

The inspection was led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and one additional inspector.

Description of the school

The school is of average size. It is located in the semi-rural village of Willaston in North West Cheshire. Most pupils come from socially and economically favourable backgrounds. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is low. Nearly all the pupils are from white British families.

The school is a member of Nottingham University school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) programme in nationally outstanding primary schools. It has Investors in People status, and has recent awards for art, school achievement and for being a healthy school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. It gives very good value for money. Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and they make very good progress. Pupils make good progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 and attain standards at 11 years that are generally above those expected for children of their age. Even so, more could be expected of the higher attaining pupils. Good teaching, a good curriculum and a wide range of enrichment activities support pupils' enjoyment of school. This is reflected in their positive attitudes to work and very good behaviour and attendance. The school has created a happy family ethos where every child is valued. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. There are strong links with parents and the local community which contribute significantly to the children's well-being. The leadership and management of the headteacher and governors are good and their approach to self-evaluation and improvement is effective. The arrangements for teaching the Year 6 pupils in an open area are unacceptable. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and demonstrates very good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to provide more support and challenge for higher attaining pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Resolve the unsatisfactory premises arrangements for the Year 6 pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school's view that achievement is good overall and outstanding in the Foundation Stage is supported by inspectors. All pupils make at least good progress. Standards are consistently high across the school and many pupils reach standards that are above, or well above, national averages. Pupils enter school with skills that are generally above average. They settle very quickly and rapidly show their promise. Through sensitive teaching they develop independence and progress very quickly to become fluent readers and good speakers and listeners. This progress continues year on year so that by the time the pupils leave, in Year 6, the national test results are well above average, with only occasional variations. The school's targets are met. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully integrated and they make very good progress. This is because the work they are given is carefully matched to their needs. Whilst the very able pupils have traditionally done well, more recent developments, particularly in mathematics, are aimed at helping them to improve further. There is room for these pupils to do even better.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. The school underestimates the quality of what it delivers in this area, judging it as 'good'. Pupils enjoy being part of this school and their attendance is consistently above average. They greet each activity with eager anticipation and explain convincingly why learning at this school is fun. They show appreciation of their teachers' efforts to provide interesting lessons. Such positive attitudes underpin the high standards of work throughout the school. Pupils' outstanding behaviour means that teachers can give independence to and rely on even very young children to behave sensibly as, for example, when Reception pupils went on a 'number hunt' to find examples of numbers around the school.

All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good, creating an ethos of respect in the school in which everyone is important. Pupils are very aware of their right to be safe and do not tolerate bullying. This was a clear message from the school council. Pupils explore their own and others' feelings and show a mature sensitivity to others' needs, for example, through the many charities they support. They know how to stay safe and be healthy and also make a strong contribution to the community through participation in village and community events. Pupils work and play together in harmony. One explained in a rap song 'Don't think twice, just be nice'. In this way, pupils are developing important life skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school judges this area to be consistently good and inspectors agree. All the teaching observed on the inspection was of good quality, with some that was outstanding. Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subjects. Pupils enjoy learning new things and they are inspired and motivated by the good quality of teaching. Teachers set high standards and give clear explanations about what they expect the pupils to learn. Praise and encouragement are strong features of lessons and this helps raise pupils' self-esteem and enjoyment, and encourages them in their learning. Pupils are highly enthusiastic learners and contribute to discussions readily and with confidence, as seen in a religious education lesson for Year 5 pupils. With skilled management from the teacher, the pupils confidently talked about difficult moral dilemmas and were eager to explain the courses of action they would take and the impact that these actions could have on people around them.

Lessons are planned so that pupils of all abilities succeed. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboards that are in all classrooms. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons and, as a result, they make very good progress when compared to the others. The marking of pupils' work is good and involves them in assessing their own work and setting new targets. As a result, the

pupils are helped to understand what they need to do to improve. Whilst the use of information and communication technology (ICT) has been developed since the last inspection, it is yet to be fully embedded across all subject areas. The Year 6 classroom is part of a corridor which is subject to interruptions and the pupils say this sometimes disturbs their work. This is an unsatisfactory situation.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum which effectively meets the needs of all pupils. The core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT are given priority to ensure basic skills are acquired. The introduction of German and Latin classes for older pupils is proving to be very popular. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra curricular activities, including good opportunities for music, drama, sports, after school clubs and residential visits. Pupils also have the opportunity to attend 'Arts Education for a Multicultural Society' (AEMS) residentials to further promote their knowledge of different cultures.

Teachers make learning more relevant by linking aspects from a number of subjects to a topic of interest. This was seen to good effect in a Year 2 ICT lesson, when pupils used their artistic skills to create a picture of a familiar story.

The pupils are successfully encouraged to be healthy and to stay safe through the personal, social and health education programme and a wide range of physical activities. Reading and a love of books has a high priority in school. Pupil review books and share their findings. They are encouraged to take responsibility and older pupils help younger ones with their reading. There has been an improvement in the provision for ICT and teaching and learning are enhanced by the use of interactive whiteboards.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care, support and guidance for its pupils. This enables them to achieve high standards and grow in self-knowledge and self-confidence year by year. Parents appreciate the way that all adults in school care for their children. Pupils grow and thrive within the Christian 'family' of the school. Arrangements to ensure child protection are thorough and staff pay very good attention to health and safety requirements as well as promoting healthy living. Risk assessments are conducted regularly and there is generous provision for First Aid and medical needs. Teachers have a good knowledge of pupils' personal circumstances and needs, whilst those who are new to the school are offered sensitive help to settle quickly.

Pupils' progress is well recorded and challenging targets are set. The tracking of these targets and pupils' overall performance is carefully analysed and improvements made as necessary. More able pupils are extended through participation in 'gifted and talented' workshops with pupils from other schools and through extension groups within the school day. Any child found to be underachieving receives well targeted support and interventions.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good with some very strong features. The school's self-evaluation is mainly accurate. Subject coordinators and the headteacher regularly monitor teaching and learning in all subjects. Although this is already a successful school, the headteacher, governors and staff seek to improve the provision. There is a readiness to take on new ideas, so that the capacity for improvement is very good. A promising start has been made. There has been a significant increase in the resources for ICT, better opportunities for pupils to learn other languages, the development of the school grounds to further encourage cooperative play, and the introduction of monitoring of the achievements of summer born pupils. The new deputy headteacher was given excellent support and guidance when he arrived; the warm welcome extended to new pupils is also a feature of the way adults are inducted into school life.

Governors support the school well and are proud of its achievements. At the same time they understand the need to question, challenge and keep the school's work under scrutiny. They have found the right balance. The chair of governors is a committed and knowledgeable leader who has guided governors effectively towards developing their strategic role and the part they play in holding the school to account.

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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?	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	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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	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	1	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	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

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?	2	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	2	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	1	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 I recently visited your school to find out how well you are doing. Thank you for looking after Mrs Brock and me and making us feel so welcome, we really enjoyed it and learned a lot about your school. Thank you for telling us about the things you do and how you think your teachers and other staff are helping you to learn. I'd like to say a special thank you to members of the school council I spoke with on Tuesday morning.

What I liked about your school

- You all enjoy school and want to learn.
- You make very good progress, especially in your reading.
- Your teachers plan good lessons and know what you need to learn.
- All staff work together to take very good care of you and help you to learn.
- The headteacher makes sure the school is working well.
- Your behaviour, enthusiasm for learning and attendance are very good.

What I have asked your school to do now

- To cut down the interruptions to lessons for Year 6.
- To help the more able of you do even better than you do now.