



Golborne Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106420
Local Authority Wigan
Inspection number 287509
Inspection dates 11–12 January 2007
Reporting inspector Marie Cordey

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

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| Type of school | Primary | School address | Talbot Street |
| School category | Community | | Golborne, Warrington |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 | | Cheshire WA3 3NN |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01942 726059 |
| Number on roll (school) | 349 | Fax number | 01942 726897 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Mr David Kelly |
| | | Headteacher | Mr Paul Ryan |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 May 2001 | | |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties is below average. An above average proportion of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school has gone through a difficult period because of significant changes in staffing and poor accommodation. Pupils and staff moved into the new school in November 2006. The school has gained the Healthy Schools award and retained Investors in People status. It has also been awarded the Eco Green Flag Award in 2005 and the Excellence in Work-Related Learning award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Golborne is a satisfactory and improving school. Following a long period of disruption, the school has moved into a very well equipped new building. Both the headteacher and staff managed the move well in order to minimise its effect on pupils. As a result, pupils have settled in well and are ready to move on in their learning.

The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Children settle in well to school life, are taught well and make good progress. As yet, their learning through outdoor play is restricted because the play area is not completed. Achievement and standards overall are satisfactory. School performance in 2006 shows some improvement over previous years, largely because of improved monitoring of pupils' work. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are broadly average overall. Performance is best in science where pupils attain above average standards. Standards in English are below average and not as good as in science because the more able pupils do not always make the progress expected of them.

The school is led with vision and determination by the headteacher. The school aim of 'attaining a welcoming, calm and purposeful atmosphere' is achieved. The caring nature of the school helps to create a harmonious spiritual environment with good moral values. The vast majority of parents support and value the school but a small number do not feel that they or their children have enough opportunity to contribute to improving the school. Inspectors agree with this criticism.

Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils enjoy their lessons. Teachers know the pupils and generally understand their individual learning needs. However, this is not always communicated clearly enough to the pupils, as some are unsure of how well they are doing in their work or precisely what to do to improve it. Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. They behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and become responsible members of their community. Pupils' contribution to their own learning and to school improvement is limited.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Visits and visitors are used regularly to enrich the curriculum and provide pupils with a varied range of learning experiences. Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and 'to enjoy their learning'. Effective partnerships with outside agencies contribute to the care and support that the pupils receive. Pupils know who to talk to and approach if they are troubled.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and the school provides satisfactory value for money. Improvements already made and new systems to raise standards and achievement, together with a more settled phase, demonstrate a good capacity to improve further. The school has a reasonable awareness of its strengths and the areas where it could do better. The evaluations of achievement and standards, teaching and learning and the Foundation Stage are accurate but judgements in other areas are too generous.

What the school should do to improve further

- Involve pupils more in the assessment of their own learning so that they are aware of how well they are doing and how to improve their work.
- Raise achievement in English, particularly for higher-attaining pupils.
- Provide opportunities for parents and pupils to contribute to school improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children joining the school show a wide range of ability, but overall their attainment is below average, with an increasing number having significant weaknesses, particularly in speaking, listening and social skills. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress thanks to effective teaching which helps them grow in confidence and detailed monitoring which ensures that the next learning tasks are pitched at the right level. In Years 1 to 6 pupils' progress is satisfactory. Standards in Year 6 are broadly average overall and pupils succeed in improving their performance, particularly in mathematics and science. However, the more able pupils do not always make the desired progress in English. The school is now using its assessment information effectively to set more challenging targets and to monitor progress to raise standards and achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory overall with strengths in their moral and social development, largely because of the effective personal, social, health and citizenship education programme. Pupils know how to keep safe and adopt healthy lifestyles. This is reflected in the school's success in gaining the Healthy Schools award. There are many examples of work to promote tolerance and awareness of other cultures and beliefs. Careful planning of activities has begun in order to prepare pupils more consistently for life in a multicultural society. Attendance is average and has improved significantly because of the school's efforts and rigorous systems. The recently formed school council is beginning to give pupils more responsibility because the school recognises that pupils are not involved enough in improving the life of the school. They are helped to prepare for their future roles as citizens and apply their learning in a practical way. For example, a mini-market project involves pupils acting in role, interviewing local business people. Below average literacy skills compromise this preparation for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Increasingly, teachers are planning work that generally matches pupils' needs, particularly in science. Learning is made exciting and pupils are attentive. In examples of good and outstanding lessons, high expectations result in pupils who are confident and proficient in their work. However, they are insufficiently involved in setting their own targets or in knowing exactly what to do to reach higher standards. This is particularly the case in English where work is marked less informatively than in other subjects. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage provides a varied range of learning experiences to develop children's independence; this enables the children to grow in confidence and make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory in the way that it helps pupils to make satisfactory progress in their personal and academic development. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress because of appropriate support. The curriculum is good in the Foundation Stage; it promotes good achievement because of a wide range of stimulating experiences to support children's needs. The school is beginning to extend learning for gifted and talented pupils through liaison with the local high school, but in some lessons higher-attaining pupils lack sufficient challenge. Throughout school, pupils have planned opportunities to enrich their learning through additional activities, educational visits and a wide range of visitors invited to school. Pupils are keen and involved in sport. The provision for information and communication technology has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Consequently, pupils' keyboard and research skills have also improved since then.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory. The school provides a welcoming environment and, despite its size, knows its individual pupils well. The school has appropriate procedures for child protection and for safeguarding its pupils. Vulnerable pupils and those with additional needs are provided with satisfactory support. Pupils are not always sufficiently aware of how well they are doing. The school is aware of this and has begun to involve the pupils more in assessing their own learning. Tracking pupils' progress in all subjects has improved significantly since the previous inspection and this provides reliable information for the staff to keep track of their overall achievement. The commitment to care is reflected in the school's Investors in People status.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school leadership team has been faced with a significant number of challenges in recent years. Throughout this time, the headteacher has shown a determination to create an environment in which pupils feel valued and want to achieve. The move to a new, well resourced building and the restructuring of the leadership team have led to raised aspirations for all. The school now has a sense of common purpose among staff, pupils and support agencies. A detailed school improvement plan recognises the need to raise standards, particularly in English, and identifies key priorities. Many of the proposed areas for development are only in the early stages of implementation and have not yet led to significant improvement in standards and achievement. In addition, several middle managers are not yet fully effective as they are only beginning to develop their monitoring roles within the school.

The school cares for its pupils and has established good relationships with the vast majority of parents and outside agencies to support its work. However, it does not provide sufficient opportunities for parents or pupils to contribute to school improvement. Governors are enthusiastic and a number of new governors are beginning to challenge and hold the school to account.

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Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 3 |

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 3 |

¹ Grade 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.

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 3 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 3 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 3 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 |
| 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 |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to your school. You were very friendly and clearly enjoy being at school. We think your school is satisfactory. The best things about it are how well behaved you are, your good attitudes and the way you enjoy school. The standards you reach in science are above average and your work in English and mathematics is improving. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make a good start to their school life. The new school is very attractive and is liked by you and your parents. Your headteacher and your school staff have worked very hard to make the move as comfortable for you as possible.

You have made some difference by helping to plan the proposed adventure playground. We agree with some of your parents though, that they and you are not given enough opportunity to contribute to the running of the school. We also think that you could work hard with the school to improve your work in mathematics and English. We think that those of you who are capable of reaching high standards should be given more difficult work. You will need to try to remember your levels in your work and aim to reach your targets. We are sure you will because you are keen to do well in your subjects.